

**Savernake Team Ministry: St Katharine's Church, Savernake Forest**  
**Annual Report of the Parochial Church Council for May 2021 – April 2022**

**GOVERNANCE**

*Incumbent (ex-officio member of the Parochial Church Council):*

The Reverend Michael McHugh, Savernake Team Rector (PCC Chairperson)

*Churchwarden(s) (ex officio member(s) of the PCC):* None appointed

*Deanery Synod representative (ex-officio members of the PCC): (two appointments permitted):*

Caroline Cunningham (from 01.12.2020)

*Elected lay members of the PCC:*

Nigel Christie (Lay deputy-chairperson and PCC Treasurer)

Rosemary Davies (PCC secretary) (re-elected 09.05.2021)

Heather Leask (Chairperson - Fabric) (re-elected 09.05.2021)

Julianne Smith (Electoral Roll Officer)

Alix Booth (from 01.12.2020)

David Homer (from 01.12.2020)

Andrew Fellows (from 09.05.2021)

*PCC Standing Committee members*

Michael McHugh, Nigel Christie, Heather Leask, Rosemary Davies and David Homer

The PCC met five times since the last Annual Meetings, three of which were virtual meetings. During darker and colder months, meeting virtually has proved both time and cost-effective, and safer. For the similar reasons, the PCC agreed to have additional services of Morning Prayer during the months of January, February and March, which replaced Evening Prayer.

**Safeguarding**

St Katharine's PCC has adopted the House of Bishops Safeguarding Policy and guidance, and takes its responsibilities for the safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults seriously. Caroline Cunningham undertakes regular safeguarding training as an essential part of her role as a Foundation Governor of St Katharine's School, including training for safer recruitment. Rosemary Davies undertook a diocesan refresher safeguarding course in September 2021. The Rev Michael McHugh is registered on the *National Register of those with Permission to Officiate*. This new register results from the Church of England's recognition of its duty towards improving safeguarding arrangements.

**CHURCH LIFE**

This year saw a gradual return to normality for services and church life generally with regard to COVID-19. February, however, brought shock with the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Increasing reports and images of brutality quickly prompted the question: how might we help?

Congregation size increased, particularly for major church festivals and Remembrance Sunday, as the vast majority of people became fully vaccinated and virus variants seemingly decreased in severity. Nevertheless, caution was still exercised. Earlier in the year, for example, Savernake Team services were taken in St Mary's, Gt Bedwyn, which better accommodates social distancing, and people were asked to wear masks at the October Flower Festival. Holy Communion continues to be taken in one form only. There was much joy when hymn singing recommenced and the PCC expresses a particularly warm thank you to David Stewart for being our regular – and cheerful – organist.

The Savemake Team had one full-time vicar off sick for several months this year, so Michael's work-load increased, for example, through covering several more PCC meetings, but St Katharine's continued to have two services of Holy Communion monthly. A new Savemake Team Administrator, Samantha Cave, has been appointed. The PCC remains profoundly appreciative of the services provided by our lay-readers, Alix Booth, Anthony Leask, Sally Thompson and Andrew Fellows; Andrew having taken on the role during this year. Without their commitment there would not be a service at St Katharine's Church most Sundays.

Caroline Cunningham is stepping down from the PCC and as its Pewsey Deanery Synod representative at the Annual Meetings. Caroline chaired the ACORN group for 10 years and has instigated new ways of promoting our church, such as through Facebook, the provision of pew-cards linked to a Just Giving account, and use of a Card Reader to facilitate payments/donations as increasingly people do not carry cash. Caroline gave a presentation on the use of these payment methods to the Pewsey Deanery Synod to help other deanery churches with their finances

### **Outreach**

During the pandemic, the PCC secretary started distributing a regular email to keep parishioners aware of on-line services and then times of church services once these recommenced. The emails have proved a useful way of letting people know what has happened, for example, the recent death of Canon Toby Salisbury, once vicar of St Katharine's. These emails have continued. If you wish to be added to the list, please contact the PCC secretary [rosemary@churchmob.com](mailto:rosemary@churchmob.com)

To celebrate the return to church, the PCC was delighted to plan some new events. Annie Fellows suggested a Flower Festival centred around Harvest Festival and kindly took the lead in implementing it. The weekend was a great success with stunning flower displays and inviting stalls, and welcomed many visitors to the church.

Alix Booth re-instated her popular puppet show, 'That's *my* donkey' before Easter, which filled the church with children's voices and lots of laughter. This year, Alix was assisted by Pollyanna Smith. A big thank-you to both for their skill and enthusiasm, and to Alix's behind the scenes 'stage manager', Andrew Luke.

Before Easter, a tidy-up of the churchyard and carpark area was undertaken. This entailed planning for the future as much as removing unwanted growth. For example, digging out tree saplings in the conservation area, so wild flowers may thrive. The weather was reasonable, but hot drinks and refreshments were greatly appreciated. Considerable, necessary work has been undertaken on the churchyard trees through the year, carefully overseen by Heather Leask who generously devotes much time to ensuring the church and its environs are maintained appropriately. The PCC is very grateful indeed to Heather for all she does 'behind-the-scenes'. This year a church sign was replaced, made by John Wilson and the church heater was renovated by Alan Davies. Neither charged for their time, which the PCC much appreciates.

Looking ahead, planning for a new look Rogation Sunday on 22 May is underway (with hopes of good weather) and for a special Evensong service on Sunday 5 June to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee of HM The Queen. A fundraising Summer Fête is planned for 9<sup>th</sup> July from 2pm – 4.30pm.

### **Baptisms, Weddings, Funerals and Memorial Services at St Katharine's Church (May 2021 – April 2022)**

While no such Occasional Services took place in the previous 12 months, the year of this report has witnessed four baptisms, one wedding, two funerals and one memorial service

of thanksgiving. Anyone wishing to book baptisms should contact the Revd Michael McHugh: 01672 550870. Sadly, three members of St Katharine's community died during this year: David Ker, Noel Shuttleworth and Joan Chapman. All had been dedicated helpers and contributors to our church in their different ways, and each had lived in the forest for many years.

### **Charitable Giving**

Since the previous Annual Meetings, £97, has been donated to Marlborough Link Scheme and £58.50 to the Bedwyn Link Scheme, from January – June 2021 Evensong collections. The Farming Community Network received £260 from Harvest Festival collection. The Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal received £355.75 from the Remembrance Sunday service. July - December 2021 Evensong collections provided £205 to Medecins sans Frontières. In March 2022, £1500 went to the DEC Ukraine Appeal. A further £750 was distributed to three recipients under the PCC's commitment to continuing the charitable giving of The Friends of St Katharine's, whose funds were passed to the PCC.

The Financial Report and Statement of Accounts for Jan – 31 Dec 2021 have been circulated, and form part of this report. The PCC is most fortunate to have Nigel Christie as the PCC treasurer and remains deeply grateful for Nigel's skilled handling of the accounts, particularly in a year which has seen difficulties in regard to payments for Occasional Services, and a substantial increased demand in what should be paid to the Diocese of Salisbury as 'parish share'. Daniel Cunningham has completed his sixth and final review of the PCC's accounts as Independent Examiner. The PCC expresses warm thanks to Mr Cunningham for undertaking this role.

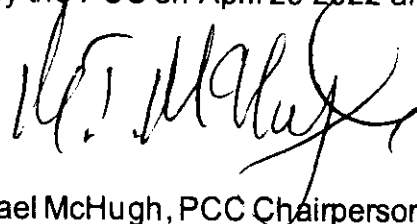
### **Pewsey Deanery Synod Report**

Philip Smith was elected this year as the new Chair Person. Colin Heber-Percy and Gerald Osbourne were elected from the House of Clergy to the Salisbury Diocesan Synod. A new Bishop of Salisbury has been appointed. The deanery synod met twice in the year, last on 15<sup>th</sup> March. It continues to deepen the discussion of '*Where is God growing new things in our parishes and communities*' and '*What we can achieve towards our shared objectives of arresting the decline in congregations and increasing the Church's relevance and visibility across our communities, how to do so and what help we might need*'. The deanery is also working together to understand how best to support the Ukraine refugee crisis as a community.

Rosemary Davies  
Secretary to St Katharine's PCC.

Approved by email by the PCC on April 29 2022 and signed on the PCC's behalf by:

Michael McHugh



The Reverend Michael McHugh, PCC Chairperson

Visit St Katharine's Church website to keep up with events, projects and service times, and to read the PCC's policies and contact details. <https://savernakeforestchurch.org>