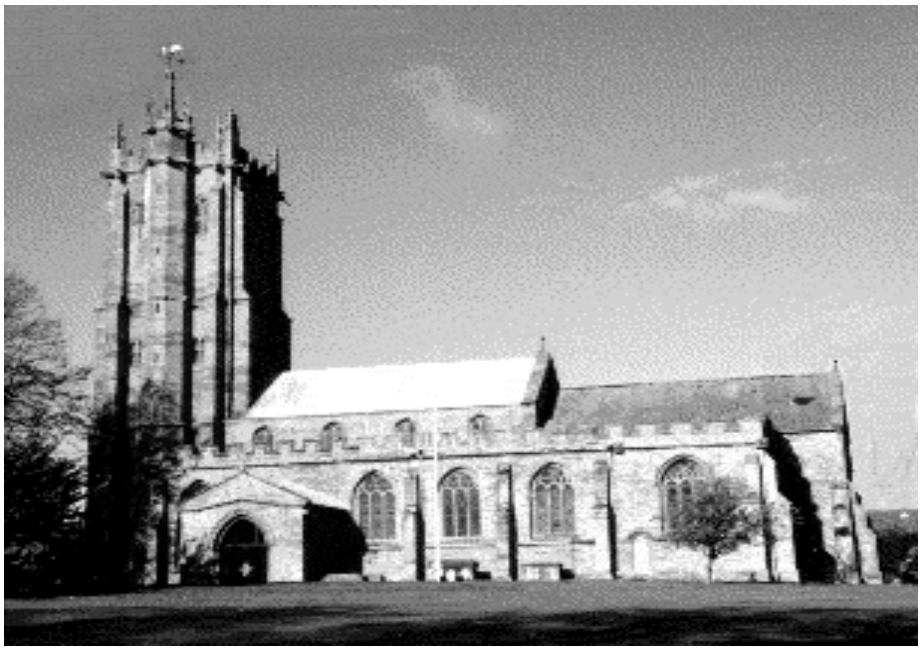
The Parish Church of St. John the Baptist, Wellington



Annual Report for 2025

Priest in Charge:	**Reverend Colin Simpson**
Churchwardens:	**Andrew Maddocks** **Jo Leigh**
PCC Treasurer:	**Henry Richbell**
PCC Secretary:	**Sharon Chorley**

The Parochial Church Council and Church Officers

The PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship at our church and to become part of our parish community at St John's. The PCC maintains an overview of worship throughout the parish and makes suggestions on how our services can involve the many groups that live within our parish. Our services and worship put faith into practice through prayer and scripture, music, and sacrament.

When planning our activities for the year, we try to enable ordinary people to live out their faith as part of our parish community through:-

- Focussing on growing and nurturing the Christian community of St John, improving what we have in place at the moment, and building on what we do well
- Building St John's as a more visible Christian witness in Wellington by improving our existing links with the town and parish
- Being innovative within the town and parish, emphasising more social action, in these difficult current times
- Working with St John's Primary School, which is a church school

To facilitate our work, we must maintain the fabric of the Church.

There are three places for members of the PCC to sit on the Deanery Synod. This provides the PCC with an important link between the parish and the wider structures of the church. In 2025, we had two representatives, William Brown and Diane Donohue.

MEMBERS ON THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL IN 2024

NAME	POSITION	FIRST ELECTED
Rev'd Colin Simpson	Priest in Charge	Licensed October 2023
Andrew Maddocks	Churchwarden & Deputy Chairperson	May 2023
Jo Leigh	Churchwarden	May 2023
Henry Richbell	PCC Treasurer	N/A
Sharon Chorley	PCC Secretary	N/A
Judith Dufour	PCC Member	May 2025
Lenore Clarke	PCC Member	May 2025
Christine Hayes	PCC Member	May 2024
William Brown	Deanery Synod Rep	April 2023
Diane Donohue	Deanery Synod Rep	April 2023
Valerie Nuttall	PCC Member	May 2025 (deceased)
John Massey	PCC Member	May 2025
Richard Elloway	PCC Member	May 2025

The Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Parishioners for the Election of Churchwardens and the Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting for 2024 of the Parish Church of St John the Baptist, Wellington held on Sunday, May 4th at 11.00 a.m.

Annual Meeting of Parishioners for the Election of Churchwardens

(This meeting was open to all residents in the parish and those on the Electoral Roll)

The meeting started at 11.00 a.m. and Colin began with a prayer and an explanation of the meeting procedures.

1. **The minutes of the Annual Meeting of Parishioners, which took place on Sunday, May 5th 2024,** had been circulated before the meeting. There were no objections, so the minutes were accepted and signed by Colin as a true record.
2. **Election of Churchwardens.** Colin had received two completed nomination forms for the post of two Churchwardens, which had been properly proposed and seconded. These were from Andrew Maddocks and Joanne Leigh. There were no objections to this. Colin was happy to announce that they were duly re-elected.
3. **Chairman's Remarks.** Colin thanked Andrew and Jo for the support that they have given him, as he understands that it's not easy when a new vicar is appointed. He was very pleased that they were continuing in their roles, and a round of applause was given.

This concluded the Annual Meeting of Parishioners

The Annual Parochial Church Meeting for 2024

(Only those present who are on the Electoral Roll are allowed to vote)

1. **Apologies** were received from Ian and Marie Brierley, Linda and Martin Sims, John Young, Fiona Brown, Emma Peacock, Diana Smith, Stephen Bowen.

2. **Minutes of the APCM of the 5th May 2024** were sent out before the meeting, and there were no matters arising for these. Colin asked that they be accepted as a true record of the meeting and signed them.

3. **Presentation of the Electoral Roll**. There was a total revision of the Electoral Roll this year, as this happens every 6 years in the Church of England. There were 9 deaths, 9 people moved away, 22 new people, and 28 people did not reapply. The total is now 116; it was 140. Maralyn Norman was thanked for her work as Electoral Roll Officer.

4. **Presentation of the Annual Parish Report**. The Annual Report contains the Annual Accounts and reports on the activities taking place in the church and hall, plus safeguarding, the fabric, and the inventory. Colin said that he would take it section by section to see if anyone had any questions.
   Finance Report and Accounts – Colin explained that the income and expenditure look deceiving as it seems as though we have a surplus for the year, but to do this, we have spent £40,000 of our reserves. He asked if there were any questions; there were none.
   A Year in Review – Colin asked if there were any questions; there were none.
   Churchwarden's Report – no questions.
   Occasional Offices – no questions.
   Sacristan Report – no questions.

Intercessions and Prayer Ministry – Judith told everyone that the review of prayer ministry is ongoing. She understands that some people might not know who their pastoral companion is at the moment. This is something that is being looked at and will be rectified. If anyone has any questions about this, please do ask her. Patrick wanted to say thank you to all those who do this.
Church Flowers – no questions. Colin remarked that the flowers always look glorious. Lenore asked to record her thanks to all those who help.
Midweek Communion – Colin wanted to give his thanks to Ian Brierley for leading this valuable service each week and for the Christmas shoeboxes that he arranges each year for charity. He also asked to record his thanks to all of the clergy who stand in for him and take services when they can.
Care Home Communion Group – Colin said that he is grateful for all who take communion into care homes and that it is a wonderful encounter with God.
St John's Churchyard – no questions. Colin said that arrangements are being made to put the bench back at the front.
Pastoral Companions – no questions. Addressed by Judith earlier in the intercessions and prayer section.
Concerts – no questions.
Hall bookings – no questions
Coffee mornings – no questions. Lenore added that there is a coffee morning next week. Colin added his thanks as these consistently raise around £1000 for church funds.
Fairs – Colin said that, again, these are fantastic and bring a lot of people into church who wouldn't usually come in, and they raise a lot of money.
Talking Café – Colin gave his thanks for all that the volunteers do at the Talking Café. He said that it is always very busy, but they manage everything calmly and efficiently.
Tea@3 – Judith wanted to stress that everyone is welcome to Tea@3, it is not by invitation only, so all can attend if they wish.
Warm Spaces – no questions. Again, Colin recorded his thanks to the volunteers who help with this.
Women's Refuge – no questions.
Foodbank – James wanted to add that since he wrote his report, the numbers attending the foodbank have gradually diminished, although the need is still there. He wondered if it was worth having a collection box for food in the church anymore, as it's only been used twice in the last year. He said it seems that most people use the various donation points at the supermarkets and urged people to still do this if they can.
Bible Reading Notes – no questions.
School Chaplain – Colin said that Helena and the other volunteers do fantastic work with the children throughout the year, and the Pupil Chaplains are one of the many success stories to come from this.
Bellringing – no questions
Tone Deanery Synod report – no questions
Safeguarding Report – Colin wanted to record his thanks to Sharon, who is the safeguarding officer. There has been a significant amount of additional work to do due to the audit at the diocese, and there is no way we could have kept up to date with this without her.

Thank you – Colin asked to record his thanks to everyone, without whom the church and its various activities couldn't operate.

5. **Election of Officers.**
   a. *Electoral Roll Officer* – Maralyn Norman was very happy to continue this role.
   b. *Elections to Parochial Church Council* – Colin said that he had received five nomination forms, properly proposed and seconded, for John Massey, Richard Elloway, Valerie Nuttall, Lenore Clarke, and Judith Dufour. There were eight spaces, so all were duly elected as there were no objections.

6. **Appointment of Independent Examiner** – Martin Arthur was happy to continue this role; there were no objections.

7. **Any other business**
   There were no further questions raised.

8. **Chairman's remarks.**
   Colin wanted to briefly explain the vision board display that he had put up in church. It is part of the ongoing process of how people would like St John's and St Mary's to move forward, and follows on from the 'tea with the vicar' sessions. It details the local challenges in the wider community – in West Buckland, male life expectancy is highlighted, and in Wellington, it's low or no qualifications. It also gives an idea of what the people want, i.e., the profile put together when advertising for a new priest, and information from 'tea with the vicar'. This has then been put together to create a detailed action plan, agreed at a joint PCC meeting of both churches in February. The various parts of the action plan were then put in order of priority by the PCCs. Each item will have a project plan with a deadline, and hopefully, everything that was asked for is there somewhere. He also wanted to explain the logo. For the vision plan, he used a circular logo in which the concentric circles of colour symbolised how different people and communities interact with the church. God is in the middle and is white, and this white is dotted throughout all of the other colours, showing that God is present in all areas. The triquetra is an ancient symbol for the holy trinity. We have taken the red from St John's, the green from St Mary's, and the lilac from the Church of England. Again, these are not solid colours but are interspersed with white to symbolise God's presence.
   Colin said that this board will remain in the church for some time and that there are various leaflets and documents available to explain things further. He asked people to take a look when they can and take some information away to read. He urged people to speak to him if they had any questions at all.

9. Colin ended the APCM with a prayer.

PCC Meeting

(A brief meeting of the PCC took place after the APCM with just the PCC members)

Colin asked if Henry was happy to continue as Treasurer. He was, and there were no objections.

Colin asked if Sharon was happy to continue as PCC Secretary. She was, and there were no objections.

The date of the next meeting was set for Tuesday, 3rd June at 7.00 p.m.

Sharon said that she would email a proposal for future dates of meetings to all PCC members. She said that she would also prepare welcome packs for the new members, giving all the necessary details and forms they need to fill in.

The meeting concluded at 12.10 p.m.

Priest in Charge Annual Report for 2025

Priest in Charge Annual Report St John the Baptist for the Year 2025

Last year when I spoke at this meeting, I expressed my concern that we were struggling to find ways to get done everything that needs doing.

This year my heart is lighter. We have had the sadness of losing some of our people, but others have joined us and yet others have come forward to offer their gifts and talents to "keep the show on the road". We have begun to understand better our unique contribution within the town and community.

Work on our Benefice Plan continues, we have trained many people in aspects of safeguarding and are more aware of its relevance to our Christian vocation; we have made progress on the outstanding repairs and maintenance, the lights are brighter and water runs off the roof rather than down the walls in the choir vestry. Our plans are ambitious, perhaps overly so and reigning in my enthusiasm for trying to do too much is a task I have set for myself this year.

We have supported people with their life events, baptisms, weddings and funerals, consoled them in sorrow and celebrated in joy. Our talking café continues to provide companionship over a cuppa and is used as an example of how to do this well. We have been more successful in raising money to better cover our running costs and we have even had the automatic doors fixed meaning easier access for those less mobile than we fortunate ones.

Our Spring and Autumn fairs and our coffee mornings have meant we have engaged with the wider community in ways we haven't done for a while, the money raised a welcome boost to our coffers, and our Festival services at Christmas and Easter continue to attract more people, as do our regular Sunday services which have been beautifully enhanced by our developing choir. We have had notable connections with our school and there continues to be significant competition for the role of pupil chaplains.

While the amount of money we raised was significant, the best thing for me is how we are pulling together to put on some significant events and many more simple ones. In the process we have got to know each other better and are beginning to have a more positive engagement with the town than has been the case for a number of years.

We have had a good year, some ups and downs, some gains and losses but I believe we have come closer together, more supportive of each other and, not wanting to single out any individuals, I thank you all for your contributions – large and small – that have made up a flourishing whole.

Reverend Colin

Churchwardens' report

Fabric

The 2024 Quinquennial Report by the Architect's Jonathan Rhind identified a number of important issues regarding the roof of the church. Since then, further detailed investigation has been undertaken by Corbel Renovation Ltd (Taunton) based on the Architect's urgent recommendations list. Corbel have now submitted a detailed quotation, which requires the PCC's immediate consideration and decision. The quotation is for £26,400 plus VAT. If we add a Contingency element for possible additional costs, we are looking for £30K. Jonathan Rhind has seen the quotation and has responded favourably. After due consideration of the quotation at the PCC meeting on 19th February, a decision was made to accept the quotation and to seek a Faculty from the Dioceses Advisory Committee to go ahead with the work.
Guaranteed funding is on offer from an anonymous benefactor to support funding applications to finance the work and secure the church roof against further damaging water ingress.

Electrical Projects

Phase 1 of the re-ordering and renewal of the church's RCD units and some cabling to make these compliant with current regulations, and the use of new bulbs and lamps was completed.
The next Phase and what that will entail exactly has yet to be decided by a Steering Group putting forward recommendations and options to the PCC. The Steering Group will consider the heating system, ancillary amenities such as being able to stream services and control sound and lighting from a central desk and offer an improved range of lighting combinations.

The Rear Door Refurbishment

The work to restore the electric operating doors was undertaken and largely enabled by the sterling efforts of Richard Elloway's Swimathon. The work by J Manny Automatic Door Systems cost just under £5000.00.

Heating In Church

At the end of November 2025, we had a major breakdown in heating the church for 12 days while the engineers identified the problem of a failed boiler pump and issues with rusted piping. We are now benefitting from a new boiler pump and the Smart Hives system that enables the timing and temperature targets to be controlled by a smartphone. But we still have a high-carbon system that is both expensive to run and maintain and is inefficient. We are beginning to investigate other systems. There are several electric alternatives available for heating. For example, radiant heating panels are an interesting option. There is a system of suspended, large halo rings that can provide both radiant heat and lighting. All the electrical needs could be served by a system of solar panels feeding power through batteries, and grid power.

Events

Under this heading, I include the church's special fundraising events: the coffee mornings; the seasonal fairs; the organ recitals; the fundraising concerts. All of these contribute so much to the church's coffers and are organised and led by very special people with the support of their volunteers.
There are, of course, the weekly and monthly events such as Tea @ 3 and Talking Café, which are organised by generous people with their support volunteers.
Mention must be made of music performers who have, during the year, given of their expertise in the cause of fund-raising for St John's: David Price, John Young, and David Davies, who raised money for the organ maintenance and development appeal; JW3 and J25, who raised money for the church common fund.
Coffee Mornings and Fairs have become a regular feature at St John's and, over time, have contributed a great deal to the church coffers. For that, we must thank Lenore Clarke, Sue Rackley, and, recently, Josie Bobbitt, for their generous and hardworking leadership.
St John's welcomes several outside organisations to our church and hall. From the Wellington Choral Society, Slimming World, NCT, NHS support sessions for ex-members of the armed forces, and choral groups such as Collegium, to give their public performances.
Jo Leigh and Andrew Maddocks
Churchwardens

Annual Treasurer's Financial Report 2025

Annual Financial Report 2025

The accounts have been duly examined and the examiners certificate is attached to this report.

On first glance the accounts seems to be reasonable in that the bottom line shows a surplus of £8667.57 for the year but this is far from the truth. We did not make our final Parish Share payment of £8000 until January 2026 so in reality our surplus should have been £667.57. The actual figure would have looked considerably worse if we had got nearer our requested Parish Share.

If we look a comparison between 2024 and 2025 our regular income was some £4000 higher but this did include a large amount through our sum up machine which is not easy to categorise. We did not reclaim any VAT in 2025 and we did not received any legacies during the year.

With regards to what we call Other Income, the big difference was lettings which were again significantly don. In addition we did not get any grants during the year which further reduced our income. All other areas were slightly down against 2024 which is encouraging. On the plus side our fundraising was up nearly £5000, an exceptional achievement. Another plus was the introduction of an organ fund which has allowed us to put money aside for essential repairs and maintenance

If we look at expenditure in the various categories:

Administration was only up by normal price inflation

General Repairs was much higher but a lot of work on the fabric of the church was undertaken. This work was essential and hopefully will save costs in the future

Staff costs were as expected and we settled our tax and pension liabilities on a regular basis. Clergy expenses and organist costs were in line with what we expected.

We were able to go through the year without touching the savings we have with the Church of England funds so this showed a welcome increase over the year.

Henry Richbell

Treasurer

Martin Arthur

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Bournemouth, Dorset BH8 8QF
e-mail: martin@accountancy.coop
Telephone: 01202 621622 Mobi: 07980668990

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of
St John the Baptist Parish Church, Wellington Somerset.

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of St John the Baptist Parish Church
I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the St John the Baptist Parish Church (Charity) for the year ended 31 December 2025.

Responsibilities and basis of report
As the charity trustees of the Charity, 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 Charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's 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:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I confirm that there are no other matters to which your attention should be drawn to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

M J Arthur.

Martin Arthur
FMAAT, FFA, FIPA, FFTA, MIH, ACIE.
17th April 2026

Martin Arthur is licensed and regulated by the Association of Accounting Technicians to provide services in accordance with License No. 2208 details of which are displayed at the registered address shown below.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST, WELLINGTON
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER 2025

The following accounts have been prepared on an Income and Expenditure basis and produce the following totals:

Total Income	100,849.59
Total Expenditure	92,182.02
Surplus for the year	**£8,667.57**

As detailed in the Income and Expenditure account.

Approved by the Standing Committee of the Parochial Church Council on: _____

And signed on its behalf by:-

_____ _____

Chairman **Treasurer**

The following two pages comprise the accounts.

CASH BOOK RECONCILIATION 2025

		A	B	C	D
	Total Funds	**Current A/C NatWest**	**Restricted current A/C NatWest**	**Deposit A/C unrestricted CBF**	**Deposit A/C Restricted CBF**
Reconciled Bank at 1st Jan 2025	31,803.36	3,153.44	47.38	1,043.96	27,558.58
Bank as at 31st Dec 2025	42,635.42	11,827.08	0.30	1,093.57	29,714.47
Nett movement of funds	**10,832.06**	**8,673.64**	**-47.08**	**49.61**	**2,155.89**

St John the Bapist Income and Expenditure Account 2025

Income	
Regular Income	
Donation not in Church Service	7606.11
Offerings in Church Service	10132.61
Planned Giving	42929.48
PCC Statutory Fees	2351.00
Gift Aid Reclaim	11290.77
VAT Reclaim	0.00
Legacies	0.00
Other Income	
Fundraising	8453.80
Sales	131.70
Interest	132.07
Lettings	10397.36
Concerts	1446.15
CBF Deposit Fund	0.00
Hospitality In	3789.72
Flower Fund	211.91
Grants	0.00
Organ Fund	1976.91
	100849.59

Expenditure	
Administration	
Bank Charges	349.45
Insurance	2985.63
Licences and Subsriptions	796.09
Telephone	1143.28
Office Running Costs	908.67
Professional Fees	550.00
Buildings	
Grounds Maintenance	0.00
Office Equipment	843.36
Cleaning	432.00
General Repairs	13385.46
Utilities	4177.47
General	
Learning Community	2167.07
Fundraising Costs	809.70
Hospitality	1650.44
Mission	0.00
Service Costs	710.21
Flowers	131.97
Gifts and Donations	0.00
PCC Expenses	0.00
Staff	
Clergy Expenses	2053.35
Salaries & Wages	14080.23
Income Tax and NI	1211.96
Pensions	1582.88
Parish Share	38000.00
Organist	4212.80
Fees	0.00
	92182.02

Reports from various church activities

Occasional Offices

In 2025, we had 6 baptisms, no weddings, 7 funerals in church, 3 funerals at the crematorium, and 4 burials of ashes in the memorial garden. There has been a definite downturn in the number of church weddings in recent years as more people tend to get married at licensed venues rather than in church.
Sharon Chorley

Sacristan Report

Sue Rowley and Jennie Wilson carry out the weekly Sacristan duties. These involve arranging the laundering of the altar cloths and the maintenance of the acolyte and altar candles, ensuring that they are sufficiently filled with oil before every service, both on Sundays and midweek, replacing the wicks when necessary, and re-ordering the candle oil and Communion wafers. The duties also include occasional cleaning of the silverware: candlesticks, the crosses used on both altars during services and the crucifer's cross.
Lenore Clarke also assists with the Vestry duties by laundering the purificators, changing the frontals and cloths for the high altar and the Lady Chapel and caring for the servers' robes, as well as carrying out her other voluntary jobs, including flower arranging, etc.
To commemorate their 60th Wedding Anniversary in 2025, Lenore and Patrick Clarke generously provided a gift of new altar linen to St John's. This was a beautifully embroidered set of purificators, corporals and lavabo cloths to be used during Holy Communion, as well as a lovely new cloth for the credence table.
Many thanks are owed to our dedicated team of servers: Lenore, Patrick, Lois, Fiona and Diane, who have served at our services of Holy Communion throughout the past year since the last Report. Their work is much appreciated.
Sue Rowley and Jennie Wilson

Intercessions

We are presently a small group who lead the intercessions Sunday by Sunday at the 9.30 am service. On behalf of the congregation, we bring the everyday situations of the world into the presence of God.
Judith Dufour

Prayer Ministry

We are a small group who believe in the power of prayer and who are available on most Sundays in the Lady Chapel after the service to listen and pray with those who ask for prayer. It may be for themselves or for friends and family for whom they have a concern. We pray over the names of all those who have been listed on the prayer board. All are welcome, and it is confidential.
Judith Dufour

Church flowers

We have a fairly small band of people who manage to decorate the Church beautifully on special occasions i.e. Easter, Harvest, Christmas, and Weddings. The flowers for these are all paid for with the money donated by members of the congregation. At other times, we use the beautiful silk flowers, which have been donated. We would welcome new people to join us.
Lenore Clarke

Midweek Communion

This ancient service of Holy Communion from the Book of Common Prayer 1662 continues to be said in our church on Thursday morning, continuing a tradition which goes back many years, I believe as far back as the early 1950's. It has only changed slightly in format from those years ago and is still attended by an enthusiastic congregation, much the same as last year, in the region of 20 people. Coffee is served afterwards and many stay and have a chat and catch up with news. We support the Women's refuge in Taunton with gifts and supplies and also, Link Hope a charity which supports families and communities in Eastern Europe with Christmas shoe boxes and financial gifts, this year to those trying to rebuild their lives in Ukraine, after the devastating destruction by you know who! Do come and join us if can, you can be assured of a warm welcome.
Reverend Ian Brierley

Care Home Communion Group

On behalf of St John's, a dedicated and faithful small team visit the Care and Nursing Homes around Wellington each month to lead worship. We hold a Communion service with hymns, and we are always struck by the power of a Christian memory; how a resident without sight can sing a favourite hymn and how a resident unable to remember names and places can recite the Lord's Prayer. If requested, we visit individuals in their rooms to share conversation, and we offer prayers at the end of life. We encourage residents and staff to keep growing in their faith or to find faith for the first time. And our own faith has grown through this ministry as we always leave blessed and our lives enriched by those we worship with. Ministry in care homes is challenging and full of surprises and the unexpected, so do pray for those who exercise this valued ministry on behalf of you all at St John's.

Reverend Canon Stephen Bowen

St John's Churchyard Report

The area in the far right-hand corner of the churchyard was cleared up and tidied during the year, a long and hard job for the volunteers.

The long and very dry summer made life extremely difficult to keep plants alive and looking good in the memorial beds. This was especially hard as there is no access to a water supply for the plants, which struggled at times. The hedge at the rear of the churchyard was cut back and made tidy. It should be noted that the very large conifer at the entrance to the churchyard had branches break off, and it should probably be checked over for any health and safety issues regarding the public using this entrance. Many thanks to the volunteers who work tirelessly during the year to keep the churchyard looking nice and tidy.

Julie Morton

Pastoral Companions

We are currently a group of twelve "Companions", each responsible for a small group, keeping in contact, sending birthday cards and visiting as and when needed. We are in need of two or three volunteers to work with us in order that we can say that everyone is included and no one is forgotten.

Judith Dufour

Concerts and Events

Concerts and Events by organisations hiring the church:

- Choral Evensong sung by In Ecclesia
    - January 12
- Wellington Choral Society
    - March 29
    - November 29
- Amici
    - May 3
- Blackdown Early Music Project
    - May 4
- Wellington Town Council Civic Service
    - July 4
    - October 19
- Blackdown Community Choir
    - July 10
    - December 11
- Somerset Film for Wellington Film Fstival
    - October 3
- Swing from Paris
    - November 15
- Wellington Silver Band
    - December 5
- JW3
    - December 13

- Collegium Singers
    - December 15

Concerts and Events promoted by St John's

- Accordion Band
    - October 12
- Organ Recitals
    - July 26
    - November 1
- Fairs and Coffee Mornings
    - Coffee July 12, August 16, September 6, November 15
    - Fairs February 15, October 25
    - Patronal cream teas June 21

Special Sung Services

- Patronal Festival Evensong sung by In Ecclesia
    - June 22
- Parish Candlelit Carol Service with the Wellington Silver Band
    - December 16
- Service of Nine Lessons and Carols sung by The Popham Voices
    - December 23

Special thanks:
All the Stewards who helped to welcome the audiences
Sue Rackley, Lenore Clarke, Jo Leigh, Andrew Maddocks for Management
Sharon Chorley for Administration
Andrew Maddocks

Hall bookings

St John's hall and church bookings have been ticking along this year, generating a good sum of money for the church. We still have our regular weekly bookings from the local Slimming World Group and the local choir, Blackdown Community Choir. We have also added some new regulars to our bookings with a monthly NHS Armed Forces Outreach Group, a weekly new choir called Wednesday Sings, and a monthly Carers Group. There are also several church groups who use the hall on a regular basis, such as Craft and Chatter, Tea@3 and Warm Spaces. Other local groups use the hall now and then, such as the Wellington Twinning Association or Wellington Choral for their AGM.
Sharon Chorley

Coffee Mornings

We had five fundraising coffee mornings in 2025 in the hall at St John's. We also had a patronal cream tea event and two fairs. There were a number of stalls with different themes, such as gardening, books and puzzles, and Christmas over the year. People donated things, baked cakes, and made craft-themed gifts. Volunteers from the congregation helped to organise the day and man the stalls. All were very well attended by church members and people from the wider community. These events are only successful in raising money for the church due to the hard work of all volunteers involved, so a big thank you to them.
Lenore Clarke

Fairs

In 2025, St John's hosted two fairs - a spring and an autumn fair. Both were well supported, raising over £2200 overall. We even had Malcolm the Magician attend to entertain with balloon modelling and tricks. The dozen independent stall holders were all keen to re-book for the next one as they enjoy the friendly atmosphere as well as making sales from new customers. The fair is also well supported by a group of volunteers who either bake cakes, run stalls or help serve refreshments. Over time, I hope new people can be encouraged to help so that a natural rota evolves, so the responsibilities are shared.
Sue Rackley

Talking Café

The Tuesday morning Talking café continues to go from strength to strength. We regularly have upwards of 25 customers. It has developed into a real community where people come to find friendship and support as well as refreshments and information. Some even find the confidence to join us for church services, which is a real bonus. Scott, one of our regulars, even came to Confirmation this year. We continue to serve "good" coffee, tea, and biscuits. People still bring cakes when it is their birthday or another special occasion. Moyra tinkles the ivories for us on a regular basis - including Happy Birthdays!

The Village Agent gives support and advice on any topic - Jackie has now retired, and for the time being, we have several different Agents joining us – mostly Jan and Gemma. The Spark Café, run by Dave, is continuing to give advice and help to those who do not have access to digital devices or need a little extra help to get online and deal with things such as Blue Badge Applications or the NHS App. He is also a wiz at sorting out technical problems. Nick and Nicky, from the Job Centre, come to us every few weeks. They give advice about employment and benefits. We have also had visits from a health professional to take people's blood pressure and give advice on lifestyle changes that can be made to help keep us healthy. A representative from NHS Digital came to tell us about the new initiative to integrate our health records online to make it easier for different NHS organisations to see our notes.

We are still part of the doctor's social prescribing initiative.

Looking forward to 2026 – after our loss of Asda support last year, Waitrose stepped in to provide our milk and biscuits. Their initiative for this type of help will end as they are restarting their Green Token Scheme in the new year. We are due to be in the first batch of candidates for their Community Support Programme running from January to March.

Finally, Talking Café could not run without the dedication and commitment of its volunteers. Thank you to everyone who has given up their time to make this such a successful, enjoyable, and special time of the week. As always, we are looking for more volunteers. If you feel you would like to join the team, please speak to Sandie or one of the other volunteers.

Sandie and the Talking Café Team.

Tea@3

This was established as we came out of the Covid lockdown to promote the rebuilding of friendships and conversation over tea and cake. It still continues to flourish on the 1st and 3rd Thursday of each month, September to June, in the Hall and is a welcoming space not only for Church members but also for the wider community.

Judith Dufour

Warm Spaces

In November, Lois restarted the winter warm space sessions from 12 pm to 2 pm every Friday, providing a Soup lunch with cake and coffee. Sadly, she was taken seriously ill over the Christmas period and had to take time off to recuperate. The group was no longer able to run due to the lack of a leader and volunteers.

We are hoping Warm Spaces will be back in November 2026.

Sharon Chorley

Craft and Chatter

Craft and Chatter happens on the fourth Thursday of the month, 2.30 pm to 4 pm, in the Church Rooms. We each bring our own craft project to work on and have a chat (mostly chatting – not much craft!) Crafts include knitting, painting, tapestry, diamond art and cross-stitch. We regularly have eight to10 people, our biggest gathering was 17. As with most church events, Craft and Chatter is fuelled by tea, coffee and cake. Thank you, Linda Robinson, for your amazing cake contributions.

Please come and join us – you would be most welcome.

Sandie Simpson

The Women's Refuge

We have continued to support the Refuge throughout this past year. They are extremely grateful for all the donations we have been able to deliver. Donations have come from various other sources, including the Inner Wheel of Wellington and other people decluttering, as well as ourselves.
The need is ever-increasing as ladies find themselves seeking refuge for numerous reasons.
Good quality household items are always needed as they leave the refuge when they are safe and are re-housed. Please continue to give this very important charity your full support. Thank you very much.
Lenore Clarke

Foodbank

The Wellington Foodbank, a satellite of the Trussell Trust, Taunton, Foodbank, continues to operate on Mondays and Thursdays in the URC church hall from 1.0 p.m. to 3.0 p.m..
On average, every week, between about ten and thirty adults and children are fed through the Foodbank in Wellington.
I hope that all members of the congregation will continue to support those in need in our locality by donations at the collecting points in shops in the town, but as the collecting point in St.John's has hardly been in use for over a year, I propose to remove it with immediate effect.
James Bradnock

Bible Reading Notes

Daily Bible Reading Notes are appreciated by several members of our congregation and beyond, and their notes are published three times a year, starting on May 1st.
There is something for everyone, whether it's regular or large print: 'New Daylight', 'Bible Reflections for Older People' or ' Guidelines'.
I have some sample copies, so do see me if you are interested.
Tessa Bradnock

St John's School chaplain

Thank you for all your support and your prayers as the exciting work at school continues. There is more to see on the Pupil Chaplain noticeboard in church.

Pupil Chaplains

- Regular weekly sessions: stories, prayer, Bible activities, preparation for events
- Presenting stories in assembly, e.g. The Tower of Babel and Pentecost
- Acting the stories of Daniel and Jonah for reception class
- Helping with school services in church
- Highlight of the year: serving at the special Pentecost service, including two training sessions with Colin
- Preparing and delivering the annual tea party for the elderly in the church hall
- Preparing and hosting a 'Joy and Hope' day in church for all the younger classes
- New cohort of 8 in September: training with Colin, commissioning at harvest
- Visiting the Old Vicarage to tell and sing the Christmas story, and make Christmas cards with the residents

Reception class and year 1

- Godly Play sessions: creation, Noah, Abraham, the Good Shepherd, Advent

For Years 2,3,4: Organised and led a whole-day 'Easter Experience' in church

For Years 3 and 4: Organised a special afternoon on spirituality and light, held in church, involving volunteers, and including artwork with Fiona

Year 4

- Led a class session on the story of the birth of St John the Baptist
- Led a class session on Holy Week and Easter

Year 5

- Sessions on Easter and the birth of St John the Baptist

Year 6

- Transition sessions using *It's Your Move* booklet
- Visit to Taunton Minster for the leavers' service

General

- Being available to chat on the playground and after school
- Meeting with Colin to review work
- Member of the diocesan pupil chaplain network

Helena Power

Bellringing Report

The bells of St. John's continue to ring on Sundays for the morning service and for special occasions, thanks to my dedicated colleagues drawn from St. John's, Wellington, All Saints, Rockwell Green and St. Peter's at Langford Budville. This arrangement has been operating successfully since the end of covid and we now regularly ring on Sundays at St. John's from 8.45 am until 9.30 am, followed by All Saints from 9.45 am until 10.30 am and then on the first Sunday of the month at St. Peter's from 10.45 am until 11.15 am. It can be a rush at times, but it ensures that all three churches have their bells rung.

In January 2025, the Annual General Meeting for the Taunton Branch of the Bath and Wells Diocesan of Change Ringers was successfully held at St. John's, with ringing before and afterwards by members from all around the Taunton area. Colin officiated at the service, and we all enjoyed a wonderful tea afterwards.

St. John's was also popular in 2025 with visiting ringers. We had a band from North Curry who rang a quarter peal in February, and later in that month, we had a group of ringers from Milverton. The Devon Ringers visited in April, and a team from East Anglia came in June and rang a quarter peal. A different group of Devon ringers came in September to attempt a full peal (3 hours+ of ringing non stop), but unfortunately they failed after about two and three quarter hours, but despite that the standard of ringing during that time was excellent.

We also rang for a wedding in May and rang half muffled for the Remembrance Sunday service in November.

We experienced some problems with the fifth bell, which, due to the high temperatures in the summer, saw the clapper 'stick' so the bell was being rung but with no sound!!! A couple of days had to be spent removing the clapper and carrying out greasing and maintenance before it could once more join the other seven.

We move into 2026 with optimism as we already have two new members learning to ring, and the number of ringers generally available for Sunday ringing is on the increase.

David Grabham

Tone Deanery Synod Report

There were Tone Deanery Synod meetings in February. May and October in 2025.

Change of Area Dean

Preb Helene Stainer stood down after many years of service as Assistant Rural Dean and Area Dean in February. Rev Colin Simpson 'volunteered' to take the role on and was commissioned by the Archbishop of Taunton as part of his Visitation in June.

Major Discussion Topics

February

The new aims and visions for the deanery were outlined in February, which included more time for spirituality in meetings, improved communication and access to education for the laity, treasurers and churchwardens.

Matthew Pinnock and Jenny Holdsworth of the Diocesan Board of Finance gave a presentation to a very well-attended meeting on the new benefice share model that was introduced in 2025. They emphasised the importance of transparency and mutual support within the diocese. Matthew and Jenny answered a wide range of questions about the financial strategy, the role of the National Church and how to deal with the challenges faced by the parishes. They acknowledged the need for ongoing support and communication. (A fuller report of the talk accompanied the minutes of the February meeting).

Members of the Synod were disappointed that some of the guests at the meeting in February didn't respect the meditative worship that took place at the beginning of the service by talking through it. It was felt that while we are opens to others joining the meeting, Deanery Synod reps should make it clear that worship forms part of the meeting and if visitors don't wish to take part, they don't disrupt it for others.

May

We welcomed Dan Wills, Diocese Net Zero Enabler with a talk entitled "Practical ways to Net Zero: Balancing Ambition, Costs, and Conservation"

Concentrating mostly on heating our mostly old buildings, Dan talked engagingly and enthusiastically about the options available (A fuller report accompanied the minutes of the May meeting)

The importance of undertaking safeguarding training was highlighted by the Charles Doble, the Lay Dean. Having done the training with what he described as "a degree of ill grace", he had become a convert to training and he encouraged others to do the training. He was encouraged to note that most people at the meeting had completed their mandatory courses.

October

At his first synod meeting as Area Dean, Rev Colin Simpson shared details of his life as an Accountant in the Heritage sector for 25 years before becoming ordained Deacon in 2008. Wellington and West Buckland is his fourth appointment. Colin is a Benedictine Oblate, which is someone from any Christian background who makes a promise to a monastery to live a spiritual life patterned after the Rule of St. Benedict.

Colin said the Church of England's vision and strategy is to:

"proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ afresh in each generation"

This should encourage us to be a church for the whole nation, which is Jesus centred, simpler and bolder. Colin talked about the Five Marks of Mission, which provide a framework for mission: to proclaim the Good News, teach/nurture believers, respond to human need through service, transform unjust structures, and safeguard creation. Summarised as Tell, Teach, Tend, Transform, and Treasure. Colin emphasised that as a body we need to be a mixed ecology because not everyone likes the same thing.

Colin spoke about the financial challenges we face. The Common Share for our deanery is £427,000 and our current commitment is £326,000. This means we can't afford the six full-time clergy members we currently have. Do we look at reducing to four clergy or do we look at smarter ways to bring money in?

Safeguarding Report

Parish Dashboards

The Parish Dashboard is the tool that the safeguarding officer, Sharon, uses to make sure that St John's is complying with its safeguarding responsibilities. The dashboard is mainly up to date at the moment, with 91% completed. All PCC members have completed the required safeguarding training, which is great. There are still a couple of volunteers who work within St John's groups that need to complete some training, but most are up to date. There are some worksheets that the PCC need to work through together, so a date for a joint PCC meeting with St Mary's will be put in place in order to do this.

The dashboard also has a section which holds details of all volunteer roles and the necessary training and DBS checks needed for each of those roles. Each volunteer is allocated to a role, and we can then see at a glance if anyone needs to renew training or DBS checks. This takes a while to set up, but it will save a lot of work when up and running. Sharon has made a start by putting the details of all volunteers and the training that they have done into this section. As this is quite a large task, Sandie has kindly taken over the job of compiling job roles and descriptions, which will then be approved by Colin, so that each volunteer on the system can be assigned to a role.

Training

As I'm sure many of you are aware, Colin has undertaken a number of in-person training sessions over the last year in order to get PCC members and volunteers up to date with their safeguarding training. As mentioned, all PCC members have completed the necessary training, and just a couple of group volunteers are yet to finish. We will put in some more dates for training in 2026 to get the last few people up to date, plus any new volunteers and PCC members.

Safeguarding Reference Material
Sharon is in the process of creating a safeguarding reference folder to put in the church. This will contain useful information for people to look at if they are worried about themselves or others. The diocesan safeguarding team provide professional advice, as well as support to those who may have suffered abuse or exploitation in a church setting, but it's not always easy for people to access this information from the website without a computer. The folder will contain a variety of reference material, details on who to contact to get help for yourself or someone else, and also how to report a concern. It will also have all of the contact details for the diocesan safeguarding team, your local safeguarding contact and local/national organisations who might be able to help.

Safeguarding Audit
The results of the safeguarding audit of the diocese were published in July this year. The overwhelming outcome was that Bath and Wells have a strong and positive safeguarding culture. Bishop Michael said, "This report is a positive step on our safeguarding journey, one which has been achieved through the hard work of the dedicated safeguarding professionals in our diocesan safeguarding team and, of course, our committed and caring volunteers and safeguarding officers in our churches, as well as our clergy. I would like to thank everyone for all that they have done and continue to do."
There are expected to be some changes and new guidelines over the next few months, due to recommendations made by the audit team, so this is something that we will monitor. One important thing that came from the report is that the diocese as a whole is lacking in sufficient mental health provision, so this is certainly an area that will see new advice forthcoming. We will keep you up to date on any new advice.

Safeguarding continues to be an item on every PCC agenda, where I'll ask if anyone has any concerns about anyone or questions about safeguarding. This makes sure that we continually monitor our safeguarding situation. This is a huge part of caring for everyone who participates in our church, either as members of the congregation, visitors to church, people attending groups or volunteers who help us every day. Thank you to everyone for continuing to help make this possible.

As always, if anyone has any questions or concerns, I'm here to help, so please contact me.
Sharon Chorley, Parish Safeguarding Officer stjohns.wellington@googlemail.com 01823 665254

And finally

*The reports above are from people who have taken leadership roles in our church, but many others do little jobs quietly in the background, so a big **THANK YOU** to all.*