

Saints Alive!

***The parish magazine of
All Saints Church, Kings Heath***



**February
2025**



£1
(suggested donation)

From the vicarage

Dear friends and neighbours,

It was a privilege to preach at the service beginning the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in which we marked the 1,700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea which gave us the Nicene Creed. We heard from John 11. As the momentum of the year grows and differences of many kinds are used to stoke division rather than interest, and as the Church of England seeks healing from its own perilous factionalism, seeking a new archbishop, I thought I would share what I offered to Churches Together in Kings Heath about the gift of difference.

John chapter 11 'Do you believe this?'

This is Jesus' question to his good friend Martha. We are given so much detail about Martha and Mary, hearing more words from them than almost any other followers in the Gospels; witnessing dramatic action in their life and eavesdropping on their family politics at dinner. For the writers to have this material, there must have been much said about them as the good news of Jesus circulated orally before the Gospels we know were written down, especially in the maybe seven decades before John was committed to parchment. Why does he give these sisters and their silent brother a chapter and a half?

We meet them first in Luke 10 where, famously, Mary sits attentively at Jesus' feet while Martha is preoccupied with making dinner. Luke makes clear Jesus has eaten there before. They are already friends. Bethany will be the place he chooses to say goodbye to the disciples. It's his safe place. Luke conveys both their boldness towards Jesus and the friction between sisters as Martha challenges Jesus to correct her sister's lazy behaviour. Mary, meanwhile, might be embarrassingly attentive, except this too is bold. She is in the formal posture of a student learning from the teacher, almost as though she thinks she might train to teach. Is Mary more emotionally demonstrative in her posture? It could be either infatuation, or bold feminism, or a bit of both. Jesus kindly but firmly takes Mary's posture as a way of easing Martha's tense, activist, but no less attention-seeking shoulders.

The next time we meet them is in John 11. Their brother has died and Jesus turns up late for the funeral. This time, it seems, Mary can't bear to meet him. Perhaps, if she is the more obviously passionate sister, she is hurt more acutely than Martha, the practical, busy one. But rather wonderfully, we get to know more of Martha's mind and heart. She goes straight out to Jesus. Perhaps she is able because she can intellectualise the matters of the heart. She challenges him straightaway, saying: 'Lord, if you had been here, Lazarus would not have died.' This is both a firm statement of belief *and* an accusation. Then she and Jesus extensively talk theology. Her strong feelings count no less than Mary's but she is immediately able to engage in theological discussion, keeping her conversation going with Jesus. 'Do you believe this?' he asks and she, clearly with an already developed theology, says: 'Yes,' but keeping it distanced in a future tense fulfilment, 'on the last Day.' She keeps short-term disappointment at bay. She does so again when she says with brutal practicality that the tomb will stink after three days – underlining the accusation again, but also holding her hope in check.

Meanwhile, Mary is at home. After all her attentiveness, Jesus had let her down. But when Martha goes back, 'he wants to see you' is all that is needed to loosen the emotional logjam and let her hurry to him. Demonstrative indeed she is, falling at his feet, not in listening mode this time, but accusing him. 'O Lord [our translations usually say, to show a slightly greater intensity in the Greek than Martha's 'Lord'], 'if you had been here, our brother would not have died.'

It is the combined, differently-patterned faith of Martha and Mary, and their contagious tears, that provoke Jesus, God among us, to weep.

As you know well, the rest of the chapter sees Lazarus rise from the dead and political heat raise around Jesus. Then in chapter 12 the sisters host a thank-you meal for Jesus with their brother at which, talk about demonstrative, Mary anoints Jesus' feet so the perfume filled the house.

So stepping back from this amazing, heart-tugging detail, what do we have? These two sisters are remarkable. They are trusted friends of Jesus. The turnout at their brother's funeral shows they are leading community figures and, despite the oft-articulated danger of association, their commitment to Jesus is public. They both engage thoroughly with his teaching and were remembered by the early Church. Without putting them in boxes, we could say Martha would love a good discussion of the Nicene Creed and Mary would love emotionally articulate worship songs. They are both learned, gifted community figures of faith whom the early Church honoured. More personally, with their different emotional, intellectual character, at different times, each has what is needed to lead the other back to Jesus. Lazarus doesn't say a word.

Hearing from them at the beginning of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity warms the heart and challenges the mind. Here we find, in their home, in Jesus' safe place, friction and eye-rolling between two sisters which he turns into grace. There, and in the public eye at the funeral, they both honour Jesus and challenge him. We, too, are siblings. Of course we will irritate each other. We wonder why the other gets the attention sometimes, especially if we're feeling a bit insecure about our own denomination's identity at any time. We have different emphases in our worship and thinking, just as Mary and Martha do. There'll be eye-rolling, but I like to think by the time of their thank-you meal, as Mary lavishly anointed, Martha still rolled her eyes, but now with knowing affection. They need each other. And Jesus was moved by what he received from both of them. Lazarus didn't say a word, yet there would be no story without him. We don't all make a lot of noise, but all our diverse denominational gifts may be needed one day to lead each other back to Jesus.

Thank you for the different gifts, tastes and insights you each bring to our common life.

David

A reminder that you can sign up for the regular All Saints email newsletter here:

<https://landing.mailerlite.com/webforms/landing/o7a2q4>

ALL SAINTS PLAYERS PRESENT...

Snow

White

Saturday 8 February 2025

Performances at 14:00 and 19:00

All Saints Church, Kings Heath

Tickets: £7 (adult), £5 (children and concessions)

£22 family ticket (2 adults + up to 3 children)

Tickets available in advance from Clare Noakes.

To book tickets for collection at the performance,

please email players@allsaintschurchkh.org

Payment can be made via PayPal –

details will be given on enquiry to the above address!

Pilgrimage of solidarity to Jerusalem and the West Bank

Last November I joined with an organisation called Sabeel for a pilgrimage of solidarity, visiting Palestinian Christians in the Palestinian Occupied Territories. The visit was originally intended to be a conference in Bethlehem, but with Israel's year-long genocidal actions in Gaza, as well as the settler violence being suffered by the Palestinians in the West Bank, the plans were revised, with the time being devoted to visiting different groups, learning about their situations and assuring them of our solidarity.

Sabeel is a Palestinian Liberation Theology group, based in Jerusalem, founded by the Anglican priest Naim Ateek¹. They see a threefold role for themselves:

1. Inclusivity, which in the Palestinian context, means good relationships with Arabs and Jews.
2. Prophecy. As always, the prophets seek for justice for all. There can be no peace without justice.
3. Non-violence. They seek to follow the way of non-violent resistance, as did Jesus.



Above: The River Jordan from the Allenby Bridge.

Below right: The Dead Sea from Jordan.

I am very grateful for the prayers, which were offered by the All Saints congregation on the day our coach crossed the Allenby (or King Hussein) Bridge. This bridge crosses the River Jordan near Jericho, which is the route we took to reach Jerusalem, the same journey Palestinians make when travelling abroad. The airport where we landed was at Amman in Jordan; from there we were taken to the town of Madaba, an amazing place that deserves an article all of its own. From Madaba our coach took us down, down below sea level into the Jordan Valley, through the Jordanian and Israeli checkpoints, then up, up over 2,500 feet to East Jerusalem, our base for the next five days.

During our stay, I had no worries about our safety. We were warmly welcomed by everyone we met, and were able to travel with minimum delays at the checkpoints. Our passports and visas were inspected by the armed Israeli soldiers who boarded our coach at the checkpoints, but we had tourist privileges and were waved through. We experienced nothing of the humiliations regularly suffered by the Palestinians as they try to travel around their own country.



¹ See Naim Stifan Ateek: *Justice and Only Justice*, Orbis Books, 1989.



We had a packed timetable over the four full days of our stay, which included Sederot, Bethlehem, Hebron, Nablus and Ramallah (Ram Allah on the map left²).

Sederot is in Israel, close to the Gaza fence, only an hour's drive from Jerusalem. There we met with two Rabbis for Human Rights, a group Sabeel works with. They spoke about the security fears of the Israelis, and of their own work to build bridges and work for peace with the Arabs of the land. While we were in Sederot, we went up a small incline to a look-out point which gave a view over Gaza.



We were so close, but could go no further with the crossings closed. It was demoralising and distressing, even as we prayed for that place for the suffering people we knew were so nearby.

From Gaza, we went to Bethlehem where we gathered in St Francis' Church for worship. Rev Munther Isaac

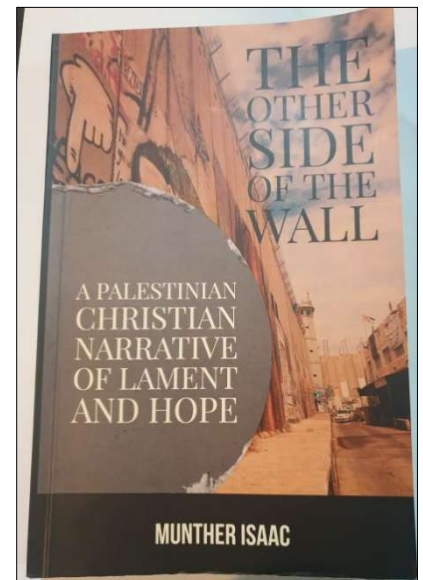


Rev Munther Isaac – his book (right) is available to borrow from David Warbrick.

preached to us on a passage from the Book of Lamentations. Collective, public lament is the honest, authentic prayer for the broken people of Gaza. One day hope might grow out of the lament, but currently the talk is merely of survival. In Arabic they have the word 'sumud', or 'steadfastness'. There is much sumud in Gaza, and in the Palestinians in general, throughout the long wait for the catastrophe of the loss of their homes and land to end.

View over Gaza from Sederot – smoke is visible on the horizon. (Photo by one of our group, Matt Hoh.)

In Hebron, Nablus and Ramallah, we met with a number of different groups, each with their own story to tell. In the south Hebron hills, we visited a small village of Bedouin-heritage families who suffer continual harassment and violence from settlers who have built close up to the village. In Nablus, we visited the Orthodox church on the site of Jacob's Well, and then the Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd, where they gave us a wonderful lunch. In the afternoon, we met with students from the university. For our last day, we were in Ramallah. This was another full day of



² Image credit: By Cavidmammadli – Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=51265382>.



Waltrina Middleton
with our Sabeel
group leader Omar
Haramy.

visits and talks, including a talk from Lulu Nasser, the mother of Layan Nasser, the young Christian who had been in detention without charge since April. These Israeli detention centres are overcrowded and insanitary. Archbishop Justin Welby wrote of Layan’s plight at around the same time, and soon after we returned to our homes we heard that she had been released, a crack of light through all the darkness.

The pilgrimage was concluded with a powerful reflection by Rev Waltrina Middleton, from Chicago, who weaved Psalm 137 into the narrative of our week’s encounters, with the refrain of ‘unmute Gaza’, as seen on posters in Ramallah.

Before too long, I am hoping to host an evening of conversation and Palestinian food in our Café.



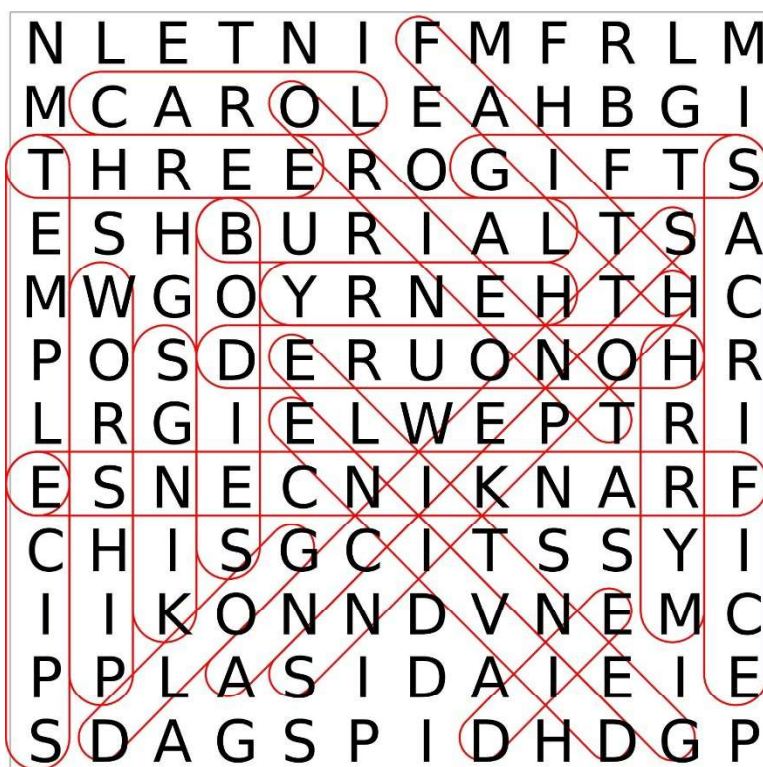
‘Unmute Gaza’ posters.

If you would like to come along, please look out for announcements of the date, which will be soon after the completion of the refurbishment work that is about to take place. In the meantime, I am happy to share and discuss more with anyone interested.

Margaret Healey-Pollett

Wordsearch – solution

We featured a three kings-themed wordsearch in the last magazine – here’s the solution!



Music matters

Carols in the sunshine, surprise jingle bells, mashups and muppets, levy-dew... a look back at the festive season in and around All Saints.

There was a record turnout for our annual carol singing on the Village Square on Christmas Eve – the weather was unusually mild (I even had to take my coat off!) and this helped to ensure that not only did more shoppers than usual stop and listen to a carol or two, but we even had some passers-by who stayed and watched throughout or joined the singers, who came from within our choir, congregation and beyond. Accompanied by Clare's flute, we worked our way through the All Saints carol booklet, joyfully dispatching tunes, descants and four-part harmonies with aplomb (with the basses at the back just about behaving themselves...) before repairing to take advantage of David and Jenny's kind hospitality at the vicarage afterwards. Thanks to the participants, and to Des and Sheila enthusiastically taking charge of the buckets, talking to people and collecting money, we raised just over £215 which has been donated to B30 & South Birmingham Foodbank.



This was set up as B30 Foodbank by the B30 Churches Together network in September 2013 and is currently operating from the Cotteridge Friends Meeting House. It is open two afternoons a week with a group of over a hundred volunteers who help at its warehouse, its supermarket collections, its twice-weekly sessions and at various local events. The Foodbank also has links with over 250 organisations that distribute its vouchers to those who need three days'-worth of crisis food. More information about the Foodbank, including how to donate, volunteer or get a voucher, can be found at <https://b30.foodbank.org.uk/>.

On Christmas Day, instead of an organ voluntary as the clergy processed out at the end of the 10am service, we sang a superb mashup of two somewhat different festive songs, one of which is heard rather less often in church than the other: launching into what at first appeared to be the verse of *Jingle bells*, it was great fun to watch members of the congregation slowly realising that the words being sung to this tune were in fact those of *Hark, the herald-angels sing*. After a whispered 'Jingle bells, jingle bells', the upper voices continued with the words and tune of *Hark, the herald...* against the countermelody of the men's 'Jingle bells, jingle bells, jingle all the way!' – if you weren't there to hear this arrangement (which was sent to Martha Ann by her sister, who clearly has great taste in Christmas music!) then you'll just have to take my word for it that the two songs go together much better than you might think...

This put me in mind of a Facebook page that I've recently discovered, 'Quires and Places where they meme', which during December published a whole series, not all Christmas- or indeed church-related, of hymn texts affectionally set (just about) to incongruous tunes, very much in the spirit of the *I'm Sorry I Haven't a Clue* game, often referred to in this column, 'One Song to the Tune of Another'. These included – and do stop reading/trying these out when you think any semblance of good taste has finally disappeared – *Angels from the realms of glory* set to **Picardy** (*Let all mortal*

flesh keep silence); A great and mighty wonder to **Wir pflügen** (We plough the fields and scatter); Away in a manger to **To God be the glory**; Lo, he comes with clouds descending to Mariah Carey's **All I Want for Christmas is You**; When Santa got stuck up the chimney to **Kingsfold** (I heard the voice of Jesus say); Birmingham boy Roy Wood's *I Wish It Could Be Christmas Everyday* to **Cranham** (In the bleak mid-winter); the *Coventry Carol* to **Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious**; *Sleigh Ride* to **Passion Chorale** (O sacred head, surrounded); *O come, O come, (Em)manuel* to the theme tune from **Fawley Towers**... My personal favourite was probably *It came upon the midnight clear* to **The Muppet Show Theme**, while my mum, who dislikes both *O holy night* and **Londonderry Air** intensely, was pleased to learn that those two birds could be killed with one stone by singing the former's words to the latter's tune! Keep your ears peeled for any of these making an appearance at All Saints in 2025... If any of this has amused you then I would recommend that checking out the Quires and Places website (<https://quiresandplaces.com/>), which has links to its social media pages.

Anyway, moving swiftly on... those present for the 10am Epiphany service on Sunday 5 January will have heard the choir sing Benjamin Britten's *A new year carol*, which usually makes an appearance at All Saints early in (unsurprisingly) the new year, and might have caught sound of the word 'levy-dew' sung repeatedly in its refrain. Each year when practising this carol before the service, the choir collectively wonders about the meaning of 'levy-dew' and then forgets to look up anything about it before it comes up again, so thanks to Liz Haskins for getting ahead of the game this time and forwarding us an article about the song from, of all unlikely sources for hymn research, the *Financial Times* – although we can't expect too many answers as David Cheal begins his piece by stating, as we have on many occasions previously: 'As with many carols that are sung around Christmas and new year, its origins and meaning were – and remain – a mystery.' The verses Britten uses were published in Walter de la Mare's book of collected children's poems, *Tom Tiddler's Ground*, in 1931; the lyric, also known simply as 'Levy-Dew', dates back to at least 1850 and is (as we collectively suspected) Welsh in origin. It refers to 'a ceremony that used to be performed in parts of Wales. Very early in the morning on New Year's Day, children and youngsters would gather evergreen foliage, draw fresh water from the well, and go from house to house sprinkling water over the inhabitants or on their doors, sometimes in return for a few coins. As they did this, they would sing "Levy-Dew".'

Cheal continues to say that 'there are competing theories as to the meaning of "levy-dew" ... Pre-Christian mythology and Christian imagery are in balance here.' (These theories include corruptions of French, Welsh and English phrases referring to God, the host at Holy Communion, the Virgin Mary and even the Roman goddess Aurora – for more on these, and on *A new year carol* as a whole, the full *FT* article can be found at <https://shorturl.at/HM6p5>). Perhaps more interestingly, however, he concludes: 'Does it matter that when choirs and carollers sing "Levy-Dew" (or even "Residue") they don't really know what they're singing about? Probably not. The words themselves form a pretty sound. And the unknown or murky origins of many Christmas carols form no barrier to their being sung: *Corpus Christi Carol* [a version of which, *Down in yon forest* arranged by Nicholas Maw, we sang in the 2023 carol service] with its Arthurian imagery, *The holly and the ivy* with its pagan resonances. Indeed, the mysteriousness of "Levy-Dew" only adds to its appeal.'

The setting comprises a simple unison melody, made up of short alternately rising and falling phrases in 3/4 time, over a piano accompaniment that I can't believe wasn't originally intended, as with the one for the Britten's masterful *A Ceremony of Carols* (never mind *In the bleak mid-winter* to the **Hawaii Five-0** theme, Christmas in the Noakes household only really starts when Clare and I are wrapping presents to our annual listening of this piece and the composer's cantata *St Nicolas*), to be played on the harp. There isn't as much music by Britten sung in church as by some of his

contemporaries, but his vocal and choral compositions are always interesting and worth exploring if you haven't done so – and listen out again for *A new year carol* with its levy-dews in early 2026!

As ever at this time of year, finally we would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who contributed to and supported music at All Saints, across the Christmas period and throughout 2024 (also making a quick mention here of the three primary school-aged instrumentalists who joined Martha Ann's village band in the children's carol service on Christmas Eve for the first time, which was lovely to see). Suggestions for new musical ideas, hymns and songs are encouraged; and singers and instrumentalists are always welcome to join us, whether regularly or occasionally, so do get in touch or come along one Sunday morning and we will be very pleased to see you.

Ben Noakes
Music Co-ordinator

The ASYP Big Christmas Word Quiz 2024

Lindsey & Ted Hammond and Liz Haskins send the following message, with their thanks and best wishes.

We would like to thank the All Saints community for their wonderful support with the sixth version of this annual fundraising venture.

We are delighted to report that the Word Quiz 2024 has to date raised well over £1,000 for the All Saints Youth Project, which is by some way a record total. From conversations over the Christmas period we know that many of you engaged with the quiz.

It was designed as fun quiz, but the main purpose was to provide the community with an additional opportunity to support the wonderful work of, and raise funds for, the Project. We are confident that both aims were realised and we plan to run a seventh quiz for Christmas 2025!

There were many more submitted entries this year than ever before, with 35 by the deadline and only 10 coming from the All Saints community. This is important because we are effectively spreading news of the great work of the Project to a wider audience. All the submitted entries successfully answered at least 90% of the questions and this might help to explain the increased rate of participation.

The winners this year were:

First prize: Pat & Pete Bailey

Second prize: Ceri Knott

Lucky runners-up:

David Simon, Debbie Ducille and Clive Whittaker

If you enjoyed the quiz but have not yet seen the answers, these are available at www.allsaintsyouthproject.org.uk, or email tedhammond74@gmail.com. Donations can of course still be made via the website.

Friday Evenings in the Café

Every Friday evening, between 7 – 9, we are treated to musical entertainment, from local bands, in the Café. Our growing number of musicians include singers and instrumentalists who offer us an assortment of folk, rock'n'roll, blues, both their own compositions, and covers. On the first Friday of the month, Brumside Radio hosts an open mic evening, then on the other Fridays the bands are rotated. If there is a fifth Friday in the month, it is given over to our blues duo.



Look out for the monthly lists in *Outlook* and *Saints Alive!* (see boxes below for the line-ups for February and March). There are also announcements on Brumside Radio:

<https://brumsideradio.com/>

All welcome! The bar is open for drinks and light refreshments. There is a box for donations towards the cost of hiring the Café.

Any musicians who would like a performance slot, email allsaintscommunitycatering@gmail.com or come and see the bar staff any Friday evening.

All Saints Café: Keeping music live



Fridays in February

7th Brumside Radio Open Mic

14th The Café Band

21st Voices

28th Slow Train

Fridays in March

7th Brumside Radio Open Mic

14th Mad Moll

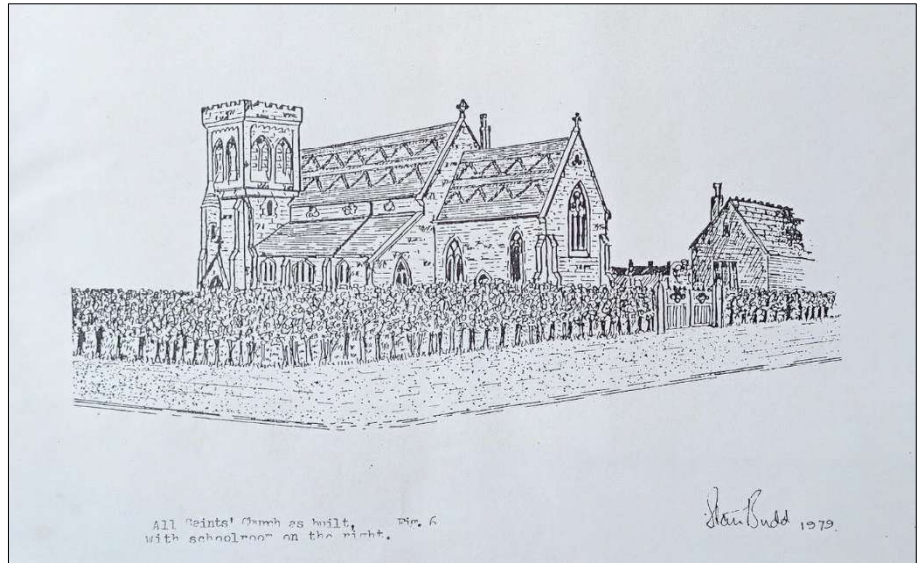
21st Strings and Things

28th Café Band

From the archives: The vision continues

As the ambitious extension to the All Saints Youth Project and The Robin Centre reach completion we may reflect on how gratified the 'founders' of All Saints Church would be to see their mission continuing to grow after 165 years.

Our archives chronicle the steady development of All Saints from its foundation until the present day. The need for a new church to serve the growing population of the 'quiet and pretty little village of Kings Heath' was recognised in 1857 and three years later the church was consecrated on 26 July 1860.



Above: All Saints Church in 1860.

(Signed Stan Budd 1979, the typed caption reads: 'All Saints Church as built, with schoolroom on the right.')

The determination and vision of those early founders, coupled with the support of generous benefactors and a committed congregation, has been continually reflected throughout the history of All Saints. The archives evidence this through minute books, parish magazines, newspaper articles, photographs and previous research.

Due to financial constraints, the original church was built with only one aisle and without a spire but was designed so both could be added in the future. The Misses Anderton of 'Moseley Wake Green' duly funded the spire. The north aisle and two vestries and an organ chamber were added in 1882.



All Saints Church in 1875.

Thus the building expanded with the population and by 1899 its capacity had more than doubled from the original 430 to 907 people. The first vicarage was built on-site in 1870 and the church and its adjacent buildings became the established heart of Kings Heath and have remained so for 165 years.

With the rhythm of life disrupted by wars there was little further building in the early 20th century, although necessary restoration work on wood, stonework and tiles was now ongoing.

In 1948 it was decided to lay flat the headstones in the churchyard. The churchyard was already closed to further burials and the scheme would enable easier maintenance and also a better appearance of the church grounds. The inevitable controversy the scheme aroused is clearly illustrated by newspaper cuttings and other documents in the archives. Current keyboard warriors would have had a field day!

In hindsight we look back and see what a visionary move this was, effectively clearing space for the creation of the Square, removing physical barriers and allowing All Saints to fully embrace its community.



All Saints Church before the Village Square.

During the next three decades significant restoration work to the fabric of the church was essential and resources had to be prioritised. Repairs to the old parish hall, where Bonmarché now stands, became prohibitive and a new parish hall was built and opened in 1969. This building, now refurbished and occupied by CircusMASH, evidenced the next stage of the vision which has driven the development of All Saints.

The lofty ceiling of the main hall happily accommodated the popular badminton club and now supports ropes and trapezes. The new venue had three rooms plus a kitchen available for hire and was well used by the community for functions, parties, sports, clubs and even services when the church roof was being repaired. The church Lunch Club met here every Wednesday, important outreach for dozens of regular attendees.

However, there was a desire to further extend the support that All Saints offers the community and this spawned the All Saints Development Project in 1996. The subsequent Statement of Values prompted the Reordering Conference in 1997 and marked the start of the next expansion which has finally been completed.

The outcome of the Conference was a hugely ambitious and visionary plan to develop the church and its surroundings 'to serve more fully the purposes laid down in our Statement of Values'. Opposition, scepticism, funding issues, planning delays and many other difficulties have all been overcome. The amount of time, effort, passion and relentless determination that has been invested in what we now see for ourselves as a reality cannot be underestimated.

The 21st-century mission 'To create a Centre for Healthy Living and Spiritual Welfare at the heart of Kings Heath' has been achieved.

How proud our forefathers would be. What next?

Marion Wilson and Vivien Thickett

Accessing and paying for the magazine

The *Saints Alive!* magazine is available in digital form on the All Saints website at <https://allsaintschurchkh.org/about-us/publications/>, with hard copies available to pick up from the back of church each month. The suggested donation for each issue is £1, but cost should not be a barrier to anyone in the church reading the magazine in either online or printed form. Cash donations can continue to be made via the slot at the back of church; alternatively a standing order can be set up to pay in advance for a year's-worth (10 issues) of the magazine – please see the form below – or a cheque made payable to All Saints Kings Heath PCC can be sent to the Parish Office (address is on the back page). The form gives the individual the ability for their payment to go towards one of three areas – please select the General Purpose Fund (GPF) and delete the other two. The church's Charity Commission Number is 1145723. Finally, if you or someone you know would like a copy of the magazine posting out each month then please contact us as below to arrange this.

Ben & Clare Noakes
Editors

magazine@allsaintschurchkh.org
07967 730156 / 07929 593097

STANDING ORDER MANDATE AND BANK PAYMENT INFORMATION	
<i>(Please detach and send to your bank) or use for Internet Banking Payments</i>	
To:	The Manager
Address:	_____

Postcode:	_____
Please pay to	HSBC PLC, Kings Heath Birmingham Branch
	Sort Code: 40-11-15
For the credit of:	
The PCC of Kings Heath Parish All Saints Church	Account Number: 71801163
the sum of £ _____	First payment on _____ / _____ /20
and monthly / weekly thereafter on the same date until cancelled by me, or on.....	
Reference:	G.P.F. V.D.F. M Garden Magazine <i>please delete the ones that do not apply</i>
<i>Please cancel any previous mandates to this beneficiary on this account number.</i>	
Name:	_____
My Sort Code:	_____ My Account Number: _____
Signature:	_____ Date: _____

If you bank online, you will be able to use the details below to set up a standing order:

Or you can scan this QR code to donate to the church:

Name: The Parochial Church Council of All Saints Church
Account no: 71801163
Reference: GPF (magazine)
Sort code: 40-11-15



If you have any problems or questions about setting this up, or the church's finances in general, please contact Steve Brittle, Treasurer on 01905 772171 or zena_steveb@btinternet.com.

Friendship meals

This term we have met in two friendship meals; small groups of people meeting together for a meal. One group went to the Red Lion (see photo) and the other group met for a bring and share meal in

one of their houses. Both reported great conversations.

If you would like to be added to the list please let Rosalyn know.

Contact details are shared with consent and the group chooses where and when to meet.

If money is an issue please have a quiet word with David as this will not be a barrier to taking part.

If you are interested please chat to

Rosalyn or email her c/o parishoffice@allsaintschurchkh.org and let her know the contact information you are happy to share.



Why not get involved...?

We are always pleased to receive contributions for the magazine – including reports and reflections, reviews and recommendations, *Getting to know you* interviews (questions in the November 2024 issue!) and hearing about activity across the church campus and beyond.

This is *your* magazine – the broader the range of contributors and of topics covered, the more interesting it will be!

If you have any comments, suggestions, ideas for articles or would like to submit something for inclusion in a future issue, please contact **Ben & Clare Noakes, Editors:**

E: magazine@allsaintschurchkh.org

T: 07967 730156 / 07929 593097

From the PCC

Since the last edition of *Saints Alive!* there has been one Standing Committee meeting on 10 December 2024 and one PCC meeting on 21 January 2025. The following is a résumé of the salient points in the meetings which readers may find of interest:

Finance:

Income and expenditure: In the PCC meeting, being the later of the two meetings, our treasurer, Steve Brittle, reported that expenditure to the end of 2024 was circa £151.7K; however income for 2024 was slightly less at circa £148.2K, giving a deficit of about just over £3.5K.

He said that the expenditure did however include an amount donated to good causes. Unfortunately, this has had to be reduced to £5K compared with the amount of £9K donated in 2023 due to the church's financial situation at the end of 2024. Nevertheless, the treasurer added that he had received a letter of thanks from the Children's Society, one of the good causes to which a donation is given.

The treasurer said that he was happy that the actual amounts for most items compared favourably with the amounts predicted in the budget for 2024, although regular giving was circa £7K less than predicted (including tax refunds) which was impacting on the final account amount for the year.

There had been one generous donation of £1,000 from a member of the congregation specifically to be used for the ongoing cleaning of the church.

The Crafters have also made a generous donation for the purchase of a new vacuum cleaner for the church.

The treasurer said that he was still receiving money from a generous donor in Canada towards Lunch Club and the Memorial Garden.

Balance sheet: The treasurer was pleased to report that investments were currently very healthy with a 'pot' of £27.5K having a market value of £52.7K.

There was still a significant amount in the Memorial Garden fund although Don Stacey, who leads the small team looking after the garden, has recently been refunded some money for his expenditure on the Memorial Garden.

Overall net worth: The treasurer reported that overall, at this time, the church balance net worth was circa £203K, but as reported previously, did include the as yet unpaid long-term loan of circa £170K to the Development Company with no specific repayment date.

Regular giving: The treasurer reported that the average monthly giving for the last 12 months compared with the average for the previous 12 months was significantly lower at the end of the year at only about £58 higher, where earlier in the year it had been as much as £600 more. He said that some of the larger donations had stopped recently which was having a marked impact on the average. It was now evident that a campaign was required to encourage the congregation to reconsider their current giving to the church which he would initiate shortly.

Common Fund: David, our vicar, presented the meeting with a letter that he had received from the Bishop of Birmingham, The Right Reverend Dr Michael Volland, giving an explanation of proposed new arrangements with respect to the amount to be paid into the Common Fund by each of the churches in the diocese, and specifically All Saints, to cover diocesan expenditure.

David explained that the Bishop's Council is changing the method by which the amount of the Common Fund to be paid by each church is determined. This is currently being developed but in the interim for 2025 the Bishop's Council is basing the amount on its estimate for 2025 of the anticipated cost of an incumbent (vicar), and any support such as a curate, the cost of training and developing future clergy and parish support infrastructure such as accommodation for an incumbent. For All Saints this has been estimated at circa £85K. David added that the costs allocated to this for each church irrespective of their location, whether in a poor or a well-off area, were the same across the diocese.

However, the Bishop's Council recognises that parishes may not have the means to pay the amount allocated to them and is allowing an aspect of 'free will' to PCCs to determine their contribution to the Fund as a balance between their mission and ministry and their operating costs.

The treasurer advised that the Common Fund contribution for 2024 had been £75.6K, or £6.3K per month split evenly across the year. He said that this had been paid in full and was actually more than the diocese had requested, to provide additional money to support less well-off parishes. The new amount determined by the Bishop's Council represented a significant increase of some £9.4K to be spread over the year, or £783 per month extra.

In view of the current state of the church finances, he said he would make a small increase to the next payment in February and this was agreed by the meeting. It was also agreed that consideration would be given to 'ramping up' the amount per month throughout the year depending on how the church's financial situation sits at the time in conjunction with the ongoing mission and ministry of the church and operating costs and bearing in mind the amount suggested by the Bishop's Council.

Christmas charities: The treasurer provided a summary of the amounts given by the congregation during the Christmas service to be allocated to the three chosen charities, viz: Acacia Family Support, Practical Action and the Disasters Emergency Committee. This had totalled a net amount of circa £1,125 to be split evenly between the charities (£375 each).

Blue Envelopes: For future reference, the Blue Envelope scheme is to be discontinued this coming April after many years, as few people use the scheme now. Those currently using the scheme have already been advised and there appear to be no issues with this.

Safeguarding:

Safeguarding co-ordinator: David said that our safeguarding co-ordinator, Eira Jones, has decided to stand down from undertaking this role due to family circumstances. Eira was thanked very much for her contribution to this important work over the past year or so.

David said that he had someone in mind to ask to take over from Eira, but in the meantime he would be holding the dedicated safeguarding mobile phone should anyone wish to raise an issue. It was generally considered that the replacement for Eira should be a member of the church and 'visible'.

Parish Dashboard: This is a diocesan means of monitoring the status of safeguarding in individual parishes in terms of, for example, training. It is a live website-based arrangement and continuously requires updating.

Safeguarding Action Plan: This is obtained from the diocese website and gives a report on the status of safeguarding matters in the church from the Parish Dashboard. The Action Plan is derived from the Parish Dashboard so updating is done to the Dashboard which automatically feeds into the Action Plan. This was reviewed in the meeting with a view that any outstanding matters would be resolved as soon as possible.

Training for leaders etc: This was discussed in the meeting and relates to the extent to which safeguarding training and DBS checks should take place for leaders and helpers who are in the public eye at, for instance, at the Iona Service, and the new servers at the 10am service. This is currently being address and the Dashboard updated as appropriate.

Safeguarding All Age service: David is planning to have safeguarding as the main theme in one of the All Age Worship services on the first Sunday of the month.

Incidents: No incidents have been reported since the last meeting.

Churchwarden's report:

Christmas services: Although it was gratifying to see so many people attending the Christmas services, Vivien Thickett, our churchwarden, raised concern at the large number of people who attended the services, with many standing, particularly at the Carols by Candlelight Service, which was problematic particularly from a safety point of view.

Methods of managing this large number of people in future were discussed included changing the layout of chairs, changing where the singers gather, possibly an overspill with a screen in the hall, ticket-only access, eliminating giving candles to the congregation, longer candles that safely last the length of the service, ensuring all fire exits are open and easily accessible, ensuring there is adequate space for wheelchair users and parking children's pushchairs in another room to make more space in the church. The matter would be revisited nearer the time for 2025 at the September PCC meeting.

Future warden(s): Vivien said that she would be standing down from being churchwarden at the next APCM (Annual Parochial Church Meeting).

Vivien had recently convened a meeting of former churchwardens where a plan was developed to encouraging people to come forward as new wardens, and also deputy wardens and more sidespersons. It was clear from the meeting that the duties of a churchwarden are much diminished compared with what they used to be. Details to be announced shortly.

Vivien said that she would be happy to assist new churchwardens into the role and the group of former wardens currently assisting Vivien would remain in place for as long as necessary, again to reduce the workload of new wardens.

Dogs in church: Vivien raised a concern regarding recent occurrences of dogs being brought into church. This is not only with respect to safeguarding, particularly small children, but people with a fear of dogs, phobias and allergic reactions to dogs.

After discussion, it was agreed that only registered 'assistance dogs' should be allowed into church. Other dogs would not be permitted.

Church inventory: This is a list of all the moveable items in the church and is checked annually to enable a report to be given to the diocese. This is due to be done ready for the APCM.

Cleaning church: Vivien is proposing to make the cleaning and polishing of the church to be more structured. She is currently drawing up a list of tasks to cover different areas of the church with a frequency with a view to setting this up shortly. Members of the congregation will be invited to 'adopt an area' on a rota basis with a view that it will be managed so that all areas will be covered in rotation. More detail to be forthcoming in due course.

Deanery Synod report/Oversight: A number of All Saints people attended a meeting of the Oversight Group and reported on the meeting. The report highlighted that there was a good turnout from each of the churches in the Group. It was an interesting day and it proved a useful starting point for attendees to get to know each other; also, it enabled a start to be made of thinking about how the Group might keep in touch and help each other in the future.

Report on the new development:

Development completion: Sarah Wilson, chair of the All Saints Community Development Company (ASCDC), was pleased to be able to report that the new works are almost completed, with anticipated completion by the end of January. The costs had come in below budget. The Robin Centre was scheduled to be moved into its new premises on Monday 27 January with reopening on the 29th, and the Youth Project moving on 27 January.

Facilities manager: ASCDC is currently advertising for a facilities manager to manage the whole site and Dave Friday, who currently looks after the site, will be retained for dealing with day-to-day matters on the site.

Walkthrough: David, announced that a 'walkthrough' of the new development is planned for after the All Age service on 2 February and the congregation will be invited. David said that it was likely that many of the congregation are not aware of what has been going on with the Centre and this would give them a better understanding. He hopes that it would encourage more newcomers to the church to get involved in helping at the Centre. Tony Price, who managed the servers for many years and has just retired from this, and who had had a lot to do with the original proposals for the development at the outset as treasurer, would be invited to attend and also to celebrate his managing the servers for so many years.

Village Square car parking: Concern was raised regarding the amount of car parking that has been taking place on the Village Square. As soon as the works are completed the removable bollards will be reinstated at the entrance off Vicarage Road to stop traffic entering the Square and any traffic movement on the Square controlled to a minimum for essential activities such as weddings and funerals. Any damage that has occurred to the Square as a result of the traffic is to be attended to under the present development contract.

Bleed kit: Vivien advised that two 'bleed kits', to assist in the event of a knife attack, have been obtained: one is in the church kitchen and one is with the Youth Project.

Reordering: David has prepared an outline proposal to enable a scheme to be drawn up for the renewal and reordering of the interior of the church for worship, arts and community activities, achieving flexibility, accessibility, aesthetic coherence and environmental sustainability.

It is proposed that the scheme will include recommendations for carbon neutral heating; lighting; sound, projection and broadcast facilities; a dais and staging; furnishing for congregation and liturgy; storage; glazed south porch entrance; and renovation of the north porch entrance.

A group of appropriate people will be formed to consult with the congregation, current and potential hirers and community users to gather aspirations, ideas and needs. The group will research possible sources of funding for reordering.

Options for the sequence in which the works would be undertaken will be drawn up, including possible phases allowing for work to be commissioned as funds are raised.

The group would work with the churchwarden(s) and diocese to make the necessary faculty applications.

Energy and net zero audit: The diocese has recently arranged for a net zero audit of the church which has been undertaken. Following the issue of a report on the audit which identified recommendations for improving the 'green credential' of the church, a meeting has been held with the net zero carbon project manager from the diocese at which the improvements identified were discussed and a schedule drawn up of when these can practically be undertaken. Many of the recommended improvements can be incorporated in the proposals for the reordering, although some can be done sooner. The diocese has confirmed that grant aid is available for these types of improvements.

First aid appointed person: Diocesan guidance has been received suggesting that it is recommended that a specific person is allocated to first aid in the church; although it applies more to employed people it could apply to anyone in principle.

Consideration has been given to this in meetings, but the practicalities of having a trained person available at every church event is considered an impossibility.

It has been decided that for the time being, making sure that the first aid box is kept up to date, and the fact that there is a defibrillator available on the site, is sufficient for the current situation. The first aid kit is to be managed by the churchwarden.

Lunch Club: David explained that Lunch Club is currently in stasis but taking place once per month and there has been no change since the last meeting. Liz, who runs the club, is continuing to manage it in the interim.

Palm Sunday service: Concern has been expressed by a number of members about health and safety at the last Palm Sunday service in March 2024. This was regarding trip hazards where palm branches and coloured fabric had been laid down on the church path for people to walk on to simulate the Bible story where Jesus rides on a donkey into Jerusalem. It clearly presented a trip hazard,

particularly for people using walking sticks, and difficulties for wheelchair users. Also, there was concern regarding the length of time spent outside at the beginning of the service in very cold conditions. David agreed to review the Palm Sunday service format of the service this year in view of these issues.

All Age Worship services: A question was raised as to whether it is time to rethink the All Age services currently held on the first Sunday of the month. It appears to have lost the 'all age' element, with mostly the same adult and young people coming that would come to a 'normal' service. The matter was not discussed in detail but was raised as an observation to be considered in planning future Sunday services.

Children in services: A point was raised in the meeting concerning our younger members of church who in the past used to start their worship with the congregation at the beginning of the 10am service, get their lanterns, go to their worship and then rejoin the congregation in the church later. Although the present arrangement gives them more time for their worship activities, it appears that the congregation has totally lost contact with this very important section of our church. The matter was not discussed in detail but it was agreed that it was a loss and David said that it was a matter currently being considered by the Ministry Team in co-ordination with Grace Storey, the children's worship co-ordinator.

Votive candle stand moved: For future reference, readers should note that the votive candle stand has now been moved from near the children's area in the south aisle which was considered a potential hazard to children.

Future meetings: The following is the schedule for APCM, Standing Committee and PCC meetings for the next year:

APCM: Although usually held two weeks after Easter Sunday (which this year is on 20 April), it is currently proposed to move the APCM to 11 May as the new Centre development opening is scheduled for 4 May.

Standing Committee meetings: 18 February, 8 April, 17 June, 21 October, 9 December 2025.

PCC meetings: 18 March, 20 May, 15 July, 16 September, 18 November 2025; 20 January 2026.
2026: 20 Jan

Tony Cocks
PCC Secretary

From the registers



We remember:

Reuben Higgins, whose funeral took place at All Saints on 10 December

David Shephard, whose funeral took place

at Lodge Hill Crematorium on 16 December

Adrian Koslowski, whose funeral took place at All Saints on 28 January

Who's Who

Worship (for clergy see back page)

Children's Worship Co-ordinator	Grace Storey	07813 322697
Youth Group (year 7 upwards)	Jenny Warbrick	0121 444 0260
Music Co-ordinators	Ben & Clare Noakes	07967 730156 07929 593097

Church upkeep

Vergers	Liz Haskins	c/o 0121 444 0760
	Paul Smart	c/o 0121 444 0760
Sacristan	Bernice Mattis	c/o 0121 444 0760
Altar Linen	Wendy Ross	0121 444 1423
Head Server	Tony Price	01564 824420
Electoral Roll Officer	Tony Cocks	0121 441 2945
Parish Magazine	Ben & Clare Noakes	07967 730156 07929 593097

Finance team

Treasurer	Steve Brittle	01905 772171
Expenditure Officer	Vacant	
Income Officer	Ted Hammond	c/o 0121 444 0760
Insurance & Investments	Tony Cocks	0121 441 2945
Gift Aid	Philip & Martha Ann Brookes	0121 444 5655
Envelope Giving Scheme	Martha Ann Brookes	0121 444 5655

Groups, clubs and organisations

All Saints Ramblers	Des Workman	0121 443 5292
	Christine Powell	
Badminton Club	Des Workman	0121 443 5292
	Steve Brittle	01905 772171
Bible Reading Fellowship	Des Workman	0121 443 5292
Lunch Club	Elizabeth Turner	0121 604 6086
Meditation Group	Daniel Wilson	0121 449 9869
Safeguarding & Child Protection	Eira Jones	c/o 0121 444 0760
Traidcraft	Gill Parkin	0121 604 6127

Planned giving: All are invited to join the planned giving scheme, contributing by Direct Debit (Parish Giving Scheme), Standing Order or Weekly Envelope. Taxpayers – please sign a Gift Aid declaration for reclaiming of tax and use of payroll giving if possible. Contact the Finance Team for further information. The church's Charity Commission Number is 1145723.

Parish Office: For enquiries about baptisms, baby naming services, banns and marriages, please contact the Parish Office: 9:30am-3pm Monday-Friday or via parishoffice@allsaintschurchkh.org.

Ministry to the sick: Visiting the sick at home or in hospital – please inform the Ministry Team of anyone who is sick. The Blessed Sacrament is reserved and oil is kept for ministry to the sick.

Ministry of healing: Laying-on of hands and anointing – last Saturday in the month at 9:15am as part of Morning Prayer, occasional Sunday evenings (as announced), and at home or in hospital as requested.

Communion of the sick: At home or in hospital, as requested, communion is taken, monthly, to the long-term sick or housebound.

Other ministries: For blessing of homes, celebrations of anniversaries, thanksgiving after childbirth, confession and counsel, please contact the Ministry Team.

Parochial Church Council (PCC)

Officers	Lay Vice Chair Martha Ann Brookes 0121 444 5655	Secretary Tony Cocks 0121 441 2945	Treasurer Steve Brittle 01905 772171
Members	Jim Andrew Margaret Andrew Sarah Baker Philip Brookes Tim Cuthbertson	Roger Drew Margaret Healey-Pollett (Reader) Tariro Mukoja (Assistant Curate) Brian Miles David Warbrick (Vicar)	Claire Wesley (Reader) Daniel Wilson Sarah Wilson Des Workman Sheila Workman

All Saints Community Development Company (ASCDC)

Chair	Sarah Wilson	c/o 0121 444 0760	office@allsaints-cdc.co.uk
Projects Co-ordinator	Andy Savage	c/o 0121 444 0760	andy@allsaints-cdc.co.uk
Facilities Manager	Dave Priday	07732 137772	david@allsaints-cdc.co.uk
Administrator	Angela McDermott	0121 444 0760	angela@allsaints-cdc.co.uk
Hall & Room Bookings	Angela McDermott	0121 444 0760	angela@allsaints-cdc.co.uk

All Saints Community Projects (ASCP)

Chair	Mary Miles	0121 449 0851
All Saints Youth Project	Vicki Willinger	0121 443 1842

The Robin Centre for Older People

Centre Manager	Paula McGrath	0121 444 8111
----------------	---------------	---------------

Ministry Team

Vicar	David Warbrick	4 Vicarage Road, 0121 444 0260
Assistant Curate	Tariro Mukoja	07305 523619
Churchwardens	Vivien Thickett (interim)	c/o 0121 444 0760
	Vacant	
Licensed Readers	Margaret Healey-Pollett	c/o 0121 444 0760
	Claire Wesley	0121 444 2778
Reader Emeritus	John Parkin	0121 604 6127
Pastoral Care Team	Juliet Bick, Becky Frall, Margaret Healey-Pollett, Tariro Mukoja, Wendy Ross, David Warbrick, Jenny Warbrick, Des Workman	c/o 0121 444 0260
Safeguarding Co-ordinator	Eira Jones	safeguarding@allsaintschurchkh.org 07497 781681
Prayer Circle	(for confidential prayer requests)	parishoffice@allsaintschurchkh.org 0121 444 0260

Worship

We have reopened for our Sunday services (said at 8am, sung at 10am and an evening service at 6:30pm), and 11:30am Wednesday service.

We will continue to provide an online order of service via the website and newsletter for those at home.

Up-to-date information can be found at www.allsaintschurchkh.org and we look forward to seeing you again soon.

All Saints Church, Kings Heath

2 Vicarage Road, Kings Heath, Birmingham B14 7RA

Administrator: Angela McDermott

Parish Office: 0121 444 0760

parishoffice@allsaintschurchkh.org

www.allsaintschurchkh.org



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND