



St John's Greenland

A Family of Faith Centred on Jesus

A Year of Activity and Distractions

Looking through the diary at 2025 revealed many good things that we, as church, got on with but also highlighted a number of things which could be considered as distractions. I had full year of being, in theory, 25% St John's and 75% RMA. I say, 'in theory,' as this ignores other roles I carry, such as Area Dean, work with Faith at Work, plus a number of other things.

The challenge is all of this is to seek to follow where the Spirit of God is leading. I keep being drawn to a question that a colleague shared with me.

How is your relationship with God these days, or do you simply work for Him?

We can get so wrapped up in the doing that we ignore the being, or perhaps that is just me.

Firstly, I am so thankful to all of you for making St John's the church it is. We have our challenges but we manage to keep that focus on God that this so important. We also manage to look outward rather than simply looking to maintain the status quo.

We have the continuing stuff we do to worship God and reach out: our Sunday services including café and activity church. We have our tea service, toddlers and Messy church. We have the activity of this place which draws many people into contact. Contact that we can seek to build upon.

But, to continue to be healthy and sustainable we can see the risks. None of us are getting any younger and society around us has different challenges. We therefore do need to press into discerning what God wants St John's to be in the future.

I believe our focus can remain the same:

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Similarly our shared vision can remain:

To be confident, vibrant disciples of Jesus

To grow new disciples of Jesus

To grow younger disciples of Jesus

Paul's Comments

AGM 28th April 2026

To demonstrate the life of Jesus in our daily lives and in our communities

But, how can we move to where God needs us to be? We can risk operating in an environment of high support and low challenge – that risks being a cosy club. Can we be a place of high challenge and high support?

A Personal Perspective

As I ponder 2025 and where we are now. I am conscious that I may be offering less support than is helpful.

Much of this comes from the distractions I mentioned up front.

Getting the RMA running was tough and time consuming, there were two new clergy to get licensed and Glenn moved on from the Christ the King Team towards the end of the year. Plus there were a number of pastoral issues which made 2025 an "interesting" year.

I had hoped that we could build up a core group of people to work on the heart of who we are as St John's; that is as a body with all its varied parts. All of the different areas we work at, operating as one body.

I really do want us to return to that vision of a smaller group of people who pray and focus on holding the body together.

A recurring image is that of an octopus. Each of the 8 legs can operate on its own, doing its own thing but there are times when legs need to work together with the body to move to a place or perform an important task, such as eating.



I see the small core group as the body, with the limbs doing what they need to focus on much of the time but held together.

The challenge is that I have limited time, in a number of senses, to help make this happen. Attempts thus far have had spasmodic attention from me and so we keep stalling. I firmly believe we need to push past this.

We need to look to what we want not just now or next year, but 2 years hence and beyond. Who is it we want to be working on that? I can play some part but who will be part of this now and onwards?

Moving to High Support High Challenge

So, we need to challenge each other and support each other. Appreciating we all have things which distract or very reasonably need and deserve our attention but there are things God is calling to focus on collectively.

We are called to love one another:

'A new command I give you: love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.'
John 13:34-35

But this does not mean that we move to inaction to avoid hurt or conflict. We may need to put things down to allow ourselves opportunity to pick up new things or to allow others to step into new places.

How can we do that together, what does that look like for us as individuals and as Christ's Church?

We need to be thinking and praying now about what this body will be in two or more years. Please can we challenge each other to make that happen.



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And a Huge Thank You

There's a lot to be thankful for. Many people and activities are mentioned in the report.

Can I add my thanks to Amanda and Barry for all they bring of themselves to role of churchwarden. They each contribute out of who they are which is a joy to see.

I'm also grateful for the way in which so many people contribute to the shared worshipping life of the church here and beyond. The beyond including the Team Parish wide Messy Church and the support folk gave to the Redditch wide Toy Appeal and Easter Blessings pop ups in the Kingfisher. Also, there are many ways in which we service as individuals beyond the local church.

Can I also offer my thanks for the office space we now have in the hall, which provides a base for the RMA.

Finally, thanks to all of those who work away in ways which are often unseen: Work to keep the buildings clean, tidy and safe; Work to ensure that relationships are maintained and those who pray and hold the family of church in prayer before God.

Thanks to you all for how you contribute to being church here in Greenlands.

Paul – April 2026