



Anglican Parish of St John

2026
Annual General
Meeting
Reports

VICAR'S REPORT

Over this past year my roles and responsibilities have shifted dramatically. The Parish has been profoundly supportive in all aspects of my ministry within the congregation. It has been a joy and an honour to have been formed for ministry within St John's, and to now have been appointed the new Vicar of St John's. I am very excited for the year ahead and pray that the Spirit will continue to lead us as we move into this new era together.

Formation for Priesthood

1. Early on in 2025 I joined a Clinical Pastoral Education group led by Rev'd Val Riches. This group focused on how we, as ministers within our context, engage in Pastoral Care. We were taught many tools and encouraged to reflect deeply on each pastoral encounter in order to find ways to improve.
2. On June 15th of 2025 I was ordained to the Diaconate at St Francis in Hillcrest. This was a really exciting and celebratory occasion. I was overwhelmed with the amount of support my family and I received. Although I only remained a Deacon for around 5 months, this time was helpful in giving a new and deeper perspective on the role of the ordained minister with the Anglican Church.
3. I was ordained to the Priesthood on November 21st of 2025 in St John's. The whole Church was packed to the brim as I was ordained alongside Reverend Liz Lightfoot and Reverend Jono Macfarlane. A really joyous occasion for the whole congregation and the Diocese.

Bible Study

The Bible study has been really positive this year. We have an encouraging group, who are always keen to question and discuss, which makes for an engaging atmosphere. Throughout the year we engaged in both the Advent study and in a focused 3 week study on Interpreting the Bible. I believe the Advent study, with contributors from Priests within our Archdeaconry, was a real success. I would like to thank Reverend Stephanie Owens, Reverend Turi Hollis and Reverend Julie Guest for the time and effort spent on writing such thought provoking material. I believe these types of studies can go on to be a helpful resource for our Archdeaconry and possibly broader. Our Interpreting the Bible study was a more indepth, challenging look at how we view the Bible and the different contexts that can offer broader perspectives.

mainly music

mainly music has continued to be a consistent place of encouragement and support for parents and caregivers. Although it has not grown a lot over the past year, the relationships built have deepened and we are seeing newcomers warmly welcomed by all. This ministry has relied heavily on technology - specifically the use of ppt - which has meant only a certain few have been able to lead. I would like to see this shift over the next year, providing more room volunteers to be actively involved in leading.

Final Note

Having come back from 2 months with the Hamilton Cathedral, I am very excited to begin ministry with St John's Parish again. I was extremely heartened to hear the way that we stepped up to support Reverend Ben Ong during his time as Priest in Charge. It gives me a great hope for what we can achieve as a unified Parish of 5 churches. Although we are

reasonably small in number in each of the individual churches, we are able to be a presence of Christ, in the power of the Spirit covering a large section of Waipa. I pray that we will find ways to become more united as well as stretch further into the community. Thank you again, for all your support as we begin this new journey together.

God bless.

Reverend Sam Pullenger
Vicar



ASSISTANT PRIEST'S REPORT

I thought perhaps I should let the Parish know what I get up to as Assistant Priest, I also know no-one enjoys having lots of reports to read for an AGM, so I'll try to keep it brief!

I usually lead a service (occasionally two) on about three Sundays each month and I preach on one of those Sundays. I try to attend the Paariha service at St. Paul's each month as well, and also the kai afterwards. I lead the small group learning Te Reo each Thursday of term. We currently have seven people in the group so there is room for a few more. It's very basic, very relaxed, suitable for absolute beginners and anyone else who wants to come. I lead a team for the Monday Meal once a month, the team being made up of Anglican, Methodist, Mormon and a non-churchgoer.

In addition I attend Vestry and Diocesan gatherings as I'm able, as well as TACCLA (the local gathering of clergy and church leaders for the churches of Te Awamutu). I represent our Parish at meetings of the Kihikihi Residents and Ratepayers group and the Te Awamutu Health and Welfare Forum.

I am here as a support for our Vicar and Parish, I'm immensely grateful to be part of the team that is the Parish of St. John and I'm looking forward with excitement to the year ahead.

Thanks be to God for all the blessings we receive.

Reverend Stephanie Owen



VICAR'S WARDEN AND PEOPLE'S WARDEN REPORT

This was a very busy year for Ministry. In October, at the end of Synod, the Parish of Orakau became part of the St John's Parish. It is a joy to welcome their members to our parish. We look forward to developing ministry in Kihikihi, with all its young families. We give thanks to God for the outreach which we can do: the Monday Meal, Mainly Music, Friday Club, Death Café, Knit & Natter. All these are ways we can take the love of God into the community. 2025 saw a larger number of Baptisms than usual – about 15 at last count. We give thanks that so many families see the importance of passing on faith to their children.

Two highlights of the year were both Sam's ordinations – to Deacon in June and to Priest in November. Both services were fully attended by people from St John's. In November it was great to welcome some 250 from around the Diocese and to be able to offer hospitality.

Our Churches and Buildings

The last two years have seen the focus by the Vestry and Trust Board on overdue maintenance and upgrade of our buildings. In March 2025 we re-dedicated the windows in St Paul's after a stunning restoration. In the same month we blessed our new Admin Area which has proved very practical and the new bathrooms are a vast improvement on what we had before. We are also grateful to the Opp Shop for their support to maintain that historic building also the Women's Fellowship who paid for much of the painting on the hall and in St John's. The next step is to look at what we can do at Christ Church. As a result of the thefts of copper during the re-build of the admin area we have become much more security conscious. There are now several cameras which monitor the outdoor areas at night, but security during the day is also an ongoing concern. St John's needs to be a safe place at all times, both for our staff and for parishioners.

Stewardship

We are concerned that the proportion of church activities financed by regular giving is steadily declining. If we were not in the fortunate position of receiving significant funds from leases, we could not afford to pay a priest. Vestry will consider this issue in the next few months, but it is an issue which will probably need a meeting of all parishioners, so that we canvas the widest possible views.

Thank you

Firstly, thank you to Archdeacon Julie for her seven years of Ministry with us in Te Awamutu. She has always given 110% or more and well deserves to wind down a little. Our thanks to Andrew for his unfailing support of Julie's ministry and for all the practical jobs which he took on in the parish.

We give thanks for Rev. Steph's 40 years of ministry in this parish. Steph has always been a vital support to the vicar and her care for the last, the lost and the least is an inspiration to us all.

We also offer our heartfelt thanks to Fr. Ben Ong who stepped in as Priest-in-Charge in February and took on the challenge of trying to preside at 4 services a week. In addition, he got to know a lot of parishioners, attended Vestry, Trust Board, TACCLA and community meetings. If Ben needs a reference in the future, we can provide it!

We give thanks to God for all the ways in which people volunteer to work for his kingdom, all the teams of helpers: Gardening, Monday Meal, Mainly Music, Friday Club (especially Suzanne), Hospitality, Maintenance, Lay Ministers, Readers, Welcomers...

Lastly, we thank God for our staff, Maggie who is an administrator extraordinaire and who has worked particularly hard during this time of interregnum, and Shirley who keeps everything sparkling clean.

We look forward to the next year. It is exciting to have a new Vicar. We welcome Sam warmly to this new role. We commit ourselves to supporting him in whatever ways God calls us to take his love into the community.

Christine Bryant & Coral Lomb



LAY MINISTERS REPORT

It has been a busy year for Lay Ministry. We have had to be nimble to adapt to changing circumstances. With the merging of Orakau and St John's Parish, we have been pleased to welcome Kathie Claypole as a 4th Lay Minister. Kathie has maintained worship at Christ Church for several years and now is able to lead worship in any of our churches.

We are delighted that Lesley Egglestone and Luke East have responded to God's call to Licensed Lay Ministry. In response to the recommendations of the Royal Commission, the requirements for being licensed have been strengthened and require a year's training. Lesley and Luke attended their first Diocesan Training Day last month and they will begin to lead services soon. Please pray for them and give them every support.

It has been a pleasure to work with a number of priests over the year: Julie, Steph, Sam, Ben, Murray Olson, Peter Bargh and Dean Julian. We thank them all for their input into our worship. We particularly thank Julie for her energy, creativity and Spirit-led desire to both enrich worship and to challenge us all to live more deeply into our faith.

In November, it was a joy to recognise Steph's 40 years of priesthood and ministry in the Orakau and Te Awamutu areas. It has given her a deep knowledge of our community and sensitivity to the issues facing us.

LLM's are involved in just about every area of ministry and outreach in our parish. It is amazing to see how many people are reached every week and a joy to share God's love with them.

Finally, it is with pleasure and anticipation that we welcome Sam as Vicar. This will be an exciting time for St John's. We commit to supporting him in every way, especially during this first year of his priesthood.

Christine Bryant, Kathie Claypole, Annette Rea, Helen Stubbs



TREASURER'S REPORT

The report is at the end of this document.

Murray Gardiner



ST JOHN'S TRUST BOARD REPORT

It is my pleasure to report on the activities of the St John's Parish Trust Board for the 2025/26 year.

ADMINISTRATION BLOCK

It has again been a busy year with the main project being the up-grade of the Administration Block. This has been a carefully planned project that was carried out within time and budget. My appreciation especially to our then Vicar Julie and to Andrew Guest

for their large workload in the planning and oversight and to the Contractors who skilfully carried out the work. It is a well justified and worthwhile improvement to the smooth running of our Parish for Staff, Clergy and Parishioners alike.

ARAWATA STREET LEASE

The lease of the former Bunning's Site on Arawata Street had some unfinished clauses in it and I am pleased to say that these have now been finally agreed between us and Waipa Council and signed off just before Christmas.

FIRE PROTECTION

We are appreciative to the Bryant Trust who during the year funded a review of our Fire Protection. The outcome of that review was that we instigated a change from our previous provider to Xero albeit at a slightly higher cost but a much more satisfactory one. Compliance in this area is a necessary part of achieving approval for our use of buildings. My appreciation to Waipa District Council for their patience and assistance in this.

PAINTING

During the year a contract for painting the Parish Hall was let and successfully carried out as was the repainting of the majority of the internal walls in New St John's. New signage was also placed on the Hall wall facing George Street. The internal lighting in the hall was also upgraded.

ST PAUL'S

New fencing on the Southern boundary of St Paul's was erected by a Working Bee as was a wash down and gutter cleaning day by Parishioners of St Paul's.

ST SAVIOURS

A long term flooding problem from our neighbours here was resolved during the year and improvements to the paintwork of the front door. Unfortunately a Working Bee planned for St Saviours had to be postponed due to the inclement weather and the subsequent water restrictions at Pirongia.

LAWN MOWING

A review of our lawn mowing at all Churches also took place and revised arrangements put in place.

TRUST DEED

With legal assistance a review of our Trust Deed was undertaken the result of which was to establish that the cost of any change would be prohibitive with very little added value. It did establish however that it was important that the number of Trustees as stated in our Deed be kept.

INSURANCE

Insurances for all our buildings were signed off with the Anglican Insurance Board.

ORAKAU PARISH

The amalgamation of St John's Parish and Orakau Parish took place during the year and while apart from some minor work in the Christ Church kitchen area little was required this year it will part of our responsibility in the future.

TRUST BOARD

With the change of Vicar in our Parish our previous Vicar Julie (an ex-officio Trust member) left us and I would like to place on record the Trust's appreciation of the very significant contribution she made to the work of the Trust during her tenure and time with us. Special mention needs to be made for the overnight care Vicar Julie and her husband Andrew undertook to protect St John's during the time we experienced copper thefts.

We recently also welcomed two new members to our Board Adam Hape and Lou Brown.

THANKS

I thank all Trustees for the diligence and contribution during the year.

My appreciation too to the support received from Vestry and our Clergy during a year of change.

John Storey
Chair – Trust Board



GROUNDS GARDENING TEAM'S REPORT

This past year the Team has been very busy keeping the grounds trimmed, sprayed, clean and tidy, and updated with new plantings. All the new plants have been either donated or scrounged from somewhere. Laurel Smith has donated a few plants. Mark Smale continues to donate the colourful Zinnias and Iceland Poppies. Thank you Laurel and Mark.

A watering system has been added to the gardens in front of the office and along the covered walkway.

Womens' Fellowship paid to have ugly trees next to the Real Estate on Arawata Street removed and the two big Camelia trees in the Cemetery pruned. Thank you, ladies.

John Storey and Warren Tims have both removed big heavy mounds of garden rubbish for us. John also arranged the pruning of the Camelia hedge along the Hall driveway. Warren has repaired the potholes in the car park area. Thank you, John and Warren.

Els, Jill, Lou, John, Wendy
Gardening Team



OP SHOP

The last 12 months has been great thanks to our wonderful ladies who turn up each week 3 of the 8 are parishioners. I wish to take this opportunity to thank them for all their work it is lovely to work with such a marvellous team.

Over the past year we have donated to St John's Ambulance \$2000, Westpac Helicopter \$3000, TA Health Shuttle \$2000, Missions \$6000, and also the painting of the interior of ST JOHN'S. This year we will give to the missions again but not to anything else.

Maree Brownlee



MONDAY MEAL REPORT

As a growing sign of our times, there is noticeable growth in our numbers on a Monday evening, with 35-40 guests the new average. However, there is a real sense of whanau as folk are doing it tough.

The hand we offer is enhanced by extra wrap-around of clothing from our Op Shop, plus fresh and frozen food donations from many parishioners, as well as welcomed supermarket vouchers. We are supported by our Women's Fellowship and our weekly bread/buns come via Kainga Aroha Community House. Thank you all! Truly the Lord does supply food and necessities by the generosity of our local community.

Another blessing is that our volunteer groups are becoming even more ecumenical, with Methodist and Mormon helpers joining our Catholic and Anglican teams. As one volunteer says, "I enjoy working with brothers and sisters from other churches, however increasing our numbers is a struggle as many of us are senior citizens.

Lounge space has become a pretty tight fit over the past year as we continue to grow in numbers. We will continue using the Hall for mid-winter and end of year meals which have seen numbers up around 60 people coming. A date for your diary - Monday 13th July come and join us for a Matariki / mid-winter festive dinner.

Monday Community Meal Team



FRIDAY CLUB

Friday Club was mostly run by Julie and Sam for the last year with me as a support person. We were blessed with having many of our meals cooked & served to us by generous people from our church family.

Our usual timetable was
5pm games & social time.
5.15 Group discussion & prayer
5.30 Dinner
6pm Christian teaching & response
6.30 Games
6.45 Tidy up & notices
6.55 Grace & farewell

Attendance fluctuates from 6 to 12 children sometimes depending on the families other commitments. Towards the end of the year numbers of children attending dropped for a variety of reasons. The children have been challenged to think of friends they can invite. From this we have had new children join us and others from the Holiday Programme show an interest in visiting us.

The 1st Friday Club this term will be a family night to give new families a taste of our Programme. We will use an ANZAC theme for families to work together to complete challenges.

Suzanne Reid



ST JOHN'S WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Because our membership is low we think it is unfair to have speakers but we had an interesting and varied year.

We brought our old Bibles, or cross and some brought baptism robes and spoke about their significance. Another time we brought along the oldest garment we still wore and gave its history.

Three ladies gave book reviews, we hosted an interdenominational quiz and had a luncheon for women of different cultures and faiths. I believe this still meets.

We went to Amber nurseries for lunch. Another month we went to the Garden Shed and had a guide tour of her garden and she provided a very nice morning tea that we felt it was more like lunch.

For our December meeting we put on a luncheon and invited the Op Shop helpers and ladies of the Parish to attend. Several meetings we had games and chatted

During the year we donated \$500.00 to the Monday night meals, paid \$1,500.00 for the signage on the hall and paid \$126.50 for the Kate Shepherd Sign

I am stepping down from the leader role and I thank everyone for their help and support over the last four years.

Bev Anso



SYNOD REPORTS

Bishop Philip's Charge

The Bishop's charge to Synod was in 3 parts:

1. The kingdom of God is not exclusive – everyone has a place (see Matt.6, The Sermon on the Mount and the Parable of the Mustard Seed.)
2. Our identity as Anglicans in the Pacific has 3 strands:
 - I. Te Rongopai – the Gospel – first preached in Aotearoa on Christmas Day 1814
 - II. Te Tiriti – Anglican missionaries were heavily involved, especially in the translation
 - III. Te Pouhere – the Constitution which requires us to uphold the 3 tikanga of the Anglican Church in Aotearoa-New Zealand.
3. The future:
 - the need to discuss succession and new episcopal leadership
 - a consistent response to the Royal Commission will need to be developed
 - 2026 is the centenary of the Diocese of Waikato-Taranaki.

The Business of Synod

1. The Bills

The Parish Bill 2025 – Withdrawn. It will be re-drafted and come to Synod 2026. Two points became clear: a) A 'parish' as defined in the Bill relates to only 25% of the faith communities in the diocese; b) therefore, it is time to re-imagine a statute which better reflects current realities and which can adapt to the future.

The Lay Ministers' Licences Bill 2025 The purpose of this Bill is to ensure the church is a safe place for all by ensuring that every person who 'ministers' as a representative of the Anglican Church is licenced for that ministry and can be held accountable. The contentious clauses were re-drafted. After much fruitful discussion the Bill passed and came into force on 1 January 2026.

The Boundaries Amendment Bill 2025: the merger of Te Awamutu and Orākau parishes.

2. The Motions

19 motions were brought to Synod. The Finance Motions (Nos. 2-8) passed without discussion. Although there were contrary opinions at many points in the discussions on other motions, all debate took place in an atmosphere of respect and careful listening.

Christine Bryant & Helen Stubbs - Synod Reps