



# St Saviour's **PARISH PAPER**

www.stsavioursstalbans.com

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## **COMPASSIONATE CAFÉ ONE YEAR ON!**

**WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP** with Rennie Grove Peace Hospice Care with support from St Albans City & District Council, St Saviour's *Compassionate Café* has been meeting a pastoral need for over a year now. Open on the second Tuesday of every month in the Parish Hall, the café offers a welcome to anyone who has been affected by bereavement or any type of loss, and creates space for a friendly chat and a chance to meet others. Planning for the Café was led by Libby Agrotis and Fr Corniel, and builds on initial conversations that began in 2018. Members of the PCC engaged with the *Reaching New People* project in the Diocese and began to think about the vision of offering some kind of community café space as part of our outreach and mission. Before leaving for the distant wilds of Watford Fr Corniel said: *"We are really excited with how this project is developing. Loss affects many people in different ways, and is something that goes beyond bereavement. The Café is very much a community project which as a church we are pleased to host, and through partnering with Rennie Grove we have a number of volunteers from the local area who have joined the team!"*

The Café is just one aspect of our response to our second MAP Priority to 'identify new projects and partnerships to increase community engagement'. **The Café is open every second Tuesday, 2-3.30pm in the Hall.**



### **Welcome to Emily!**

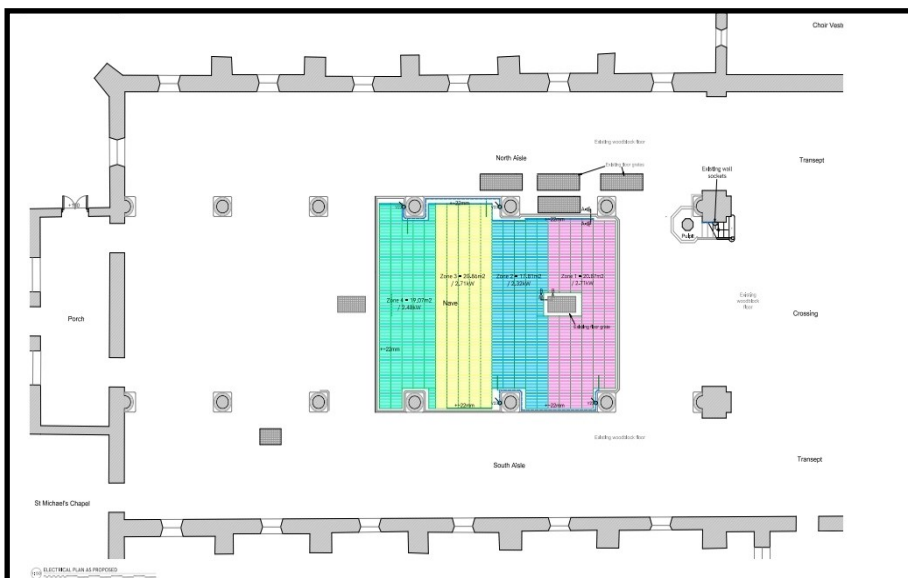
Following her ordination to the diaconate at the end of June, **Emily Lloyd** will serve her title as Curate at St Saviour's. Her first service will be Sunday 6 July at 10am. Emily is married to Jonny, the Vicar of St Michael's Church in St Albans and they have three primary school aged children, Evie, Rupert & Jesse. Emily says: "I'm very excited to be joining the team at St Saviour's and I'm looking forward to getting to know the parish community and congregation. Prayers for my family and I would be much appreciated during this transition period." We are very excited to be welcoming Emily to the Ministerial Team and look forward to the gifts and experience she will bring to our mission & ministry in the parish. Please pray for her in the final months of her training and for her family and the congregations of St Michael's and St Saviour's as she begins her new ministry here.

**God of mission,  
who alone brings growth to your Church;  
send your Holy Spirit to give  
vision to our planning, wisdom to our actions,  
joy to our worship, and power to our witness.  
Help St Saviour's to grow in number,  
in spiritual commitment to you,  
and in service to one another  
and our local community;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen.**

# YEAR-LONG CONSULTATIONS ON NEW CHURCH HEATING SYSTEM

HAVING BEEN LESS than satisfactory for a number of years the gas heating finally gave up the ghost during the Vicar's sabbatical in 2023. When engineers inspected the system early in 2024 it was condemned as unsafe and the churchwardens instructed that the heaters should be disconnected and the gas supply capped. Then began a process of consultation, first with the Diocesan Net Zero Carbon Officer to ensure that any possible solution would comply with the PCC's commitment to reducing carbon emissions and so lay the foundations for a sustainable future for St Saviour's. Following a site survey the Diocesan Net Zero Officer submitted a comprehensive report to the PCC outlining a series of options based on his assessment of the needs of the worshipping congregation, local community and the practical requirements of the building.

There then followed a series of surveys, specifications and quotations from a variety of professionals ranging from a traditional 'wet' underfloor heating system (similar to the one recently installed at St Peter's and with an anticipated costs of over a quarter of a million pounds), to infrared electric heaters at the head of each column in the nave, very similar to the system removed in the late 1970's to make way for the gas heaters. Unit costs for this scheme would have been considerably lower, but installation and rewiring supervised by our architect would have more than doubled the price and not been the quick and easy solution we had initially hoped for. The most aesthetically satisfying suggestion was a series of 10 wrought iron chandeliers bearing electric heaters at a cost of £7k per chandelier, plus rewiring, installation and VAT. But in every case the contractor advised the same, that for a building of St Saviour's size, no single solution would be possible. Fundamentally the space in church is unheatable. So the focus would need to be on heating the *people*, and whichever scheme was decided on, it would only ever be one part of the solution.



## CHANCELLOR'S COMMENDATION

In granting the faculty for the proposed scheme, the Diocesan Chancellor praised the PCC for its level of thought, creativity and commitment to net zero thinking. Once a tender price has been accepted the PCC will be able to apply for grant assistance from the Diocese, and the remaining costs can be met from PCC funds.

## CONGREGATION FIRST

Looking for a way forward that was both affordable and offering a relatively quick return for the worshipping congregation, the church architect and Diocesan NZC Officer proposed a scheme which has recently been trialed in smaller churches. Rather than expensive underfloor excavations, an electric heat mat would be installed in the section of the nave where the congregation are seated which heats up to 28°C in 15-20 min. As with a conventional underfloor system, the heat rises and warms people before it dissipates above average head height. The PCC has now instructed the architect to go ahead with a four-zone scheme at an estimated cost of £23k-£25k. Tenders were expected to be in before Christmas but our preferred contractor, Lodge & Son have only just been able to assess the job in order to bid. ***The PCC expects to receive tenders and authorize the works at its extraordinary meeting on Weds 26 Feb.***

Above: Plan outlining the position of four independently controlled heating zones in the nave, approx. 1 inch high with a beveled edge to prevent tripping. The scheme allows for the heated area to be extended onto the platform or into the side aisles at a later date according to need.



## NAVE DEVELOPMENT: INITIAL VISUALIZATION

AS THERE IS no single solution to heating the church building efficiently or economically as it is, we need to think how such a vast space might be adapted to provide areas which can be heated separately for various meetings and activities. The basic vision was outlined at the APCM in May 2024 with a positive response from those present, but the original idea goes back to a meeting between the PCC and the Diocesan Advisory Committee before lockdown. Their assessment was that access urgently needs to be improved, and that it is unacceptable for the church to have no toilet facilities in the main building. The PCC had already highlighted the need for a kitchen/coffee area to be made permanent, and in addition to the provision of WCs had included a church office and meeting space in their 'wish list'. The wood panel and glass partitioning shown in the visualization above includes on the left a kitchen/bar area and toilets in the current St Michael's Chapel, with a staircase leading to a mezzanine floor with a meeting room, storage and access to the bell and roof space. On the right side nearest the font is an office area and a second meeting room but with no upper floor so leaving the stained glass window unaffected. The PCC have asked the architect to prepare a scheme for presentation to the DAC and there will be a consultation meeting with the congregation in the coming months as things progress. We assess costs and explore applications to grant making trusts.

## ORGAN TRANSPLANT

*You may be aware there are **two** pipe organs in church, but you may not realise why! The Victorian organ in the chancel is used for the Parish Mass each week, but in need of substantial repair and renovation. In the last few years we have made minor repairs and begun to build up a fund to enable its full restoration. The larger instrument is the property of the **International Organ Festival** and has resided at St Saviour's rent free since 1989. The IOF are in the process of arranging its transfer to St Paul's, Knightsbridge but have to strengthen the gallery where it will be sited! Once gone, we will be in a position to resume a conversation with the DAC and The Victorian Society about the removal of our choirstalls and plans to enlarge the nave altar platform to improve its use for concerts, and include heating mats like those planned for the nave.*

St Saviour's has begun the New Year with a new parish website and a new home on the web! [www.stsavioursstalbans.com](http://www.stsavioursstalbans.com)

## STEWARDSHIP: LENT 2025

LED BY THE PCC and as part of our Lenten observance this year, we will all be encouraged to review our financial giving to enable our ongoing mission & ministry. Just to keep the basics going it costs £400 per week to keep us 'in business'. Information will be shared on how to sign up for the PARISH GIVING SCHEME.



### INTERFAITH FRIENDSHIP HITS THE AIRWAVES

A new interfaith podcast has grown from the friendship between Rabbi Adam (SAMS), Akhtar Zaman (Islamic Centre) and Fr Richard. Working as the *St Albans Interfaith League* (SAIL) the trio have spoken in schools and at interfaith gatherings across the district, and most recently have recorded the fifth installment of their podcast *A is for Abraham*. Each episode follows a letter of the alphabet and explores the differing approaches each faith tradition has to Abraham, Beginnings, Community, Doubt and...well if you want to hear what E is for then tune in! You can use the QR code to find the podcast on your device.



## Swifts finally find their promised rest

IT SEEMED LIKE a straight-forward project to boost our eco-profile by installing swift boxes on the Walton Street side of the church, but for a variety of reasons it became a rather long-running saga through 2024. We were advised by our local eco-friends at *Wilderhood Watch* that our building's height make it an ideal site for encouraging the existing swift colony to grow, so permissions were granted and ladders climbed! The boxes contain a small speaker which will be activated at the beginning of the nesting season (May-August) to hopefully welcome new residents!

## O COME ALL YE FAITHFUL!

OVER THE YEARS *Carols till Closing* has grown into something of a St Albans institution, having been numbered by the national press among the 'most Christmassy' events in Britain. Bizarre but true! In 2024 Fr Richard took on a record number of ten pubs around the city, most of which were full to capacity before they'd even started singing. Each year there's a nominated local charity that benefits from the bucket cash collection each night. This year's charity was **Herts Young Homeless** and the ten evenings generated a record **£1,460** to support young people living on our streets. This year, at the suggestion of the pub landlords, St Saviour's also received a donation in return for the Vicar's vocal efforts! It was agreed at £100 per pub but some paid over the odds and the church received £1,450 as a result. **Thank you!**



## HARVEST DONATION ACKNOWLEDGED IN NEW BERNARDS HEATH PLAYGROUND

BEFORE THE WEATHER turned last autumn, **Families at Four** went up onto the Heath to seek out the 'thank you brick' set into the ground of the new play area created by local charity *Let's Play Bernards Heath*. A percentage of our income from Harvest in 2022 was donated towards the cost of the renovation of the play area which is used all year round by families on the Heath - especially children on the way home from Bernards Heath Junior School!



**ST SAVIOUR'S PARISH PAPER** is published at various times through the year to keep us all updated with the progress of the Mission Action Plan and report on other news and events.

If you'd like more information on any of the features included in the paper then please contact Fr Richard email: [vicar.stsaviours@gmail.com](mailto:vicar.stsaviours@gmail.com) | [www.stsavioursstalbens.com](http://www.stsavioursstalbens.com)