

2024 Parish Council AGM – Seend Church summary report for year 2023

Our Wellsprings Benefice Rector, Rev Alison Bridewell had been on long term sick leave and after a heartbreaking decision to leave us, a final farewell service was held for her at St Marys, Potterne on the second Sunday of Easter. Our clergy then consisted of Rev Caroline O’Neill – Associate Priest, three days a week, living in Seend Vicarage, Curate Rev Gerry Lynch (shared with St John’s, Devizes) and our retired priests: Rev Jane Knowles and Rev Maureen Allchin. An advertisement was placed in the Church Times in July for a new Benefice Rector. With the interviews to be held in October this was a relatively rapid appointment process for the vacancy. The Diocese recognised that we had been in a virtual interregnum situation for the last two years. There was just the one applicant (not uncommon for rural parish vacancies), who was already well known to all – Rev Gerry Lynch. Following the interview process, led by Bishop Andrew of Ramsbury, Gerry was duly appointed as Team Rector for the Wellsprings Benefice, of which Seend is one of five local parishes. He has already made himself well known and tries to attend many of the events which occur withing the villages – including Seend Panto!

Money – or the lack of it – is always an issue with any parish church (particularly rural ones like ours) and 2023 was a difficult year for finances, as many of you will have been aware.

Receipts for the year 2023 totalled £43,074 (£63,273).

Main points to note are:

1. Regular giving through Gift Aid amounted to: £14,693 (£14,758).
2. Grants and Donations received amounted to: £6200 (£18,361), including: Seend Fund, Friends of Seend Church, and a legacy of £1,000.
3. Receipts from Activities generating funds – a total of £9438 (£7,958) gross including: Summer Concert, Seend Open Gardens, Fete Teas and Organ recital.
4. Spotlight – Total receipts amounted to £4716 (£4,278) including Donations: £1610 (£1,535) and Advertising revenue: £3106 (£2743).
5. Income from investments: £891 (£1,954).

Payments for the year 2023 totalled £xx (£56,017).

The following significant items are included:

1. The 2022 Diocesan Share: £22,845 (£22,179) was paid in full.
2. Church Maintenance & Repairs: £5,100.
3. Church Insurance costs: £4595 (£4,035).
4. Upkeep of churchyard: £3876 (£3,354).
5. Spotlight – Expenditure on Production: £2671 (£3024).
6. Costs of Fund raising: £377 (£298).
7. Salisbury Diocese Board of Finance Loan repayment: £10,000. Balance outstanding: £23,797, including the interest.

In Summary:

In 2023 the total Payments including Parish Share for the Holy Cross Church, Seend, amounted to £52,992 (£56,017).

This equates to: £1019 (£1077) per week or £144 (£145) per day.

I quote from our Rector: “Among our challenges for 2024 is, inevitably, finance. Few people seem to realise that, in the Diocese of Salisbury, parish giving essentially pays for the cost of clergy. Central posts, among the smallest in number in the Church of England to begin with, are funded from other income streams, not parish giving. The Diocesan system for determining the share required for each parish is changing from 2025, and the link between what we pay and the clergy we receive will become even more obvious”.

There have been three baptisms, one wedding, two funeral/thanksgiving services and three burial of ashes ceremonies during 2023. The loss of Nigel Knocker in February was felt by many in the parish who knew and respected him and a very full church at his service of thanksgiving was testament to that.

The year drew to a close with the familiar and popular Christmas services, the Carol Service when just over 200 attended – led by Rev Gerry, there were 40 at the Midnight Christmas Eve Communion service and just over 50 for the Festal Eucharist on Christmas morning, all increased from last year.

Here endeth the Church report.




Len Murray
 Church Warden
 Church of the Holy Cross
 Seend
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Question asked by Richard Whitehead regarding costs incurred by wall collapse:-

	Opening	Incoming	Outgoing	Transfers	Gains/losses	Journals	Closing
Wall - Wall Rebuild Designated	—	7,600	10,200	3,135	—	—	535
Sub-total for Wall	—	7,600	10,200	3,135	—	—	535

Transferred from the Friends of Holy Cross and other sundry non restricted funds.

Closing amount held for South Door improvement fund.