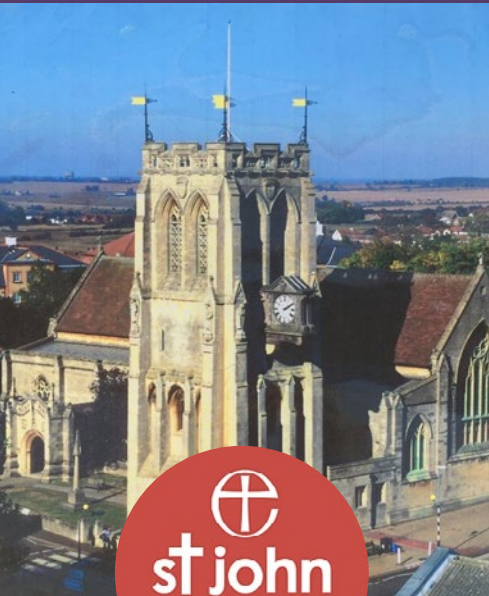




Epping Team Ministry

Three Churches
One Family



Team Profile and information for the appointment of:

Team Rector



The Church of England
in Essex and East London
Diocese of Chelmsford

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The Church of England
in Essex and East London
Diocese of Chelmsford



A MESSAGE FROM BISHOP GULI

Covering Essex and East London, Chelmsford is one of the largest, most diverse, and exciting dioceses in the Church of England. We are home to more than 3 million people representing many socio-economic, ethnic and faith groups and a fantastic variety of cultures and traditions.

We have enormous opportunities for mission and service and considerable challenges to face and resolve as we continue to deal with the long-term implications of the COVID-19 pandemic and global challenges that have a direct impact on our parish churches and the communities we serve.

My sense is that the whole Church of God is in a liminal season when we cannot clearly see the future and so don't quite know what it will look like. But we know that the Church has faced profound challenges in the past and as we look to the future, we do so with faith that when we open ourselves up to being changed and transformed, we are best placed to serve God and God's people.

It is within this context and following a period of listening and discernment that started when I became Bishop of Chelmsford in 2021, that we have begun to articulate our future direction of travel as a Diocese with a focus on travelling well together:

- Our purpose is to love God and to love our neighbour; to worship faithfully and empowered by the Holy Spirit, witness to the love of God revealed in Jesus Christ as we serve the extraordinarily diverse array of local communities in Essex and East London.
- Our approach is to enable and empower parishes and worshipping communities to discern how they are to be God's people in their own very different local contexts and as part of one diocesan family.
- Underpinning our approach is an invitation to a way of being articulated by shared diocesan values which might shape how we travel together, support each other and provide mutual accountability.

Since I became Bishop of Chelmsford, I have witnessed people's great warmth and I have seen first-hand, the wonderful things going on in our parishes. Any new priest joining us in the Diocese of Chelmsford does so at a time of challenge, a time of change and most significantly a time of hope for our Church in this most diverse and exciting of dioceses.

+Guli

Bishop of Chelmsford

**Find out more about our Diocesan
Direction of Travel and Values:**



Welcome to the Epping Team Ministry

The role of Team Rector for The Epping Team Ministry is an exciting opportunity to work with our three Churches. You would be leading and working alongside experienced and committed Clergy, Licensed Lay Ministers, Church Wardens, and laity. As Team Rector, you will be the Parish Priest for St John the Baptist Church, which is the largest Church in the Team and is situated in the town of Epping.

Is God calling you to Epping?

Our Team's Vision

Our collective vision as a Team Ministry is:

- To embody the Gospel message through personal and communal worship.
- Guided by the Holy Spirit, we aim to proclaim Jesus and his Kingdom, attracting others through our lives and actions.
- We prioritize spiritual growth through friendship, care, and support, while actively working to expand God's Kingdom in our community.
- Strive to foster an inclusive, loving, and nurturing environment, extending hospitality and outreach to all.
- Provide a space for our wider community for healing and belonging, embracing all and seeking new ways to be a church.

We now seek an experienced priest with a strong team-oriented mindset and collaborative leadership skills to help us realise this vision across our parishes within the vibrant and diverse communities in Epping. Our new Team Rector can anticipate an engaging, stimulating, and fulfilling ministry experience with us.

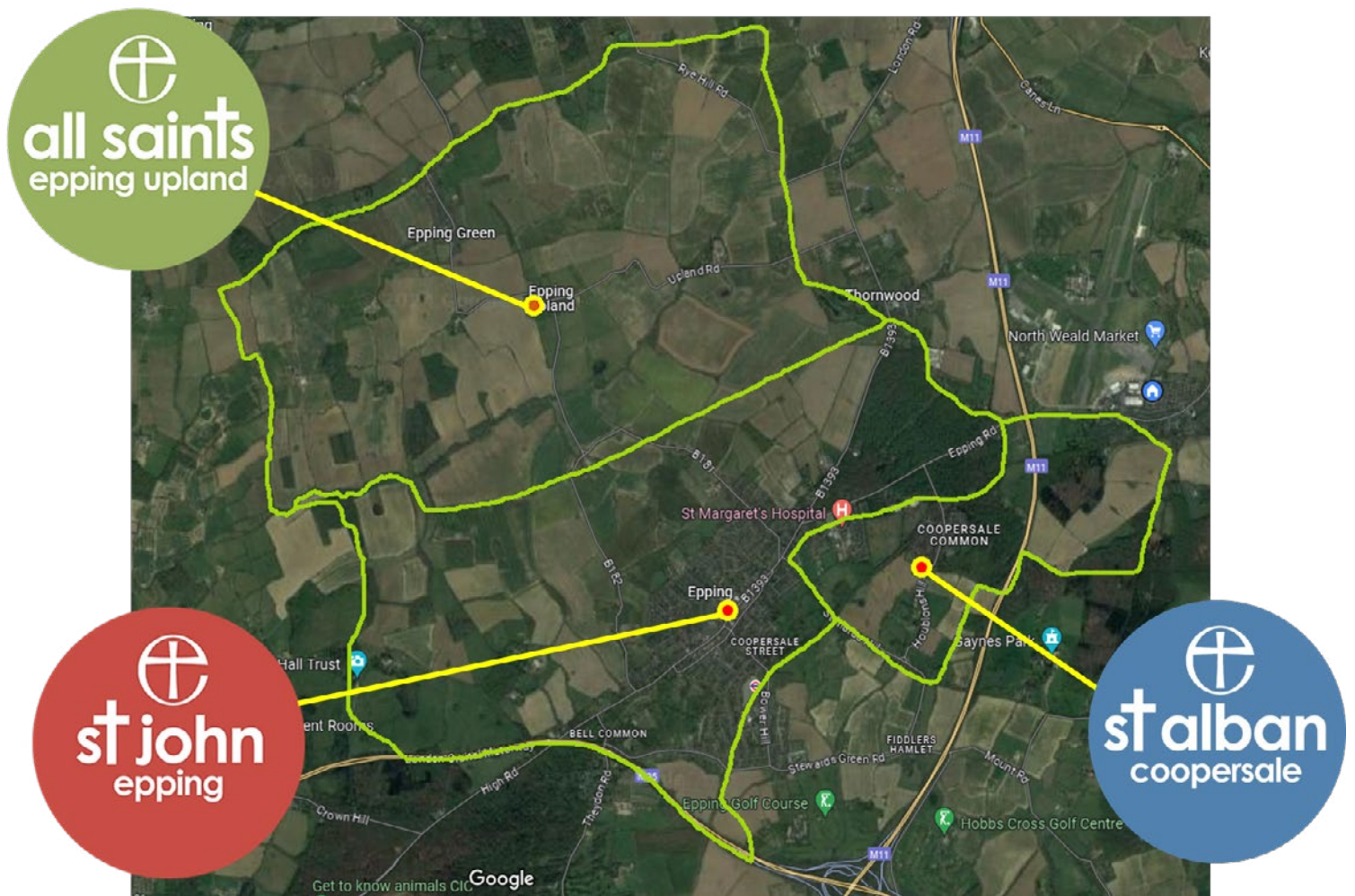
We seek a Rector who is:

- Mature in their faith and experienced in their ministry
- Eager to share the good news of God's love.
- A person of prayer who is able to draw others into a deeper understanding of God
- Adept at fostering teamwork and collaboration.
- Committed to growing faith and church attendance and can connect with people of all ages, backgrounds, and views, able to make everyone feel valued members of our church family.
- Able to build on our many partnerships across the communities especially with our five schools.
- Welcoming, empathetic, and inclusive towards all demographics represented within our three congregations.
- A visionary. Confident to develop our shared ministry, understanding and promotion of the priorities of each independent church
- Able to respect and develop our three preferred styles of worship, whilst leading and inspiring our enthusiastic laity and encouraging service and stewardship.
- Able to engage with the local communities and develop the foundations already established -
 - including the work with the local schools enabling children to flourish in their spirituality.
- Supportive of existing initiatives run by members of our team especially the pastoral care team and work with those affected by dementia and domestic abuse.
- Aware of the financial challenges of each church, supporting each PCC with innovative and inspiring solutions.
- Able to lead and guide each PCC to make the right decisions for their church with good humour, compassion, courage, and patience

Serving town, village, and farming communities

The Epping Team is part of the Epping Forest Mission and Ministry Unit, in the Diocese of Chelmsford. We are comprised of three parishes serving a wide range of communities, each with a distinctive worship style. Each parish is committed to the shared vision of the Team whilst cherishing its individuality, strengths, and character (see attached Parish Profiles). (<https://www.eppinganglicans.org.uk/>)

The three parish churches are situated within a few miles of each other. St. John's is located in the centre of the vibrant market town of Epping; St. Alban's, with its forest location in the nearby village of Coopersale; and All Saints' in Epping Upland, surrounded by farmland and serving the village of Epping Green.



Who is the team?



Rev Jessica Bostock

Chelmsford



Diana Lowry

Licensed Lay Minister



Jo Waller

Pastoral Assistant



Emily Kirby

Youth and Families Worker



Steve Snooks

Licensed Lay Minister



Team Rector

We are an energetic, multi-gifted team, driven by our desire to work with God for the flourishing of all and to make God's kingdom known throughout our area.

The Team Rector will be supported by an Associate Minister (self-supported), with two Licensed Lay Ministers who preach regularly and lead non-Eucharistic services including funerals. We are also blessed by a Pastoral Assistant who chairs the Pastoral Care Team, and a committed team of Churchwardens and lay people. The post of Team Vicar in the Epping Team Ministry became vacant at Easter 2024. The Team also employs a Team Administrator who is responsible for running the Team Office, its volunteers, and administrative functions. The Team Office income is derived largely from parochial fees, and the Team expenses, are met by a monthly parish contribution.

The Team Council is comprised of the Ministry team, Parish Churchwardens, Vice Lay Chair and Team Treasurer and Team Safeguarding Officer. It meets up to four times a year, including a joint PCC meeting with the aim of enabling interaction between parishes. This ensures a creative and dynamic network of co-operation around a shared vision of excellence in our ministry and best practices in policies and procedures particularly with respect to inclusion and safeguarding.

We prioritize inclusion and diversity, constantly striving to ensure that our PCCs reflect the makeup of our congregations and wider communities. Additionally, we are dedicated to making our churches more accessible and welcoming, with a special focus on accommodating individuals with physical disabilities and those affected by dementia.

The Team Council has responsibility for developing and maintaining a consistent safeguarding focus. The team safeguarding representative is supported by Parish Safeguarding officers at each church. As part of the Christian Church living in the spirit of the Gospel, we are committed to protect and care for everyone. We aim to be a leading example of best practice in safeguarding, ensuring that our volunteers, clergy, advisers,

and lay people achieve the standards laid down in the Safeguarding Policies of the Diocese and the Church of England. Guided by our Team Safeguarding Officer and supported by our Diocesan Safeguarding Team, we work to identify safeguarding risks, to ensure that all members of the church community are safeguarded. Holding to account all persons responsible for the safety and wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults in the Parish.

A Team Ministry

Our Team Ministry is dedicated to supporting our congregations through various initiatives and services, fostering a culture of continuous learning and community engagement. We organize joint initiatives like Lent and Advent study groups, Communion and Confirmation preparations, and an annual Baptism party. Additionally, we oversee nurture groups such as 'Being With', 'SHAPE', and the Pilgrim Course, alongside courses like the Alpha Course and those focusing on further development such as Living in Love and Faith, unconscious bias training, dementia awareness, and domestic abuse awareness—essential for all PCC members. In addition, we hold an annual bereavement service and an Advent carol service, providing spiritual support during significant times of the year.

Our ministry extends beyond the church to our local schools, where we offer support and training sessions, including unconscious bias training for the BMAT Multi Academy Trust schools in our district. Our Ministers also serve as school governors and charity trustees when needed. The Team takes weekly collective worship at our local Church of England Secondary School (one of only four in the diocese) – Epping St John's (ESJ) and in our two church primary schools within Epping, supporting their religious education provision. We also have a relationship with our three secular primary schools (one independent), including providing termly assemblies. In addition, we organise various multi-school events throughout the year, such as an annual Singing Festival, Easter Workshop and Environment Day Workshop.

Led by our Pastoral Assistant, our Pastoral Care Team works with many care homes in the area, offers home communion, and aids those in need. Their strong ministry in working with those affected by dementia has been recognized by the Epping Forest District Council and The Alzheimer's Society, including hosting virtual coffee mornings, occasional gatherings, specific services, and dementia awareness training.

Collaborating with Changing Pathways Domestic Abuse Service, we sponsor a peer support group for survivors of domestic abuse. Additionally, we have active youth ministry in all our parishes and our Team Youth Group for 12-18 year olds meets monthly in a local café.

We have recently led new groups such as Queerly Beloved and Forest Church. Our Eco working group ensures environmental issues are prioritized within our PCCs, promoting biodiversity and energy efficiency in our buildings.

We maintain strong connections with the HeartEdge Network, hosting events to enrich the local community. Furthermore, we engage with a large range of other groups in the town and wider Epping Forest district, and you can read more about those in the Parish Profiles of our three churches below.

The Epping Team Ministry

Current Worship Pattern

Day	Times	Service	Church
Sunday	8am	BCP Holy Communion	St Johns
Sunday	9.20am	CW Holy Communion (second Sunday lay led service)	St Johns
Sunday	11.10am	CW Holy Communion	All Saints
Sunday	11.10am	CW Holy Communion	St Albans
Sunday	6pm	Choral Evensong or Prayer and Praise Worship	St Johns
Monday	8.30am	Morning Prayer	St Johns
Monday	5.30pm	Evening Prayer	St Johns
Tuesday	8.30am	Morning Prayer	St Johns
Tuesday	5.30pm	Evening Prayer	St Johns
Wednesday	8.30am	Morning Prayer	St Johns
Wednesday	9.30am	Holy Communion	St Johns
Wednesday	5.30pm	Evening Prayer	St Johns
Thursday	5.30pm	Evening Prayer	St Johns

The Sunday 9:20 am service at St John's is usually led by the Rector, as the Parish Priest. All other services are led by the Rector or other members of the Ministry Team.

We also have Baptism Services held across all three team churches, mainly on Sundays, and occasionally within the main Sunday Service.

THE RECTORY

Our new Rectory is in Buckingham Road, Epping, CM16 5AG. It is a spacious six-bedroom family home within the Arboretum development, built 2015. It is a short walk to St John's Church. It features: Six bedrooms, three with en-suites bathroom, a family bathroom, modern, spacious kitchen/diner, utility room, landscaped rear garden, garage and off-road parking.



Front Entrance



Floor Plan



Lounge



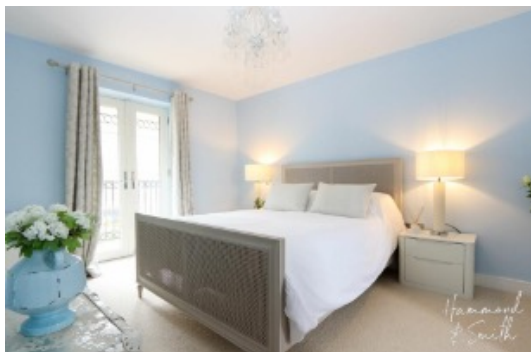
Second Reception



Kitchen



Dining Room



Bedroom



Bedroom



WELCOME TO OUR PARISH

Ours is an inclusive, loving, and welcoming community at the heart of Epping. We are truly a broad church: reflected in a diverse and enthusiastic congregation of all ages, and through an exciting and eclectic mix of Anglican traditions and approaches by which we are all called to Christ.

St John the Baptist (eppinganglicans.org.uk/) is in the Parish of Epping. The Parish covers three wards in the Epping Forest District and a population of around 12,500 people, 50% of whom identify as Christian according to the 2021 census data.

Epping is a historic market town, which grew along a principal trading route into and out of London. The Monday market remains a popular weekly attraction on our high street, which contains a mix of shops, services, and businesses. Epping is surrounded by farmland and smaller villages, and of course gives its name to Epping Forest which lies close to the town.

Embracing future growth opportunities is one of the exciting challenges both for our town and our church community. Despite changes, Epping maintains a vibrant high street with diverse shops and services, including popular chains and local favourites. Essential amenities such as three primary schools, one secondary school, a hospital, and community hubs enrich the town's fabric, fostering a strong sense of community through various social and cultural groups.

We have strong links to the nearby Secondary School - Epping St John's (ESJ) which is one of only four Church of England secondary schools in the Diocese of Chelmsford. In addition, through the renovation of our old church hall 16 years ago, we host The Open Box Education Centre (OBEC, openboxeducation.org.uk/) in a purpose built premises funded in agreement with the Koinonia Youth Trust. This building is situated alongside our Church building on St John's Road and provides an independent alternative provision school catering to students aged 14-16 with unmet educational needs.

OUR CHURCH BUILDING

St John's is a beautiful Grade II* listed building, designed by the leading Victorian architect GF Bodley in the Gothic style. It is beautifully decorated with furnishings by Bodley, his followers and contemporaries: with outstanding stained glass, a fine organ and a spectacular early 20th century rood screen and reredos. The foundation stone was laid in 1889 and the church was completed in 1908.

For Bodley, like us, the church had to be at the centre of local communities, not just physically, but as a facility for local people in their everyday lives. He was forward thinking in how he laid the church out: St John's has no pews as he wanted the space inside to be as flexible as possible. This has been a huge blessing, allowing us

to provide different forms of worship, and a space that can be configured in many ways for all kinds of events. To learn more about these, please visit our online events pages and our Facebook page @eppingchurchUK

eppinganglicans.org.uk/about-3
facebook.com/eppingchurchUK/.

Over the years, the church has received many gifts, a testament to the heartfelt worship experienced here. A recent addition is the St. Francis stained-glass window in the

Transfiguration chapel. We've used careful budgeting to install new lighting, sound systems, and step-free access to the main doors. Our goal is to preserve and build upon this legacy for future generations. As part of our EcoChurch initiative, we're enhancing energy efficiency while maintaining the building's beauty. Currently at Bronze, we are aiming for Silver status. Our church serves as a community asset, hosting choirs, concerts, charity, and community events, along with Deanery services and meetings.



PEOPLE AND WORSHIP

Our church community at St John's embraces people from very many different traditions and approaches. We find strength in that diversity, with everyone able to meet Christ and enjoy fellowship with each other through the broad range of services and types of ministries that are on offer. We could be described as a solid, "Parish Anglican" church. We offer an open, welcoming, and non-judgemental approach to everyone seeking regular and occasional offices. There are two Eucharist Services at St John's every Sunday at 8am and 9:20am which are provided from the Book of Common Prayer and Common Worship respectively, Regular Eucharist services at 9.30am on Wednesdays and other services on important feast days and during Advent, Lent, and Holy Week. These form the bedrock of our worship alongside more informal lay-led services, including a monthly all age "Up Front" service on a Sunday morning and Prayer and Praise service with worship band on a Sunday evening. Our "Sundays at Six" programme offers a diverse series of reflective services and meetings - from Compline and Taize to talks on faith in art.

All our services (with the exception of our all-age services) are live streamed on our Facebook and YouTube pages.

youtube.com/@EppingAnglicans

There are currently 144 names on our parish Electoral Roll, of which 98 are resident and 46 non-residents. And our usual Sunday attendance in 2023 was approximately 105, rising to 148 at Christmas services. In 2023 we held 6 weddings, 12 funerals and 39 baptisms.

Our clergy are supported during services by our committed laity: from sidespeople and servers, to the choir and bell ringers. Special services such as our annual Remembrance Service, Bereavement Service for the relatives of those whose funerals have been taken by the ministry team in the previous year, and services for other civic occasions take place throughout the year.

Music plays a hugely important role in church life, and we are blessed with an outstanding musical director, organists, and choir. Our main Sunday services use a mix of traditional and more contemporary hymns. No style dominates, and the reflective monthly Choral Evensong (led by the Choir) and the livelier contemporary

songs at our Up Front lay-led all-age services (led by the St John's Band), together with our Prayer and Praise service led by the Worship Band reflect the diversity of our musical provision.

Recently we were joined by new members of the congregation who have come to the UK as refugees. Our brothers in Christ were housed at a local hotel. They were valued members of our congregation; they joined us to share Christian Faith and Fellowship, with some being Baptised and confirmed here at St John's.

Supporting our inclusive vision, we have a Dementia Awareness group which influences how we use signs and liturgy. We run some special services for those with dementia.

We support Prayer, Bible study and Fellowship



groups, and we continuously look to ways to increase these. Our pastoral care team visits local hospitals and care homes and provides home communion and pastoral visits to those who are unable to come to church themselves, organised by our Pastoral Assistant.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH GROUPS

At St John's we are committed to ministering to the whole family of God. We are blessed with many young families in regular attendance and children and young people are a valued and integral part of our family. We have a dedicated space for very young children within our church building and we run multiple groups on Sunday, during church services specifically aimed at the varying age groups.

We invite you to watch a recent video made by our children's groups:

youtu.be/4E1H3asdnhY?si=wE5pfBMd2OLffkJJ

We have an active team of seven trained (and DBS checked) voluntary Childrens group leaders led by our Epping Team Youth and Families Worker. Together they offer children's groups catering for 0-11-year-olds, during every Sunday Service except on the second Sunday which is our all-age "Up Front" service. Children are also strongly encouraged to participate as members of our Choir and Bellingring team and our older youth group members (Go Gen) are often seen serving and reading the Gospel at our learning Sunday services every fourth Sunday.

Group	Age range	Where	When
Little Lambs	0-4	St Johns House, next to the Church Building	During 9.20 am Service: 1st, 3rd, and 4th Sunday
Sunday School	5-7 years (KS 1)	The Open Box Centre	During 9.20 am Service: 1st, 3rd and 4th Sunday
Go Generation	7-12 years (KS2 & early KS3)	The Open Box Centre	During 9.20 am Service: 1st, 3rd and 4th Sunday
Epping Team Youth Group	12-18	Julie's Café, Stonard's Hill Recreation Ground	3rd Thursday of the month, from 6:00pm - 6:45pm
Church Mice	Preschool	In the church	Thursdays during term time, 10 am

For more details about the services we offer for children and young people see our website: eppinganglicans.org.uk/children-youth

We also run a hugely popular baby and toddler group called Church Mice, every Thursday morning during term time which is free and open to all Parents/Guardians and their children in our community irrespective of faith. This is an extremely important part of our Church's ministry offering songs games and prayers for the children whilst providing a space for parents to enjoy tea, coffee, and friendship.

ST JOHN'S IN OUR COMMUNITY

As a town centre church, St John's is in an excellent position to invite people in for all types of events and activities, as well as providing an attractive building for prayer and quiet contemplation. Our building is open and used every day.

Our weekly Market Day Coffee on a Monday morning is an important part of our outreach to the local community and visitors to Epping. St John's Church is used regularly as a venue for musical concerts and recitals, visual and performing arts shows and events, children's celebrations, school study days, the annual Epping Horticultural Show, fitness and wellbeing, as well as our own social events such as Quiz Nights and Harvest celebrations. We also hold an Open Day once a year in May, where the whole community is welcomed into our church and church grounds. The annual St John's Christmas Tree Festival takes place over the first weekend in December and is hugely popular in the town. It is a wonderful occasion where thousands of visitors enjoy a beautiful display of decorated trees in the run up to Christmas. Events such as these help us raise money not only for St John's but also for the other charities we support each year. You can view more details and photos of our activities on our Facebook page.

The ministry of our church community extends far beyond the walls of the church building. We work with the Town Council on civic events and the Royal British Legion for acts of Remembrance around the town, we enjoy close links with the Epping Town Partnership, the fire service, local police, Air Cadets, and the Air Ambulance.

Our church building affectionately referred to by our local Church secondary school, Epping St John's (ESJ) as 'the classroom on the high street'. We regularly co-ordinate events for our local schools, sometimes in collaboration with the pupils at ESJ. Events include: a singing festival; eco workshops in preparation for COP



and Earth Day; a Pride march and a music recital.

We have strong connections with other groups in the town, such as Voluntary Action Epping Forest (VAEF), and the wider district.

We participate with Churches Together in Epping and District (CTED), and attend their meetings, coming together with other churches and denominations to worship, bear joint witness to Christ, and provide events for the local community.

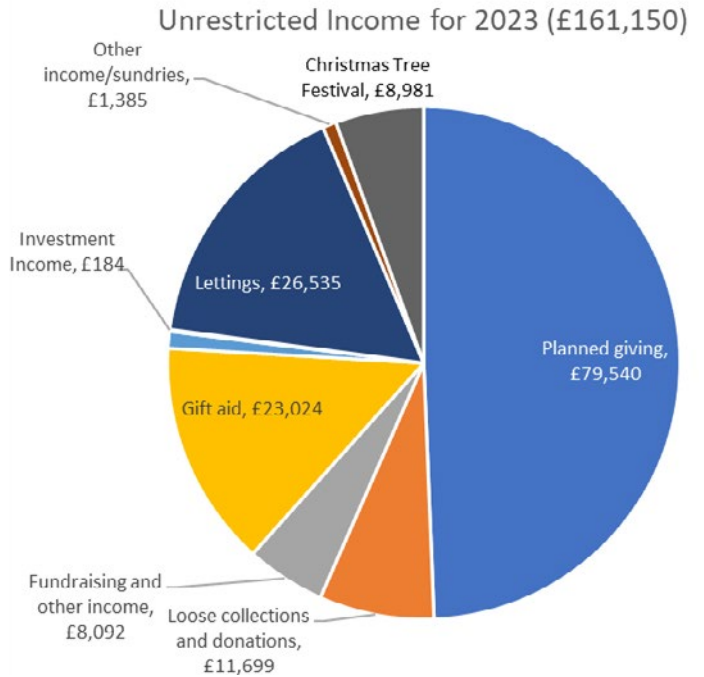
We have a large and active branch of the Mothers' Union based at St John's. Our aims are to support family life, parenting, empower women, combat gender inequality and gender-based violence, and promote the participation and representation of women in our community and worldwide. Our members have been actively involved in various activities and initiatives aimed at supporting families, promoting Christian values, and making a positive impact in our community. One of the main aims of Epping MU has been raising awareness and providing crucial support to survivors of domestic abuse within our community. facebook.com/eppMU/

OUR FINANCES

Our annual income derives largely from pledged giving, donations and rental income on buildings and land and has continued to exceed our expenditure annually. At St John's we are committed to paying our parish share in full each year however, in 2022 and 2023 we were unable to meet this due to a combination of factors but most notably: a loss of charitable giving due to decline in attendance after return to in-person services from the COVID19 pandemic, and problems with expenses incurred due to the flooding of our boiler room caused by external draining issues (acknowledged as the fault by Thames Water) and the energy crisis causing a spike in fuel prices. Our PCC finance committee have been working hard to rectify this imbalance. Fortunately, our Parish Share for 2024 has also reduced significantly to £100,940, the issue with Thames Water has now reached a resolution and fuel prices are starting to decline. Therefore, our current position is that we expect to return to paying our Parish Share in full this year. The PCC feel this to be a priority and have always benefited from having a Rector who shows financial responsibility and is hands on with all financial aspects of St John's.

Year	Parish share	Amount Paid
2017	£104,277	Paid in full
2018	£107,497	Paid in full
2019	£109,716	Paid in full
2020	£110,890	£90,890
2021	£110,412	Paid in full
2022	£116,409	£96,409
2023	£106,977	£87,321
2024	£100,940	

There are no outstanding bills for 2023/24, other than our Parish Share. However, there was a protracted dispute with our energy supplier over our energy bill covering the last three years. This dispute has now been referred to the ombudsman.



Our main charitable giving is the annual Christmas Tree Festival. In 2023, proceeds of £13,868.02 were divided: £2,780 each to Essex Air Ambulance and the Disaster Emergency Committee (DEC), the rest to our General Account. Each year we host a Lent lunch, typically benefiting Christian Aid, Harvest Festival Service typically for the Epping Forest Foodbank, and a Christingle Service for The Children's Society. Church members are generous in their giving to St John's through envelopes, standing orders, cash and card donations (through our card reader), with active promotion of Gift Aid and the Parish Giving Scheme. Our Finance sub-Committee aids this effort via focus on increasing giving and prudent expenditure, alongside our annual Stewardship campaign each autumn.

In autumn 2021 the Team established a new Hardship Fund that allows us to respond with financial help when members of the Ministry team encounter individuals in particular hardship. This has been supported by our Harvest Appeal and donations from the congregation.



WELCOME TO OUR PARISH

Thank you for considering the Epping Team Ministry, including St. Alban's Church Coopersale, as a place where God may be calling you to serve in the next stage of your ministry. We hope that in this Parish Profile you will discover what underpins the life of our church, our village, and our Team, and how God provides so generously in all we do.

St. Alban the Martyr Church (<https://eppinganglicans.wixsite.com/stalbans>) is in Coopersale, northeast of Epping. The parish encompasses parts of Epping and the southern area of North Weald. Coopersale is a diverse village with approximately 1000 residents, featuring a mix of traditional and modern homes, including a majority owner-occupied 1970s council housing estate. According to the 2021 Census, 53% of the village identifies as Christian, with 5% following other religions and the rest having no religious affiliation. The wider parish has around 2,300 residents. Due to its proximity to Epping and the Central Line Underground, most residents commute elsewhere for work.

The village centre boasts a small selection of shops, including an Indian takeaway, grocers, newsagents, and a second-hand furniture and clothing store, all facing the Piazza. This area serves as a communal space where events like the annual "Light up Night" Christmas carol singing bring together the community and church.

Coopersale and Theydon Garnon Church of England Primary School, located centrally, often faces high demand for its single-form entry. The local pub, the Garnon Bushes, is a popular spot for both residents and visitors, while the Theydon Oak, just outside the village, actively supports church and community events.

The Gernon Bushes, a 34-hectare nature reserve of ancient woodland, borders the village and adds to its picturesque charm. St. Alban's Church, positioned at the end of the village, is easily accessible on foot from anywhere within the parish for those who enjoy walking.

OUR CHURCH BUILDING

The church of St Alban the Martyr in Coopersale was consecrated in 1852 with lands and funds given by Miss Archer-Houblon, a local landowner. The adjoining vicarage was sold by the diocese 30 years ago. The church sits at the end of the village, surrounded on one side by woodland and farmland and is connected to Epping via a footpath that crosses the old underground line now used by the Epping Ongar Steam railway.

Our church is small but beautiful, just the right size for the village community and wider parish. We are a Church for all, committed to the value of all people, regardless of boundaries.

St. Alban's is a welcoming and inclusive church who are also committed to the Epping Team Ministry and supportive of Team mission and activities. A member of our congregation is Deanery Synod Secretary.

The most recent Quinquennial Report on the Fabric of the church is dated 23rd May 2019 carried out by Kay Pilsbury Thomas Architects, with no Category A (urgent requiring immediate attention) work required. It is hoped that some of the works listed under Categories B, C & D will be able to be carried out when and if the internal re-ordering mentioned below takes place.

We sold our Parish Rooms opposite Church in November 2022 as they were no longer fit for our use.

Our churchyard is open and well maintained, including a valued Garden of Remembrance for internment of ashes.

Wedding couples enjoy a warm welcome, and appreciate the architecture, size, and beautiful surroundings of our church building. It is hoped to encourage couples to join our fellowship on a more regular basis. Our church has also recently been used as a set for a video production. We carry out Baptisms, Funerals and Burials in our open Churchyard.



PEOPLE AND WORSHIP

St. Alban's church is welcoming, caring & sharing - a praying Spirit filled family. Holy Communion is celebrated every Sunday at 11.10 am with a small but consistent congregation. Marriages and Baptisms take place through the year. Each Christmas we hold a Carol Service with Nativity, and this is very well supported. We currently average around 16 worshippers at our Sunday Communion service, with 22 members on the latest Electoral Roll comprising 15 resident and 7 non-resident. In 2023 we held 2 weddings, 1 funeral and 5 baptisms. Children and Young People's Ministry as an area we are keen to develop.

Although, as a Church, we try to avoid labels St. Alban's would best be described as a "Low Church" in the tradition of our worship. We encourage and develop every-member ministry with the involvement of congregation members in readings, Intercessions, Chalice Serving and piano playing each week. We are an enthusiastic singing congregation, and

we are very fortunate that a member of our congregation plays the piano for us each week, to enhance our worship. We use Mission Praise Hymn Book. We have a beautiful sounding Organ, but unfortunately since Covid19 have not had a regular Organist, nor the funds to engage one. In 2023, a member of our congregation was honoured to be chosen to be a recipient of Royal Maundy money from King Charles III in York Minster.

Messages from visitors of St Alban's

" the people are welcoming"

"happy Church"

"everybody is so kind"

"such a warm and welcoming church - I felt at home as soon as I came in."

ST ALBAN'S IN THE COMMUNITY

We are actively engaged with the people of the village and the Parish. During Covid-19 a Community Group was established in Coopersale which continues to thrive. It is led by a dedicated committee of volunteers, including members of St. Alban's and this has led to the church becoming even more involved in village life and vice-versa.

Here are some of the events we have been involved in:

- Light Up Night with Carols & Songs
- Christmas Market with Santa's Grotto
- Community Quiz in Institute Hall
- Community Day on Cricket Field
- Scarecrow Festival
- Litter Picks & Bulb and Plant planting.
- Sunflower Competition

The above and other Church events are publicised in The Coopersale Chronicle distributed throughout the village and online.

coopersalecommunity.co.uk/events

facebook.com/coopersalechurch/



The Church has organised an annual Easter Egg Hunt for several years which has been much supported by the local community - we have operated this as an outreach event, not as a fundraiser, but the last two events have proven very successful and resulted in many donations. A local Pub operates a Burger & Banger food stand on the edge of the Churchyard and this, coupled with the free refreshments and hot cross buns that we provide in Church add to the success of the day.

A new format for our Remembrance Service was initiated in 2022 at the War Memorial in the Churchyard and successfully repeated in 2023. Members of the wider Coopersale community took part and were appreciative of the opportunity.

We have strong links with Coopersale & Theydon Garnon Church of England Primary School and representatives of the Epping Team support the Governing Body. The school organises Churchyard visits and holds their regular Easter, Harvest & Christmas services at the church. A member of the Epping Team leads a weekly act of Collective Worship in the school during term time.

Several members of our congregation are members of the Pastoral Care Team of the Epping Team, under the leadership of a Pastoral Assistant. They offer a healing and prayer ministry, extending home communion to those unable to get to church, and assist with monthly Services at local Care/Residential sites.

In addition, we are a Bronze accredited Eco Church, working towards Silver, we are "Working to become Dementia Friendly church", and we are a member of CTED - Churches Together in Epping & District, a collaboration of local denominations.



“St Alban’s Church is an incredibly warm and welcoming community to everyone. No matter if a person has faith, a different faith or no faith, they are invited to participate as much or little as they feel comfortable with in the Church. There is never pressure to act or behave in a particular way, rather, there is a freedom to be your whole self at St. Alban’s. The Church is incredibly aware of their position in our village, supportive and present at community events like our Christmas Light-up night (leading a mix of secular and traditional carols), community day, bake sale socials. Coopersale Community Group are delighted to support the Church with the events they lead such as Remembrance Sunday and the Easter Egg Hunt. Their soft touch and continuous presence in our village offers stability in times of uncertainty. And, the informal way in which the Church engages with the village means people may feel more inclined to seek out that support in difficult times.”

Coopersale Community Group Chair

“The school enjoys using the church for special services as well as bringing Christian RE to life. They also use the churchyard for their wider curriculum: art rubbings, science investigations and local history studies. They benefit from the clergy’s support with teaching the Christian element of RE and for weekly collective worship.”

Coopersale & Theydon Garnon C.E. (V.C)
Primary School

OUR FINANCES

Our Parish Share in 2023 was £22,953 which was paid in full via regular monthly payments and one ad hoc payment. We continued to satisfy our other commitments for maintenance, running costs and contribution to Team expenses. For the year ending 31st December 2023 we had an annual shortfall after Transfer between Funds of -£3,046.

At the 31st of December 2023 our total funds amounted to £555,233 of which £5,016 are Restricted Funds for Mission & Outreach, £543,279 Earmarked and £6,938 available, of which £2,613 was held in Barclays Current Account. The remaining funds are held within CCLA CBF Church of England Deposit Funds.

Since the sale of our Parish Rooms opposite Church in November 2022 the PCC are currently investigating some re-ordering of the existing church building to provide a WC, kitchen/servery, meeting, storage and flower arranging areas. These proposals are being carried out by our quinquennial architects.

We are generous givers of time, talent, and money. We care for our beautiful church and its environs and are seeking to improve our facilities for the church and the community.

We support Epping Forest Food Bank with Harvest donations and funds throughout the year.

The prayer of St. Alban:

I worship and adore the true and living God, who created all things.



WELCOME TO OUR PARISH

All Saints' is the original parish church of Epping, dating back to the 13th century. Initially mentioned in 1177 as part of King Henry II's possessions granted to the Augustinian Canons of Waltham, it was later assigned to Waltham Abbey by Pope Clement III in 1191 and exempted from episcopal authority by Pope Alexander IV in 1255. Until the dissolution of the Abbey in 1540, it remained under its jurisdiction. Afterward, it came under the authority of the Bishop of London. Post-Reformation, All Saints' and St John's Chapel were jointly served by one cleric. However, by the late 19th century, the growing population and economic importance of the town part of the parish led to St John's becoming the parish church for all of Epping under the Epping Church Act of 1888. All Saints' status was reduced to that of a chapel-of-ease to St John's.

The church is in Epping Upland parish, covering an area of approximately 172km, with most residents in Epping Green. It's located about a mile from the village and fosters strong ties with Epping Upland Church of England Primary School, engaging in various activities within the school community.

Epping Upland Parish Council oversees the allotments, Millennium Garden, Parish Burial Ground, and War Memorial. Epping Long Green, a historic pathway, is managed by the Corporation of London and popular for walking and horse riding. The surrounding area is mainly farmland, with a small Evangelical Baptist chapel in Epping Green. The Village Green, leased from Copped Hall Estate, is managed by Epping Green Community Association, which has organized events like 'Pub in the Park,' Jumble Trail, and a fireworks display, and features a playground and outdoor gym equipment.

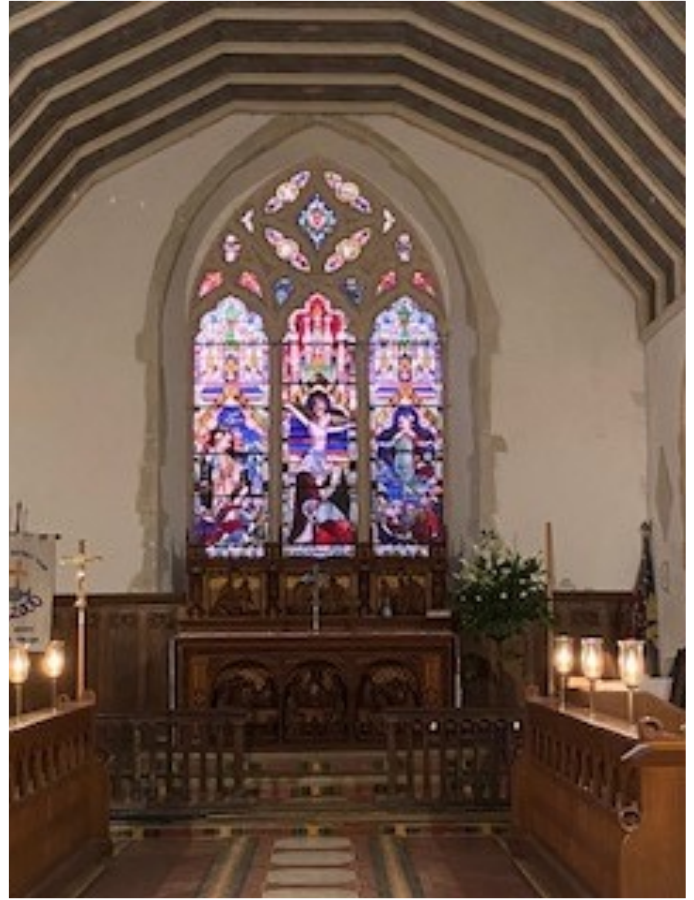
OUR CHURCH BUILDING & GROUNDS

The fabric and grounds are maintained by an enthusiastic group of volunteers made up of members of the congregation and Epping Forest Countrycare. The main group meets on the second Saturday of the month and undertakes any works which are required. In addition to these sessions, the Head of Fabric undertakes general works and oversees third parties.

About the Church

All Saints Epping Upland (<https://www.eppinguplandchurch.org.uk/>) is a Grade II* listed church, originating in the 13th century with later additions, features a 15th-century south porch, a 16th-century tower, and an 1876-78 Arts and Crafts restoration by James Brooks. Stained glass windows adorn the east, west, and south elevations. Inside, fixed pew seating dominates, with a cleared area at the west end for congregation and events. Recent reconfiguration allows for flexible use, including social gatherings and children's activities. The interior's excellent acoustics make it ideal for concerts. Despite damp issues from the Victorian restoration, the church remains in good condition, with ongoing maintenance efforts, including cleaning the painted ceiling funded by church members. A team of visiting bellringers, aiming to refurbish the bells, seeks to use the tower for training due to its accessibility and ample facilities.

We are a recognised Animal-Friendly Church and welcome pets to our services, most commonly dogs, although our Pet Service in June has an eclectic mix of creatures. We also hold silver Eco status for our church and have been an important part in rolling out this programme within the Team. We are eager to connect with the local community and are happy to lend our building and grounds to local groups and charities. Recently, the church and grounds were used for a Yoga Day, culminating in a Gong Bath within the building. As well as introducing many newcomers to our community, it raised a significant amount of money for us. In addition, we often welcome special interest groups into our church, such as local history groups, U3A and visiting bellringers.



The Churchyard

The churchyard, accessible from Epping Road, is now closed for burials, with interment of ashes permitted on the south side of the church. A large car park is situated to the southwest, accessible via a private road through the churchyard. While not in a conservation area, we maintain a wildflower area in collaboration with Countrycare, with pathways for public enjoyment. Our grounds are cared for by community volunteers and occasional support from Community Payback. Visitors can relax on seating with views across the valley to Copped Hall and the London skyline. Nearby fields are farmed by local farmers, some of whom are church members. The Fabric Committee have arranged events like bat and moth discovery evenings and historical tours to engage the community and local school children. Soon, we hope to be able to restore our pond to encourage more wildlife and insects into the churchyard.

Our churchyard is also a 'destination' point for many walkers from the surrounding area and we often find visiting hikers, cyclists and families picnicking in the grounds. We like to see others enjoying the beauty of the environment we are blessed with.

The Labyrinth



The Labyrinth has become an important focus for church life during the summer months. This year, for the first time, we used the labyrinth for our Good Friday reflection, placing readings and pictures of the Stations of the Cross within it so worshippers could follow Christ's journey. Many of our congregation walk the labyrinth before and after services for peace and reflection. We have organised prayer evenings and Forest Church using the labyrinth, as well as mindfulness sessions. The Labyrinth looks towards Epping to the south, and we can see the tower of St. John's from it.

Our churchyard is always open, and we actively encourage the local community to visit it and enjoy the peace and tranquillity to enable them to hear God's word.

PEOPLE AND WORSHIP

Our main act of worship on Sundays is the Common Worship Parish Eucharist at 11.10am, during which vestments are worn. We encourage members of the congregation to take part in the worship by reading the lesson, writing, and leading the intercessions, bringing the elements to the altar and helping to administer the sacrament.

Once a month we replace the Parish Eucharist with a shorter, less formal, non-eucharistic Family Service. The Sunday School meets before this service for the children to prepare their contributions to the service and take part in some child-friendly Bible teaching. In December the Family Service takes the form of a Children's Nativity Service (often with a real 'donkey') and on a Sunday in June there is a Pet Service (with the pets present!).

We have 64 members on the latest Electoral Roll comprising 18 resident and 46 non-residents. In 2023 we held 2 weddings and 5 baptisms.

Occasionally Baptisms are conducted during the 11.10 am service (either the Parish Eucharist or the Family Service) but more often they take place on a Sunday at 1pm. Weddings and funerals are arranged as required through the Team Office. There are currently no regular weekday services in the church.

As well as our weekly services, we hold various 'special' services throughout the year. We particularly enjoy hosting the Team Easter Dawn Service on Easter Sunday, followed by bacon sandwiches. Weather permitting, we celebrate the Eucharist outside accompanied by the rising sun and the dawn chorus. In the summer, we hold our Pet Service, where, in stark contrast, we are often accompanied by a cacophony of howling! In the autumn, through the local primary school, we invite the children and families of the new reception class to our Harvest Festival, to welcome them to our broader community. In November, on Remembrance Sunday, we parade to the War Memorial in the adjacent burial ground, accompanied by the Air Cadets and local dignitaries.



Easter Sunday Dawn Eucharist

If our churchyard is at its best in summer, then the church building comes into its own at Christmas. The nave and deep window arches are lit by a plethora of candles, with many Christmas services beginning in darkness; as we journey from darkness to light, we are reminded of the many thousands of people before us who have stood in our church over the centuries and kept the faith of Jesus Christ.



Music for services at All Saints' was provided by a digital organ which replaced the no longer working pipe organ. However, we have recently purchased a Hymnal which is very easy to use and has proved far more reliable than the weekly download from the internet. At the Family Service we also include items from the contemporary hymn and song repertory.

We have a congregation member who is part of the Pastoral Team and the Dementia Awareness group who has been instrumental in ensuring our church and facilities are dementia friendly.

Due to our small congregation, we look to the Team for Prayer, Bible Study and Fellowship groups. We have organised Team events at our church, usually around the nature of our location, e.g. 'Beating the Bounds' on Rogation Sunday, which is a walk around the parish

starting and ending at All Saints' that includes silent reflection and prayer as well as a chance to chat and form friendships.

Our small size means that nobody is a stranger in our church, our common worship has sparked many friendships and inspired groups to explore worship together, in venues away from our own church. Because of our enjoyment of each other's company, our social events are well attended. We can rely on each other in times of sadness and hardship and when someone cannot fulfil their responsibilities on the rota! Our team of wardens and sidespeople are supportive of each other and work well to ensure the smooth running of our church, whilst having fun along the way. Our PCC meetings are full of laughter and love, and we leave feeling lighter for having attended.

ALL SAINTS IN OUR COMMUNITY

Epping Upland C of E Primary School

We have strong links with the local Church of England school and the Ministry Team provide special school services. We also host Epping Upland Primary School's Christmas and Leavers' Services. The PCC funds and organises Bibles to be presented to all children starting in the reception class, as well as the Year 3 children so they can use them during lessons.

"Our Epping Upland School community places tremendous value on our relationship with All Saints Church Epping Upland. The support and knowledge that the clergy offer us with regard to RE and SIAMS give us confidence and belief in our provision and a professional challenge where it is thought we can improve and develop further. We respect and appreciate how the clergy value our school principals and philosophy and work to complement this culture and ethos, rather than impose."

Message from the Headteacher, Epping Upland C of E Primary School

Community events



A major source of income for our church is our fund-raising events, which give us a good excuse to get together.

Please visit our Facebook page to see some pictures of our recent events and activities: [facebook.com/AllSaintsChurchEppingUpland](https://www.facebook.com/AllSaintsChurchEppingUpland)

During most months throughout the summer, we host afternoon teas. In 2023, we organized three such events. The first occurred in June, coinciding with our annual Car Show and tour of the church tower. In July, we offered a cream tea, and typically in September, we host a Fun Dog Show.

We host a myriad of other social events throughout the year which include an 'Autumn Leaves' gathering featuring local acoustic music, plenty of desserts, and wine; a competitive autumn Quiz Night; and a Christmas Jamboree with festive games like Ho Ho Bingo.

Other events include gin tastings, and wine tastings, both of which were very popular and profitable. Expanding our offerings, we hosted a women's prayer evening using a labyrinth and introduced a six-week program of Mindfulness & Wellbeing activities. This included Pilates, yoga, stone painting & poetry, mindful painting, prayerful meditation, and a sound bath, providing a serene escape from the bustle of daily life. These activities, held in our churchyard, sparked conversations about church life with non-churchgoers, aiming to foster community connection and spiritual exploration.

Expressing gratitude, we annually host a lunch for the church working party, many of whom are not church members. This typically coincides with 'The Great Rake' day, where everyone pitches in to clear cut grass from the wildflower meadows.

OUR FINANCES

At All Saints' we are committed to paying our parish share in full each year and we were extremely pleased to do this in 2023, after being unable to do so, in full, in the years following the Covid-19 pandemic. To meet our parish share, we are heavily reliant on fund-raising through social events, therefore the pandemic hit us hard financially. We also had an issue with diseased trees in our churchyard that had to be removed professionally; sadly, we had to take the decision to fund this to the detriment of our parish share payment.

The Epping team Ministry have always been supportive of our fund-raising and look for interesting and original ways to offer events that engage the local community.

We support local charities: asking for donations at after-service coffee for a local animal rescue centre. We have recently finished a three-year commitment to support the work of the Marsabit Diocese in Kenya. Our Harvest appeal supports the local Food Bank. In addition, our Easter breakfast donations went to support the Team's Hardship Fund last year.

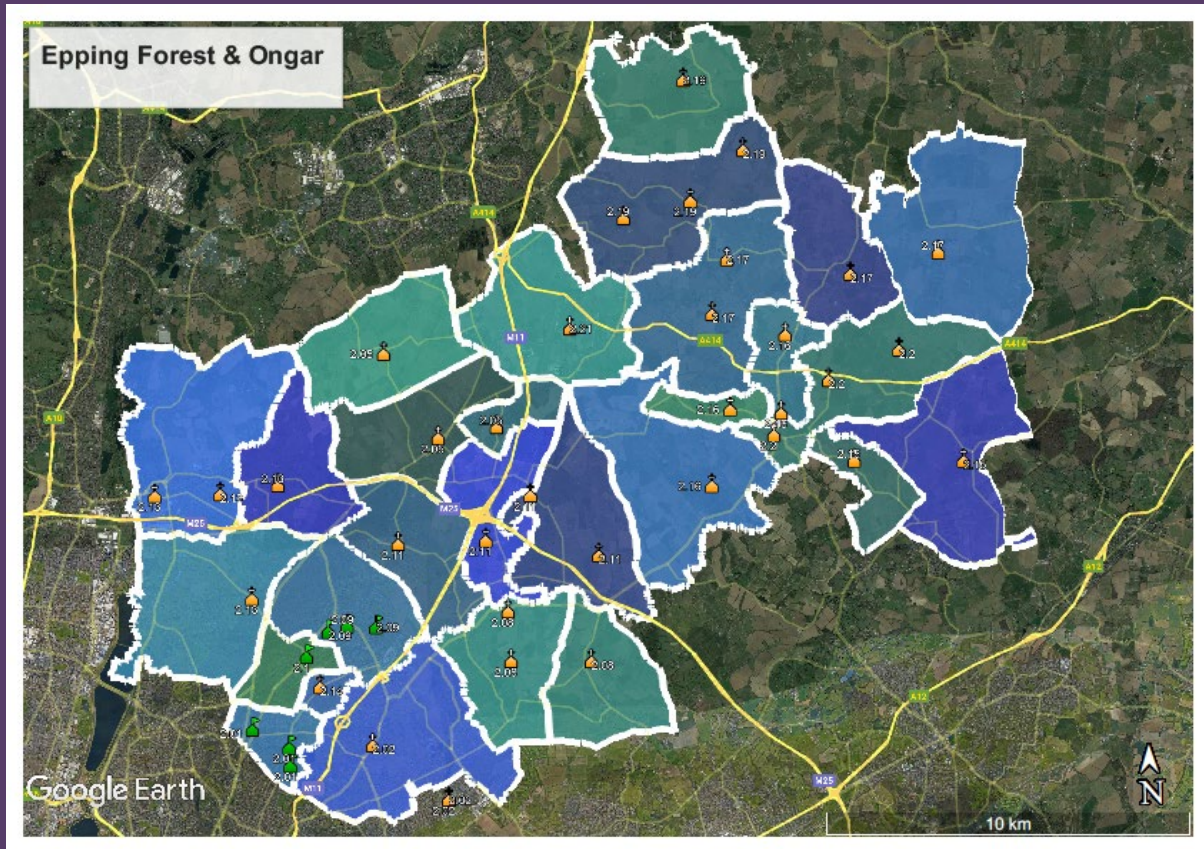
Since the pandemic we have been active in encouraging our church members to give via the Parish Giving Scheme. We still offer Gift Aid envelopes within the church and accept cash donations. We are currently exploring the possibility of a card reader for convenience at both services and social events, although we are hindered by the lack of WiFi in our building.

We were successful in applying for a Covid Grant and this has been used to purchase a Hymnal system and ear-marked to improve the hearing-loop system and the heating.

As well as traditional methods of fund-raising, we hire out our building and grounds to film production companies, with limited impact on worship. We have featured in sitcoms, TV introductions, music videos and Bollywood films. Our building will soon be used as the location for a 20th century South African church! This is a lucrative revenue stream, which we hope will become more frequent.

We have found that sponsorship can be an efficient way of raising money for specific projects, such as cleaning the ceiling or replacing the heating.

The Deanery of Epping Forest and Ongar



The majority of the Deanery is located within the area covered by Epping Forest District Council and parishes within the Deanery reflect the diversity of the local area, some being deeply rural others far more urban. The parishes of the Epping and District Team are those with the parish code 02.05 on the map below, immediate to the north east of the junction of the M25 and M11.

The Deanery has continued to be organised into three Mission and Ministry Units, each discerning together their own strategic direction for mission. The Epping Team is part of the Epping Forest North Unit, which also includes the parish of St John's Loughton and the parishes that make up the Theydon Parishes and Waltham Abbey Team Ministry. The clergy of the unit meet weekly to say Morning Prayer together and enjoy fellowship with one another in each of the ministry contexts of the Unit.

There are currently 22 clergy serving the Deanery in a range of posts, including stipendiary clergy, house for duty posts and self-supporting ministers alongside a number of lay ministers and authorised local preachers. The post of Team Vicar in the Epping Team Ministry became vacant at Easter 2024. The current post holder filled the role on a full time stipendiary basis, but at this stage it cannot be guaranteed that any future Team Vicar would be appointed on the same basis due to the ongoing review of clergy numbers in the Deanery. The new Team Rector will be expected to lead any future recruitment process for this post. Deanery synod meets two or three times a year in the evening, and the Chapter meeting bimonthly over lunchtime varying the day of the week to maximise the opportunity for colleagues to attend, the venues for both meetings rotating around the Deanery. The Deanery looks forward to welcoming the new Team Rector.