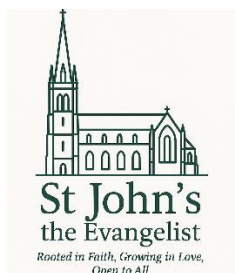


**2025 Reports and Accounts
for the Parochial Church Council of St John the Evangelist Church,
Oulton with Woodlesford**



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Aims and Purposes

St. John the Evangelist's Oulton with Woodlesford Parochial Church Council (St John's PCC) has the responsibility of co-operating with the Team Rector, the Reverend Canon Mark Umpleby and Rev Lisa Senior (until March 23rd, 2025) in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. The PCC is also specifically responsible for the maintenance of the Parish Hall building of Woodlesford Parish Hall, Woodlesford.

Objectives and Activities

The PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship at our church and parish hall and to become part of our parish community at St John's. The PCC maintains an overview of worship throughout the parish and makes suggestions on how our services can involve the range of diverse groups that live within our parish. Our services and worship put faith into practice through prayer and Scripture, Music and Sacrament.

When planning our activities for the year, we have considered the Charity Commissioner's guidance on public benefit, and particularly the supplementary guidance on charities for the advancement of religion.

We try to enable ordinary people to live out their faith as part of our parish community through:

- Worship and prayer
- Learning about the gospels
- Developing their knowledge and trust in Jesus
- Provision of pastoral care for people living in the parish
- Mission and outreach work

To facilitate this work, it is important that we maintain the fabric of Woodlesford Parish Hall which is used for worship under a temporary licence from the Bishop of Leeds due to the condition of St John's Evangelist, Oulton Church Building.

St John's the Evangelist – Church Building

After much prayer, careful reflection, and with the guidance and support of the Diocese of Leeds, the PCC has come to the difficult and heartfelt decision to move towards the closure of St John's church building.

This decision has not been taken lightly. Over many years, the PCC has worked diligently to secure funding and grants for essential repairs. Despite exhausting all available avenues, and following the Heritage Lottery funding received in 2016, no further funding has been obtained.

Throughout this time, we have continued to hope and pray for a different outcome. However, the ongoing financial demands, including monthly running costs of approximately £895, have become increasingly unsustainable.

While this is not the outcome we had hoped for, we trust that God continues to guide us as a church community beyond the physical building. We remain committed to our mission, ministry, and presence within the parish.

Achievements and Performance

Since the departure of Revd Sarah Hancox in February 2024, we have been blessed by the ministry of our interim vicar, Revd Lisa Senior, who joined us in March 2024 for a period of twelve months. As Revd Lisa concluded her time with us in March 2025, the PCC and wider congregation would like to place on record our sincere thanks for her care, support, and dedication to mission during her time with us. We pray God's blessing upon her as she follows her new calling.

As we transition from having three clergy to two across the benefice, Revd Canon Mark Umpleby, Team Rector, has taken on responsibility for the parish of St John's the Evangelist, Oulton with Woodlesford.

Our social events, including coffee mornings and fish and chip lunches, have continued to be well attended. These events are promoted within the local community and provide both fellowship and valuable financial support to our general funds. During 2025, the coffee mornings raised over £1,500. The PCC would like to thank all those involved, both behind the scenes and on the day, for their dedication and hard work in making these events such a success.

We are blessed with committed Churchwardens, Treasurer, Secretary, and PCC members, and we give thanks to God for their faithful service and dedication, especially in the face of ongoing challenges within our parish.

Clergy Report for 2025

2025 was another year of transition. Revd Lisa was with us until 23 March 2025 and then I was the Vicar with pastoral responsibility going forward. It's been a real pleasure to continue to lead worship and to get to know you all more over 2025.

Our ministry team continues with Darren, Stuart, Revd Diane and myself leading worship in our parish. A huge thanks to each one in all that they offer to our parish. Our new pattern for Sunday worship continues to settle in as does the 11am start on a Sunday. We continue to have lovely well attended midweek services each Thursday at 10am.

I have enjoyed visiting Oulton Primary School on a number of occasions to lead assemblies for the whole school.

We have continued to work with the diocese to enable the PCC decision to ask the Bishop to close for worship St John's Church building at Oulton.

We continued to grow together as a benefice, with services together (on Ash Wednesday and Ascension – as well as farewells to Revd Lisa and Revd Mandy) as well as a Pilgrimage Day in October hosted in Rothwell. We continue to have regular benefice transition meetings with all 4 parishes represented. Our parish is now having to develop a new church connection with sharing me as Vicar with Rothwell, when before the previous Vicars were shared with Methley. We shared a 'Remember with Love' in November with Rothwell where we remembered loved ones who have died.

We hosted a great daytime benefice Lent group in 2025 at Woodlesford.

It was great to have a Wedding at Woodlesford in 2025 as well as numerous burials/interments at St John's churchyard.

I can continue to attend Chapter meetings, Deanery Synod as well as Diocesan Synod. I also continue to be on a group that organises a monthly Pride Church Leeds service hosted at Leeds Minster.

I want to say a huge thank you to all who make our parish life and worship work. A HUGE big thanks to our two Church Wardens Paul and Stuart – for all their support, work and guidance to us all. Thanks to all who read and lead intercessions and serve at the altar during our services. To all members of the PCC including our treasurer, secretary and safeguarding officers. To all who serve refreshments, and wash linen, play the organ, open up the church, run the knit and natter group and Monday afternoon club. To all who make our monthly coffee morning happen. We continue to pray for our future as a parish and as a benefice as we seek to grow God's kingdom in this place and beyond. To all who look after the hall.

Every blessing.

Revd Canon Mark Umpleby

Report from Stuart Ward and Paul Ellis – Churchwardens

Morning and evening prayer continue to be held regularly at St John's, alongside the weekly ringing of the bell as a reminder to the community that we are still present. During the warmer months, the church has also been open for private prayer.

Our Easter Dawn service in the churchyard was well attended, as was our Remembrance Sunday service, held at the Oulton Institute and followed by an act of remembrance at the War Memorial. Both occasions brought the church and wider community together, and we are grateful to the Oulton Institute for their support and hospitality in providing refreshments afterwards.

We are pleased to report that no further damage has occurred to the church building, and it continues to dry out well. At present, only the main pews are in use, with the side pews remaining roped off due to safety concerns regarding potential debris and floor damage. Risk assessments continue to be reviewed on a quarterly basis.

At the beginning of the year, we benefited from the Community Payback scheme, which supported work in the churchyard for several days each week, helping to improve accessibility of pathways. Unfortunately, due to the condition of the welfare facilities, this support could not continue.

We would like to place on record our sincere thanks to Fiona, who faithfully tends the south field in the churchyard on a weekly basis. Her dedication ensures that this area remains well cared for and welcoming.

We have also been blessed by an anonymous donation to support the upkeep of the churchyard. This has enabled significant improvements, including the restoration of the ha-ha, re-grassing, planting of bulbs, and new hedging along the south field. We are deeply grateful for this generosity.

Our thanks also go to our wonderful bin team—Liz, Irene, Ann, and Janet—for their faithful service throughout the year. We remember with gratitude Ann Wraith, who sadly passed away in November 2025, and we give thanks for her commitment and support of the parish.

All statutory requirements for St John's church building have been completed.

Worship and Prayer

The PCC is committed to offering a range of services throughout the week and across the year that are both meaningful and spiritually enriching for our parish community.

We have continued to offer the shared chalice at Holy Communion, while also respecting individual preferences by providing the option to receive in one kind or to receive a blessing.

Our regular service pattern is:

Sunday: 11.00am

Thursday: 10.00am

Special services throughout the year include Dawn Good Friday (Hour at the Cross), Easter Dawn Service at 7.00am in the churchyard, Remembrance Service at the Oulton Institute and War Memorial, Christingle, and Midnight Mass.

Holy Communion is celebrated twice monthly on Sundays and weekly on Thursdays, although during the final months of 2025 this moved to a bi-weekly pattern.

Services of the Word are led by trained and commissioned Lay Leaders on alternate Sundays and Thursdays.

A full revision of the Church Electoral Roll was undertaken in 2025. As of April 2025, the roll stood at 39 parishioners. The previous full revision in April 2019 recorded 73 members, indicating a decrease of 34 over the past six years. This decline is mainly attributable to members of the congregation having passed away or moved out of the parish.

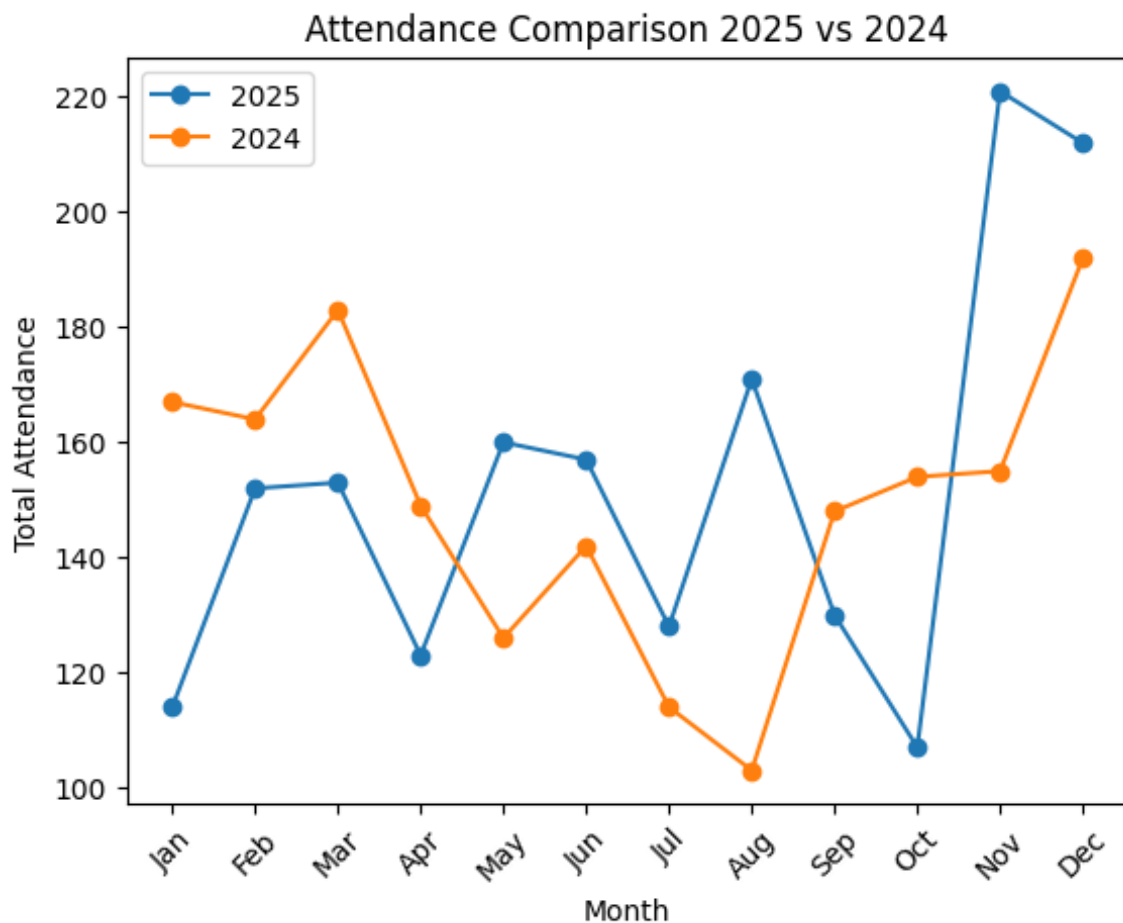
During the year, we conducted 1 wedding, 3 baptisms, and 8 funerals within the parish, either at the Parish Hall or graveside. Additional funerals for parishioners were conducted at Holy Trinity Rothwell or St Oswald's Methley and are recorded within those parishes' statistics.

Workshop and Prayer - Attendance summary 2025 v 2024

Attendance throughout 2025 showed a mixed but ultimately encouraging pattern when compared with 2024. The early months of the year saw lower attendance following the Christmas season. However, as the year progressed, attendance stabilised and began to grow.

Significant increases were seen towards the end of the year, particularly during November and December, reflecting strong engagement during key seasonal services such as Remembrance and Christmas.

Midweek services remained steady, demonstrating the faithfulness of the core congregation. Overall, while there are opportunities to strengthen attendance earlier in the year, there are clear signs of renewed growth and community connection.



Deanery Synod

Deanery Synod meetings have been attended by Stuart Ward, who currently serves as Lay Chair for the South Leeds Deanery.

We are grateful for the contribution of our Deanery Synod representatives and hope that in 2026 we will be able to appoint an additional representatives.

South Leeds Deanery Synod Report 2025 for Parish APCMs in 2026

The South Leeds Deanery Synod met on Tuesday 20th May 2025 at Christ Church, Upper Armley.

Diocesan Synod Update – Rev Phil Arnold, Upper Armley, and Revd Mark Watson, East Ardsley, have been elected to Diocesan Synod. Juliette McLellen, Diocesan Director of Safeguarding, would send out a quarterly Newsletter to Parish Safeguarding Officers. Parish Share – There was going to be a change in approach to engage with parishes in how the Parish Share is paid. South Leeds Deanery had increased the percentage of their payments on the share, but it was still lower than East Leeds Deanery and North

Leeds Deanery, possible due to differences in demographics.

General Synod Update – The meeting in February focused on Safeguarding exploring several options of how to monitor and have oversight.

Canon Jude Smith spoke about the Compass Initiative and how it aimed to give parishes confidence in 4 areas of Mission, Future, Leadership and Witness.

The Leeds Episcopal Area Forum was held on Wednesday 19th March at 7pm at St George's Church with Revd Anne Russell, Area Dean of East Leeds and co-lead of our Sudan link, speaking about Sudan with its forgotten war and stories from her last visit.

The next meeting of the South Leeds Deanery Synod was held on Wednesday 24th September 2025 at St John's, Wortley with the Rt Revd Arun Arora, Bishop of Kirkstall.

Rev Phil Arnold gave clergy updates.

There was presentation by Jo Sarkar about the work of the Mothers' Union. Bishop Arun spoke about the process surrounding the election of a new Bishop of Leeds. Finance is an issue in the Diocese with a deficit of £2.2 million which will mean fewer clergy in the future.

Bishop Arun reported that Confirmation Services across the Diocese are joyful occasions and allow us to hear and see what God and the Holy Spirit are doing. Bishop Arun then moved on to discuss Racial Justice in Leeds in the current climate of national pride engendering hatred and violence towards asylum seekers and refugees. He advised us all to be agents of love and hope in our communities.

The Area Forum at St George's Church on Wednesday 19th November 2025 focussed on Identity and Race with speakers Wayne Simmonds, Racial Justice Officer, Qari Asim – Senior Imam - Makkah Mosque, Susie Gordon, CEO - Leeds Jewish Representative Council

We are thankful for all those who serve on Deanery Synod and, in particular, the work of Rev Phil Arnold, Area Dean, Rev Sharon Wilkinson, Assistant Area Dean and Stuart Ward, South Leeds Deanery Lay Chair, Brenda Pickard, Deanery Secretary, and Jo Sarkar, Deanery Administrator.

All Saints' Parish Hall, Woodlesford

2025 has been a mixed year, with some new users joining us while several regular users have reduced or cancelled their bookings.

Our weekly Thursday worship continues, with attendance showing encouraging growth. We now meet regularly in the lounge, and Sunday morning attendance has also improved. Special services such as baptisms and Christingle have been particularly well attended.

New initiatives such as the Monday Club and Knit and Natter have grown and are becoming an important part of the weekly life of the parish.

All statutory requirements for All Saints' Parish Hall have been completed for 2025.

We extend our thanks to Sarah Oxley and Sue Whitley for their work in managing bookings and enquiries, and we were pleased to see an increase in party bookings during the year.

Pastoral Care

Throughout 2025 we have been able to offer home visits and face-to-face pastoral care. Revd Canon Mark, Revd Lisa and Stuart Ward continue to visit those at home or in care who request a visit, and to pray for them all.

Home Communion continues to be available for anyone in our parish who would like Communion bringing to them at home.

Mission and Evangelism

The PCC have continued to look how we can rebuild the congregation confidence and re-establishing links with our members of our parish.

Our strongest form of evangelism and outreach continued to be through christenings and funerals. At the joint benefice service for Accession Day 2025 – Thursday June 2025 Stuart Ward was commissioned by the Rev Canon Mark Umperley at Holy Trinity Rothwell.

A Lent group for the benefice on a Wednesday afternoon in Woodlesford Parish Hall which was well attended.

Ecumenical and Team Relationships

We continue to maintain strong and positive relationships with churches across our benefice. In October 2025, we participated in the Benefice Away Day, which was greatly appreciated by those who attended and whose insights were shared more widely.

Joint services, including Ash Wednesday and Accession Day, continue to provide valuable opportunities to worship together as a benefice.

We also continue to support one another by sharing and promoting upcoming events across our sister churches, strengthening our sense of unity and collaboration.

Volunteers

As already expressed, we are deeply grateful to all our church and community volunteers for their time, commitment, and faithful service.

Special thanks go to our PCC members, Treasurer Susan Whiteley, PCC Secretary Susan Wild, the Church Hall Committee, our caretaker Sarah Oxley, and our Churchwardens Stuart Ward and Paul Ellis.

The Team Rector expresses sincere appreciation for their support and for the dedication shown by all who contribute to the life and ministry of the parish.

Structure, Governance and Management

The Parochial Church Council is a corporate body established by the Church of England. The PCC operates under the Parochial Church Council Powers Measure.

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. At St John's the membership of the PCC consists of the incumbent, churchwardens, and members elected by those members of the congregation who are on the electoral roll of the church.

The PCC members are responsible for making decisions on all matters of general concern and importance to the parish, including deciding on how the funds of the PCC are to be spent. New members receive initial training into the workings of the PCC.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding remains an important and constant concern in this parish. To this end we have Safeguarding as a standing item on our PCC agendas. All PCC Members have up to date DBS checks. New employees, PCC Members and helpers are required to have DBS checks in place (where this is relevant) and to supply references (again where this is relevant). All PCC members have completed the on-line training on the Diocesan website at Co or C1 level. All PCC Members are required to complete a Confidential Declaration Form following the ACPM each year. The PCC has complied with the duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 (duty to have regard to House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults). All members are aware of their obligations under this Act as evidenced by undertaking training, agreeing to DBS scrutiny and signing a disclaimer regarding any previous convictions or cautions.

Our continued thanks to Janet Charlton, our Parish Safeguarding Officer.

Administrative Information

St John the Evangelist Church is situated in Oulton, Leeds. It is part of the Diocese of Leeds within the Church of England. The correspondence address is for the secretary: Susan Wild, 10 Eastfield Drive, Woodlesford, Leeds LS26 8SQ. The PCC is a body corporate (PCC Powers Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2011) and a charity currently exempted from registration with the Charity Commission.

Financial Review 2025

Statement of Financial Activities

Summarises income and expenditure.

Income has decreased from 2024 by £8277.00.

Expenditure has also decreased from 2024 by £4,423.

Balance Sheet

Shows the fixed assets. Endowment Funds have a nominal value of £29067.86 (a slight decrease on last year). These are assets that we cannot utilize.

Current assets include debtors (mainly the HMRC Gift Aid refund), investments (those managed by Leeds DBF), and cash available. The Liabilities comprise small amounts that were not invoiced to us until after the year end, all of which are now paid.

Breakdown of fund balances

Balances across all funds on 31.12.25 were: General & Parish Hall Funds £37813.35. St John's Building Repairs including Churchyard and Plaster Work Funds £28635.77 of which £27588.90. is sat in restricted funds.

Analysis of Income

Total Income from all sources dropped by £8277.00. Income from donors dropped by £1,029. Income from Hall Letting and Fees increased by £2505.

Analysis of Expenditure

The continued careful management by our Church Wardens and PCC costs overall have decreased on 2024 by £4423.00. The main saving being costs of buildings maintenance, plus a further decrease on 2024 in Parish Share paid. The biggest increases are insurance, administration and wages.

Admin Costs – Is mainly our share of Team Ministry costs and, photocopier charges, plus HSBC bank charges and caretaker telephone costs.

Statement of Assets & Liabilities - Gives a full breakdown of what is held in each account

In Summary –

Overall, we recorded a surplus of £700 for 2025. However, we once again did not pay our Parish Share of £20,274. As we currently do not have sufficient funds—and there is little likelihood of being able to pay it—we have not made an accrual for this amount.

The Accounts have been Independently Examined and signed off by Mark Ibbertson. I record my thanks to Mark and confirm that he is willing to continue in this role.

Sue Whiteley – PCC Treasurer