



Annual Reports 2022

FOR PRESENTATION TO ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING ON
TUESDAY 21ST FEBRUARY 2023

Minister's Report

If you are reading this on the evening of our Annual General Meeting – just prior to coming out to the meeting! – you've probably spent the last hour flipping pancakes. Yes, our CAGM this year coincides with Shrove Tuesday.

So what's your favourite topping? Lemon and sugar? Nutella? Banana and honey? Ice cream? Or do you go for something really exotic – peanut butter and marmite?

I suppose you could say that the life of our Church could be compared to pancakes and Shrove Tuesday! There is so much variety, flavour and taste! There's no secret ingredient or special method involved – unlike that which is claimed in the KFC or Coca Cola recipes. It's down to hard work, willing volunteers, gifted individuals and a liberal dose of the Holy Spirit. There are so many examples I could share of the selfless devotion of people as they go about their church business – organising, arranging, opening up, tidying up, planning, visiting, supporting, comforting, helping, loving, sharing, praying, dreaming, brewing up ... the list goes on and on.

Let me remind you of the list of toppings that I mentioned at the start of this report, which tells us that we are each unique and special people in the eyes of God. We are all different even to the point that we might not even like pancakes! But that is ok. I'm not sure how church would look (or the world for that matter) if we all looked and acted the same. God likes our differences. He celebrates our differences. He uses them to grow his church. We find our own distinctive place in the life of church, our own God-shaped hole, and we serve and fulfil his calling to us. Not found your place yet? Keep searching, keep praying, keep listening. God's work at Southam & Bishop's Itchington Congregational Church is nowhere near complete, as Paul says we keep pressing on ... *"I don't mean to say that I have already achieved these things or that I have already reached perfection. But I press on to possess that perfection for which Christ Jesus first possessed me. No, dear brothers and sisters, I have not achieved it, but I focus on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us."* (Philippians 3:12-14 NLT)

Can I just share one final thing with you – we're growing! I've had to add another four pages to this report booklet. There is so much going on in the life of our church it's taking more and more words to report it. I hope you read every word of the wonderful reports submitted here and are encouraged by what they have to say. I commend this report to you wholeheartedly.

Your friend and minister,

Neil Chappell

Secretary's Report

In my Secretary's Report I have sometimes made reference to the language of school reports. Mine often contained words such as 'must', 'try' and 'harder'! I don't think for a minute that these words apply to us; in fact I think we can use words such as 'very satisfactory' and 'progress'! I was recently sitting in the Lounge during a 'Warm Space' morning and looked across at the 'Jackpot' notice board and saw all the stars there, each with a name on them, I started to count how many there were.....30! On another occasion I needed to see Neil so I popped down to Paint Pot. It was amazing! The church was full of people of all sizes; parents, helpers, leaders and....children, lots and lots of them! It was full of energy, fun and laughter, friendship, caringand noise! I thought it was wonderful, (but a bit too noisy for me!). On our children's church Sunday in January there were 40 or more people in church, (we lost count after that!). There is also, of course, our 'Warm Space' initiative, which has brought new people into contact with us.

So I think we can be encouraged by the number of children and young people who come or have contact with our church and we should praise and thank God that He has blessed us in this way. Also we have been encouraged by having someone commit themselves through becoming a church member and also by a number of people who have resumed coming to Sunday worship after a long time of not feeling safe to do so.

In fact, on reflection, I think the 'School Report' I started with is a bit too modest. I think we have made much more than 'very satisfactory' progress. I think it has been 'very good'. For a start we have emerged from the restrictions we were subjected to during the Covid pandemic; especially the ones which prevented us from singing God's praises! But also it has been even more important, I think, to have got back to our 'normal' ways of social interaction, meeting, greeting and



seeing people's faces again!

We have been fortunate to have had grants from the Janet and Brian Moore charitable trust, which enabled us to update our A-V system, (which dated from the last century!). Now we can actually see the image from the projector and have the assurance that the music will be there when required! It is true that some of us still like to use a hymn book, but I expect that in due course (20 years!) we will get used to the new ways.

I do think that God has blessed us with our children and young people, and also with the old(er) people who continue to come to Coffee Pot, despite the absence of a Tuesday market. It is truly said that young people are the future of the church; but we also have to care for those who are now the church of the past, those who served Christ faithfully and now, through age or infirmity, can no longer worship with us. We hope to introduce a system of pastoral contact to care for and support those who need it.

This leads me to think about a concern which I have mentioned before (nearly every year!), that is the effect of an ageing congregation. Even those we still think of as 'the young ones' are not so young anymore! There are plenty of 'opportunities' for the really young ones to join us in the many tasks which need to be done week by week.

Having said that, I cannot end my report without expressing our heartfelt thanks to God, and to all those who serve our church week by week, some known and some unknown, and who, by their service, bring God's blessings to us.

David Hudson

Church Family

As we look back on the past year in the life of our church family there have been occasions of great happiness and joy, but also those of sadness and sorrow. In April we heard that Muriel Wade, who played the organ at church for quite a few years (was it 30?), had died after a long period of illness. Her funeral was held in Newquay, where Arnold and Muriel had moved to be near their daughter. Later in the year, on the 28th July our church was packed out for the funeral of our friend Bill Pease. Considering that Bill was twice Mayor of Southam, was a very active Rotarian and had wide involvement in the life of our town, it was not surprising that his Memorial service was so well attended, as we joined together to give thanks for Bill's life. We are glad, as a church, to have the opportunity to support Lynda and pleased that Bill's sister ('Auntie' Deana) has moved to Southam and is often to be seen out and about in the town, and sometimes at our church with Lynda. It was lovely to have our dear friend Carol, from Oban, with us to conduct Bill's service.

We have been pleased to welcome Wendy Balsom into church membership as

she continues her involvement in various aspects of our church family life.

We were pleased that Samantha & Matt brought Ella to be baptised in May, and that not long afterwards, in July, the church was full for Annie and Jack for the baptism of their son Jake. It has also been a blessing and joy to welcome Charlie and Marie Collis and their family into the life of our church, in worship and as they help in leading the 'Jackpot' young people's group, and it was a joy that they welcomed Elizabeth into their family last year too.

There were also other 'happy events' during the year. Iain and Debbie celebrated their Ruby wedding anniversary in July with a marvellous party in their garden, when a great time was had by all. The next day it was my 'trombone' birthday – but not a big parade. As I write this (31 January) Iain and Debbie anticipate becoming grandparents any day now when Rachael has her baby, (we know it is a girl).

Philip and Cathryn celebrated the engagement of Hannah to Will and also the graduation of Rachel from Durham University. (It hardly seems any time at all since she went away to Uni!). Rachel is now studying for a Master's degree at Edinburgh.

John and Pamela Connell celebrated the marriage of Harry to Sara, (and possibly heaved a tiny sigh of relief!)

On the subject of getting married we congratulate Viv and Dave and look forward to their wedding in a little while. In fact it is the day before our Annual Church Meeting, so that is two things to look forward to!

Also there were some notable birthdays during the year, (no names, no pack drill). A well-known lady was 85 in June, and a few days before Christmas another 'young lady' was 60. Someone else in our congregation also had a 'trombone' birthday. (She and I joke about it). Sue has told me that today (31 January) Angie Bull celebrated her 90th birthday.

Our friend Marion Hartwell, who has now retired and lives in Swindon, keeps in touch by sending us her 'Thoughts' in letters quite regularly. We also correspond with 'Pol the postie', who is in a home in Swindon and with Olga, who has moved from her granddaughter's to a home in Daventry.

Apologies if I have left you out and you would have liked to be in, or vice-versa!!
Call my lawyers!

David Hudson

Coffee Pot Report

'Service as normal' seems to sum it up I think!

The regulars continue to enjoy meeting up in a warm space, having a chat plus

coffee and biscuit, and some of them then go out for lunch together. We do have new folk who come to see what goes on after seeing the sign outside. Steve Cunningham joins us sometimes with Qantas, his guide dog, who gets lots of attention!



Recently we've had a boost at 11am when the folk attending the BSL course in the lounge have their coffee break.

Our Coffee 'n Carols included Pauline's ukulele ladies, Janet playing clavino and Pam Miller reading her poems.

All in all Coffee Pot is appreciated and we gladly continue to serve in this way.

Sue Hudson

Junior Church/Creche

Children's church takes place once a month (wonderfully timed to coincide with Cake Sunday!). It has been so encouraging to see the growing number of children who attend ranging in age from 0 – 16! I think if everyone came there would be 16 altogether!

To help make the activities more age appropriate, we divided the group into two, so now deliver a group for primary school aged children and one for secondary.

Junior Church would not be able to function without the help of a merry band of ladies who come and ably assist and are more than happy to get involved in whatever has been planned! I would like to take the opportunity to thank Janet, Sally, Cathryn, Chris, Rosalie, Pamela, Dianne and Caroline for all their willingness to help.

Please continue to pray for our children and young people. They bring such joy to so many members of the church who enjoy seeing and talking to them at the monthly service.

Cathryn Clarke

Jackpot

2022 saw the creation of Jackpot, a youth group for under 18s that provides a fun environment to learn about the Bible, as well as to socially interact with friends.

Jackpot started as an idea that children in our church (and churches in the area) should have a communal space, even if they do not come to church regularly. Our world is changing, as seen in statistics from the 2021 census, where there was a 13% drop in people who identified themselves as Christians, compared to the decade previous. Jackpot was an answer to the question, how can we get more young people into faith? Go back maybe half a century and church was a routine element of many people's lives. In such a short amount of time it has become what the census has established as a declining practise. Our churches' youth group

provides a place where young people who do come to church (and those who don't) can bring their friends along to where they can learn about God in a non-pressurised environment.

Right from the beginning of Jackpot, the Congregational Federation recognised the potential of the project and we received a £400 grant to buy equipment for our youth group. We've bought a table tennis table, a dart board and table football. The structure of an evening usually involves a craft, a lot of independent playing and talk by Neil and - of course - some refreshments. In the summer, Jackpot makes its way outside, reminiscent of some bygone era where we all run to the park to set up the rounders pitch. We usually find we subvert any stereotypes newcomers might have had of a church youth group, its 90 minutes full of fun and laughter.

In its first year, the project has been a stunning success, in no small part due to the amazing team of volunteers who organise the monthly sessions. Since we started Jackpot here at Southam Congregational Church, we've had children come along from many different churches in the area, young people have begun to bring their friends along and, most excitingly, we've had children regularly who have no church background but just got involved. The project has been a testament to community outreach and how it can play a massive role in bringing people into the church.

So in conclusion, yes times are changing, and it may be harder than it once was to introduce young people to the church. However, Jackpot is a recognition of that change. We are doing our best to change with the times, not get left behind in the past. So as a whole new generation of young Christians start getting involved with church again, or for the first time, I cannot help but think it is working.

Evie du Bois

PaintPot

Paintpot is a very happy friendly group. We meet every other Monday and have a regular cohort of about 15 children and their carers, and every week welcome new people and those that come more occasionally. We are really pleased that since we resumed meeting after lockdown we have welcomed lots of new children and families, and still are such a popular little group.

We follow the same structure every week: songs, story, craft, snack, all based around the colour of the week. The children love bringing and showing their toy and joining in the songs and it's amazing how Sally remembers all their names and welcomes each child and makes a special connection with them. It's lovely to watch them grow in confidence each week and feel comfortable in the environment. Story time with Neil is a favourite part of the morning – thank you

Neil. At the end we get the musical instruments out and make some noise!
A special thanks to Chris who shops for, and prepares snacks and drinks for the children and adults each week – and is often told that Paintpot has the best snack time of any toddler group in Southam! Thanks to Janet too for coming to help Chris with teas, stepping in at short notice to help with crafts and tidying up. It is lovely to see everyone that comes so comfortable and at home in our Church.

Neil Chappell – Sally Forgan

Safeguarding Report

Safeguarding makes sure that everyone who walks through the door or takes part in an activity linked to the church feels welcome and safe. Should there be a concern, situation or an allegation having policies and procedures in place will provide a guide as to what to do.

In order to remain affiliated to the Congregational Federation, by the end of 2023 we are required to hold an up-to-date Safeguarding Certificate. Our current one expired in January 2022 and now we are in the process of fulfilling all the necessary requirements to have this renewed hopefully by the end of March 2023.



An independent report (ICAS) has been carried out following the historic abuse cases linked to the Church. One of the recommendations states that every religious organisation (which includes us) must have Safeguarding procedures in place. It is not acceptable and there are no excuses under law not to make sure that Safeguarding is not part of our Church business.

(Taken from, CF 'How to be awarded a Safeguarding Certificate by the CF – A Beginner's Guide)

In order to assist Churches, the Congregational Federation have issued a revised draft Safeguarding Policy for Churches to use when renewing their own policy. As our policy was adopted by Church meeting in 2017 it is now not fit for purpose and needs to be replaced by a new policy. I am in the process of using the draft policy the Federation have issued to suit our own Church. This policy will be presented to the Deacons in March and taken to Church meeting in March to be approved and adopted. This will need to be reviewed annually.

Following a Safeguarding visit/inspection in January this year from Joy Howell (Area worker) with Neil and myself the following points for actions were identified:

- Risk assessments need to be put in place for all activities the Church undertakes – this will involve a generic one for all activities but be tweaked slightly for each user group. Joy has kindly offered to assist us with this.
- Encouraging group leaders to undertake specific Church related safeguarding training. The Congregational Federation are affiliated to Thirtyone-eight (An independent Christian charity that provides support to Churches in all matters of safeguarding) and will make online training available periodically.
- All volunteers who are helping/leading with children and or adult activities where there maybe the possibility of vulnerable adults attending will need to complete a new DBS application (recommendation every 5 years) and sign a code of conduct which they can retain for themselves. During 2022, with the re-emergence of Children’s Church and Jackpot we have new volunteer helpers who have completed DBS applications in order to fulfil safeguarding requirements. All other DBS applications were completed in 2017/18 and therefore need to be renewed.
- Updating and renewal of Safeguarding policy
- Renewal of basic First aid training for those who currently hold certificates but also the need for others to be trained in basic first aid.
- Fire evacuation drill.
- A few other small health and safety improvements.

We are expecting to receive Joy’s full report shortly with her observations and recommendation.

The task of renewing, reviewing and in some cases establishing our policy and procedures does seem somewhat daunting but is a requirement. Safeguarding is the responsibility of all of us and as we are an ‘open’ church welcoming all to worship and other activities we need to be a safe church in every way.

‘Speak out on behalf of the voiceless and for the rights of all who are

vulnerable' Proverbs 31:8

Should you have any questions or queries please do ask Neil or myself.

Cathryn Clarke

Church Flowers 2020

We have continued to enjoy a wonderful range of flowers this year, and I should like to thank everyone who has made a contribution in any way towards this popular part of our church life. We have a small team who happily arrange flowers on several dates during the year, and I am particularly grateful to them for the way they happily step in to cover when there are gaps in the rota.

The result of the request for donations towards the flowers for Christmas week this year was overwhelmingly generous, and our thanks go to Helen who then designed and arranged these for us.

We are always happy to welcome new people to our rota, and if you would like to be included, either in providing or arranging flowers, we can always find you a slot. I know people appreciate the flowers, and I am sure this will continue through the coming year.

Janet Whitehead



Church Electric & Gas Utilities

On 1st November 2021, we entered into a new gas 3yr fixed term contract. A new contract will be required in October 2024. On 1st February 2022 we entered into a new electricity 3yr fixed term contract. A new contract will be required in January 2025. Both contracts are with Scottish Power.

Monthly charges are summarised below:

Electricity	Current contract	Gas	Current contract
Standing charge	31.34p/day	Standing charge	30.00p/day
Unit charge	23.09p/KWH	Unit charge	5.46p/KWH

I take gas and electricity meter readings on or about the 2nd of each month and enter these into the online accounts on the same day or soon after.

I download invoices within a few days and correspondence as and when required from our accounts.

I provide the Church Treasurer with updated charts after each invoice is received and checked summarising invoice payments, direct debit payments and the

cumulative balance. The charts also provide annual cost totals in September which give a direct comparison each year from 2015. These totals were adjusted to give the true cost on 2nd January, 2023 by taking into account credits or debits at the end of each year.

The adjusted annual costs, including VAT are summarised below:

	Electricity	Gas	Total cost of energy
2015 Annual cost of supply	£598	£927	£1525
2016 Annual cost of supply	£567	£985	£1552
2017 Annual cost of supply	£490	£746	£1236
2018 Annual cost of supply	£478	£873	£1351
2019 Annual cost of supply	£508	£791	£1299
2020 Annual cost of supply	£506	£781	£1287
2021 Annual cost of supply	£604	£758	£1362
2022 Annual cost of supply	£637	£749	£1386

I suspect that the increase of £98 in the annual cost of electricity from 2020 to 2021 is due to the use of a 24hr/day water heater in the kitchen. The further increase of £33 from 2021 to 2022 will be due to increased rates on the new contract which began on 1st February, 2022. Perhaps it might be less wasteful if the water heater electricity supply was routed via a timer.

The electricity account balance is currently £44 in credit and the gas account is £114 in credit.

Trevor Surgey

Traidcraft Annual Report

The church has continued to support Fair Trade goods through buying Traidcraft products when we can. Wherever



possible, all our coffee, tea, sugar, toilet rolls and kitchen rolls have been sourced from Traidcraft. Traidcraft has also sold a number of products such as hand sanitisers, washing up liquid and cleaning products which have been very useful.

As we did in 2021 we bought "Real Advent calendars" from Traidcraft as part of our support for families that use the Fosse Foodbank (see also Missions report). We also ran a stall selling Traidcraft Christmas cards as part of the Christmas card sale and this proved very popular.

It is with sadness that I have to report that, in January 2023, Traidcraft PLC went into administration. Traidcraft has been a true pioneer in the fair-trade movement from its start in 1979. Its Christian roots have relied heavily, especially in early days, on a network of churches – including our own – selling fair trade goods and promoting the fair-trade message. We have been actively supporting

Traidcraft since 2000. For many years we ran a Traidcraft stall and we have bought Traidcraft goods wherever possible. Since 2000, we have accounted for over £33,000 in turnover of Traidcraft items.

In making this announcement, Traidcraft PLC referred to the weaker position of the company following the covid pandemic, however more recently it has been the war in Ukraine and the wider cost-of-living crisis that has brought the company to its present position.

Traidcraft's charitable arm (previously called "Traidcraft Exchange" but now known as "Transform Trade") will continue with the important work of Traidcraft and be a legacy to the transformational change that Traidcraft has brought to the global awareness of the importance of fair trade.

Can I take this opportunity to thank everybody who has continued to support Traidcraft and fair trade this year.

Philip Clarke

Missions Annual Report

As a church we have continued to support mission work both at home and abroad. In our own community, we have continued to support initiatives such as Coffee Pot, Jackpot, Paintpot and Tuesday Club as well as starting new initiatives such as Warm Space. These will be covered in other reports within this Annual Report.

Christian Aid

Christian Aid Week took place in May as usual. The theme this year was on the effects of climate change on rural communities in Africa, with a focus on Zimbabwe. Christian Aid produced a "seven-day devotional guide" which we distributed to everyone in the church. We also organised a collection within church and raised a total of £457.07.

Ukraine crisis

Inevitably, the war in Ukraine has been a focus for much prayer and mission focus in the past year. Part of our Christmas offertory went to the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) appeal for Ukraine (see below). In the early days of the war, we also responded to a request from the church in Moldova for financial support to enable it to support the wave of migrants who were crossing from Ukraine into Moldova. In April we had a retiring collection on Mothering Sunday and sent a donation of £450 to support this work as part of a wider response across the Congregational Federation.

Harvest

For our harvest appeals we support two good causes; one at home and the other overseas. These were the Fosse Food Bank (food items) and the DEC Pakistan

appeal. We raised a total of £264 which we sent to the DEC appeal.

Fosse Foodbank

The church continues to support the Fosse Foodbank, whose work has never been more important during the current cost of living crisis. As well as our “normal” support, including as part of the harvest food offertory, we provided “Real Advent Calendars” to the Foodbank. Eighteen were bought and donated to families with children benefitting from the Foodbank.

Christmas appeals

As usual, we agreed that the church would support two appeals over Christmas, one at home and one abroad; Guide Dogs for the Blind, and the DEC Ukraine appeal.. Our total raised is £1,032.30 (inclusive of Gift Aid). Some of this was specifically earmarked for the Ukraine appeal and so we donated £584.95 for the DEC Ukraine appeal and £447.45 for Guide Dogs for the Blind.

Many thanks to everyone who has supported all of our mission work.

Philip Clarke

Graham Adams Centre

This year is an exciting year for the centre as we celebrate 25 years of serving the people of Southam. Over that time many people and activities have passed through the centre, and we want to thank everyone who has been part of that



journey. The Graham Adams Centre continues to be recovering from the challenges that Covid has brought over the past two years and developing the support that it is offering to the people of Southam. Thankfully many of our users have returned and we are pleased to be home to a wide range of community groups as well as local businesses to run their activities. The centre is also booked periodically for Mother and Baby Yoga and Baby Massage courses and meetings of Warwickshire Youth Justice Service or Warwickshire Children and Families Teams when they require a venue in Southam. Many other community groups, for example Southam Lions and Southam Christmas Lights Association, hire the hall for fundraising or other events and the hall is also regularly used at the weekend for children’s parties.

As a centre we are also providing:

- Table Tennis group for young people
- ‘Stretchy Monkeys’ - a physical play-based toddler group
- CALM Youth Group (for Children with Autism, Learning disabilities and Mental Health difficulties)

- A creative dance and wellbeing group for home educated girls (funded by Think Active!)
- SEND Parent Support Group

We also provide the venue and administrative support to Southam Book Festival. We have continued to develop the centre and are thrilled with our new branding which was pledged through 'Make Good Grow' and are looking forward to successfully gaining funding to continue to rebrand and publicise the work of the Centre. We would like to thank Councillor Andy Crump for the funding from the County Councillor grant for a new outside noticeboard which we hope to get in place shortly.

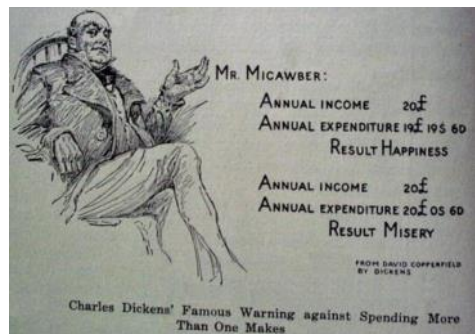
We are really excited to receive funding from the Arts Council England Let's Make Jubilee Fund to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and are using this to create a 'Jubilee-Tree' mosaic to display in the foyer. On 31st May last year we held a family Jubilee Crafternoon Tea to celebrate the Jubilee and to give the opportunity for people to take part in craft activities and contribute ideas for the mosaic, and then on 12th June we will had a drop-in workshop where people helped make the mosaic. The finished mosaic is on display in our foyer.

The challenges for the centre remain the same: fundraising to ensure the centre's sustainability (including with maintaining the building) and recruiting volunteers to be part of the Board of Directors (Trustees). We welcome any interest from those in our community to volunteer to help with our activities or to join the board – please contact me or, if you know someone who might be interested, let me know!

Iain Wilson

Treasurers Report

The budget for 2022 was balanced by making a series of difficult decisions to ensure our committed expenditures could be met from our projected income. Draft accounts show a small shortfall of around £(300) so we didn't quite make Mr Micawber's definition of happiness!



Charles Dickens' Famous Warning against Spending More Than One Makes

Final accounts can't be completed until we receive the 31 December 2022 valuation of our investments held by the Congregational Federation. Hopefully this will be in time for our March Church Meeting.

Debbie Wilson

Tuesday Club Report

Tuesday Club has continued to meet once a fortnight during term-time. We have been pleased to welcome a new lady, Irene, who has joined in very well. We were sad to hear that Biddy had died in Warwick hospital in March. Biddy and Wally had been staunch supporters of Tuesday Club for quite some years until they both had a fall together. Wally was not seriously hurt and recovered well, but unfortunately Biddy never fully recovered from her serious injuries. They were both, as the old Bible used to put it “full of years”.

We continue with our programme of talks, games, activities, tea and chat. Following on from the fascinating talk Jackie West gave us on the stained glass windows at Ladbroke church I thought it would be an interesting activity for us to make stained glass windows out of card and coloured paper. We had seen wonderful examples of these, in church, during Advent a couple of years ago. It is fair to say that Miriam, who had made one before, was the only one who had any idea how to do it! It proved to be much more difficult than I had thought. My teaching tutor would have said, “Good idea, David, but not sufficiently thought through!” Well, in the end we had a laugh about it and that did us good. I have threatened them that if they don’t behave themselves in the future I will make them do stained glass windows again!

At the moment we welcome 8-10 people at each meeting, which is just about sustainable, but new people would always be welcome. We are grateful to Neil, who is now registered to drive the community minibus and drove us to our Christmas meal at the ‘Fox and Hen’. He did get a free lunch. (Who says there is no such thing!)

Details of our meetings can be found in ‘The Storyboard’ (if I remember to let Philip know in time!), or phone me on 812695. A warm welcome awaits you – just bring your best smile and a sense of humour!

David Hudson

Southam & Bishop’s Itchington Congregational Church Minutes of Church Annual General Meeting 15h February 2022

Chairman: Neil Chappell

Attendance: 20 members

Apologies: received from 4 members

Devotions: Neil led devotions on the Feeding of the Five Thousand and reminded us that God always leads us on.

Minutes of the previous meeting: 16th January 2021 (held via Zoom due to Covid restrictions.) These were accepted and signed as a correct record. Proposed Alison Biddle, seconded Philip Clarke. All in agreed.

Annual Reports: These were available last Sunday for people to read in advance of the AGM, however the Tuesday Club report for 2020 had been included in error and the 2021 report was shared at the meeting. Thanks were expressed for all those who contribute to the life of our church. Iain Wilson proposed and Sue Hudson seconded that the reports were accepted. All agreed.

Finance: The final accounts cannot be completed until the Congregational Federation provide the 31 Dec 2021 valuation of our investment funds. This is due by 8 March so the accounts will be presented to the March Church Meeting.

Appointments: These have been displayed on the noticeboard in the Lounge for the previous 2 Sundays. The following changes were noted:

Lunch Club has been removed as it is no longer viable

Eco Co-ordinator was added with Valerie Nicholson agreeing to take this responsibility for one year to see how we can progress this

The Graham Adams Centre: the meeting was informed that Glesni Thomas has retired as a Trustee

All other appointments were shared and confirmed. Proposed Caroline Johnson, seconded Janet Whitehead. All approved.

Officers and Deacons:

The meeting agreed that voting slips were not required

3 of the 4 Deacon vacancies should have been renewed in 2021 but were postponed to 2022 due to Covid. The meeting agreed that all 4 vacancies could be elected for the full term of 3 years.

Secretary: Nomination David Hudson. Proposed Philip Clarke, seconded Trevor Surgey. Elected unanimously

Treasurer: Nomination Debbie Wilson. Proposed Miriam Thompson, seconded Trevor Surgey. Elected unanimously.

Deacons:

Caroline Johnson. Proposed Debbie Wilson, seconded Philip Clarke
Philip Clarke. Proposed David Hudson, seconded Chris King
Chris King. Proposed Dianne Surgey, seconded Debbie Wilson
David Hudson. Proposed Valerie Nicholson, seconded Philip Clarke
The 4 proposals were voted for en bloc and elected unanimously.

Everyone who served in 2021 was thanked for their work and faithfulness.

Membership: Our current membership is 41

Church Family News: We shared news of several church members and friends.

Any Other Business:

Neil advised that 3 Christenings will take place in May, June and July. 2 already have connections with the church and 1 has recently moved to the area.

Terri Du Bois has suggested we consider starting a youth group to reflect the current age profile of our young people. Terri is happy to co-ordinate these meetings but will need help. An open meeting will be held on 28 Feb 2022 and all interested are encouraged to attend.

Dates of Next Annual General Meeting: Tuesday 21st February 2023 7.45 pm

The meeting was closed at 8.25 pm by sharing The Grace together.