

Forthcoming Events

Bring and Share Benefice Lunch at St Matthew's

Sunday 5th July

PCC Away Day

Autumn

Next PCC Meeting

1st September

Harwell and Chilton

PCC Newsletter

June 2026

Benefice PCC Members and Church Officers

At the Annual Parochial Church Meetings, the following people were elected to serve:

St Matthew's Church Warden: Stephen Manning

All Saints' Church Wardens: Alex Reich and Judith Russell

St Matthew's PCC:

Tony Hughes (Vice Chair), Elizabeth Clarke (Secretary), Nick Clarke (Treasurer), Adrian Bollon (Diocesan Synod Representative), Roger Mawle, and Jane Woolley. Sarah Barrett was subsequently co-opted to serve for one year. They join Rebecca Lewis and Adrian Rance-McGregor who have not yet completed their three years.

All Saints' PCC:

Hazel Benton (Vice Chair), Naomi Gibson (secretary), Stuart Gibson (Treasurer), Liz Morris, John Pigott, and Pat Moseley,

Looking for a new home

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For some time, the Buildings Committee has been wrestling with the problem of where to locate the old clock mechanism.

It was on display in the vestry until 2017, then moved temporarily into the downstairs extension before being found a more satisfactory temporary home behind the east side of the organ.

The mechanism is of considerable interest to the Harwell History Group, who have tried to find a location outside the church e.g. in a local museum. However, it is clear from a visit of the DAC Clock Advisor that we would not get approval for it to leave the church.

We are therefore investigating possible locations such as in the north transept or behind the font. Putting it back in the vestry would be convenient, but does not now look compatible with how the vestry is used at present.

Safeguarding

The protection of children, young people, and adults involved in Church activities is the responsibility of everyone who participates in the life of St. Matthew's Harwell and All Saints' Chilton.

The Churchwardens, along with Parish Safeguarding Officers, have recently undertaken a review of our Safeguarding system, processes and status. We have then benchmarked them against the guidance the Diocese of Oxford has issued in respect of the Safeguarding training an individual performing a specific role in the Church should undertake e.g. PCC member, Preacher and Leader, Individual working with children, young people or vulnerable adults. We have written to all individuals performing specific roles within our churches, asking them to ensure that their safeguarding training is up to date and to undertake the relevant training as soon as possible.

We recognise that the safeguarding bar has been raised by the Church of England in recent years, and therefore there may be gaps in people's training. We are planning to run some group training for some of the more general courses.

Children's and Families Worker

The Benefice held a workshop in April to discuss the potential role and job description of this key position. It was attended by all those involved or experienced in this aspect of our work, and was a very successful morning.

It has now been agreed that we can re-advertise the vacancy, and a steering group is being formed to draw up the job description and person specification, prior to advertising.

Praise in the Park: Fullness of Life

The Committee responsible for the organisation of the Harwell Feast kindly offered the Benefice the use of the Harwell Feast marquee on the afternoon(24th) before the Feast.

It was a very successful afternoon and over 100 people took part in the service which included personal testimonies as well as hymns and prayer.

Our thanks go to Alex Reich and Rebecca Lewis for organising it, to Didcot Baptist Church for the sound system, everyone who produced and served the tea and cakes, and others who helped generally with the event.

Treasurer's Report

The work of the Benefice Fundraising Group in 2024/25 resulted in an increase in our planned giving of some £790/month and some £7,000 of one-off donations. The number of households giving on a regular basis also increased from 48% of those on the electoral roll to 58% currently. While the increase is welcome it still means that there a significant proportion of those on the electoral roll who have not committed to regular giving.

Nick Clarke, the Church Treasurer, reported the following financial position in the period from 1st January 2026 to the 30th April 2026.

Income £ 38,101.00

Expenditure £34,204.00

Income/expenditure + £3,897.00

While the current situation appears healthy, there are some significant items of expenditure which will not arise until the second half of the year, such as insurance and building maintenance items

Benefice Church Services

We are having a six months' trial period of using service booklets supported by hymns on the overhead screens. Deborah estimates that not having to spend time creating weekly service sheets will give her about 1 ½ days extra time each week to spend on other Church Office tasks.

Church Projector

The Appeal for funds to replace the existing projector has so far raised (with gift aid) £2,500. A new projector will cost approximately £3,000. If you haven't given so far could you help to provide the last £500 to get us to the finishing line? It would be much appreciated

PCC Away Day

We are planning to have an Away Day in the Autumn for PCC members, but also open to those who might like to join us. The theme for the day will centre on planning the way forward for our Church over the next 12 to 24 months and setting long and short term goals.