

Alsager Community Church
5 Lawton Road
Alsager
Stoke on Trent
Staffordshire
ST7 2AA



Registered Charity : 1052554

www.alsagercommunitychurch.org.uk

**Report and Accounts
For the Year ending
31st August 2024**

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Report of the Trustees and Activities Review

The Financial results are set out in the enclosed accounts on pages 17 to 18.

The Principal activities throughout the year under review were

- To advance the Christian faith in accordance with the Statement in such ways and in such parts of the United Kingdom or the world as the Church Council from time to time may think fit:
- To advance education in such ways and in such parts of the United Kingdom or the world as the Church Council from time to time may think fit:
- To relieve sickness and financial hardship and promote and preserve good health by the provision of funds, goods, services of any kind including through the provision of counselling and support in such parts of the United Kingdom or the world as the Church Council from time to time may think fit.

CHURCH TRUSTEES

Rev Peter Howard (appointed 28th August 2013), 27 Woodside Avenue, Alsager, Stoke on Trent, ST7 2DL
Contact via Church office Telephone 01270 873859

+ **Andrew Collet (appointed 17th January 2023)**, 5 Elanor Road, Sandbach, Cheshire. CW11 3FZ

+ **Sarah Humpries (appointed 17th October 2022)**, 28 Shady Grove, Alsager, Stoke-on-Trent ST7 2NQ

+ **Ian Tideswell (appointed 10th September 2022)**, 57 The Bank, Scholar Green, Stoke-on-Trent, ST7 3LF

+ **Michael Keenan (appointed 4th September 2022)**, 45 Sydney Road, Crewe, Cheshire, CW1 4HQ

+ **Alan Roper (appointed 4th September 2022)**, 16 Kingfisher Court, Thwaite Street, Cottingham, HU16 4QA

+ **Mrs Laura Smith (appointed 9th November 2020)**, 36 Alfred Moseley Place, Alsager, Stoke-on-Trent ST7 2ZL

Wendy Walker (resigned 15 January 2024), **Ben Cade-Hughes (resigned 16th January 2024)**, **Vicki Dent (resigned 12th March 2024)**, **Chris Preston (removed 20th May 2024)**, and **Lynn Prestley (resigned 12th June 2024)** also served as Trustees during this financial period.

The Holding Trustee of the churches property from 2nd August 2023 is the Official Custodian for Charities.

Due to large changes in trustees, the elders marked + serve will initially serve one year in office which may be extended to 2 years to facilitate continuity, and subsequently normally 2 years. The Rev Howard's term continues until he ceases to be Minister of the church. The Data Protection Officer continues to be Mrs Vanessa Howard.

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Report of the Trustees and Activities Review - continued

RESERVES AND OTHER POLICES

The trustees have recently reviewed their reserves policy on Organisational Risk to ensure that adequate funding is available to allow the church to deal with unforeseen expenditure, replacement or repair of equipment and six months building and staff running costs. Other policies in place and approved are Building Hire Terms, Complaints Management, Data Protection Equality and Diversity, Pastoral Care, Prayer, Staff Handbook, Safeguarding, and 3 Trustee conflict of interest.

STATEMENT REGARDING THE ACCOUNTS

We certify that the books, vouchers and information produced to enable the independent examination of our accounts to be conducted contain a full and accurate record of our financial transactions and the activities to the best of our knowledge and belief. In view of the scale of the charities activities, the Trustees consider it appropriate to prepare the accounts on a receipts and payments basis rather than an accruals basis.

Signed on behalf of the Church Council and Trustees



Michael Keenan

Dated: 14th April 2025



Pastor's and Trustees church activity review

Introduction

The material included below is taken from the Vision Sunday meeting reports presented by the various groups.

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Leadership Team and Trustees (Pete Howard)

In the second half of 2022, circumstances led us to make the decision to separate the Leadership Team and Trustees, which we up until that point one group, into two: a Leadership team and a Trustees Team. The former would be responsible for vision, ministry and mission, whilst the latter would take responsibility for more practical matters and therefore, support them. We have made the decision to continue with that arrangement as it seems to be working well, and we are continuing to learn how to effective with it. We are still learning about what roles belong to which but are making good progress.

The Leadership Team currently consists of Nessie Howard, Laura Smith, Peter and Janice Bird, Wendy Walker and myself and may be further expanded in the future as God gifts us with the right people.

When we began with the new structure, nine trustees were appointed initially for a year. This was practically to keep the church in a legal quorate position at all times. The team has functioned well and taken responsibility for scrutinising the finances and discussing practical matters. Whilst vision is not their responsibility, we nonetheless are open to thoughts and ideas coming from this group and are pleased that this has happened.

At the same time, different trustees have, for different reasons, stepped down and so we are now seeking to recruit additional trustees.

Laura Smith

We have appreciated Laura's input into the life and leadership of the church both before and since we employed her first as Assistant and then as Associate Pastor on Staff. Alongside this, she has been completing the AoG Minister's in Training programme. Laura completes this course in May, gaining her full status as an AoG Minister and will of course, continue working with us. She would like to that all in the church for their support and help whoile she has completed the MIT.

Holding Trustees

At the time of the last report, we were in the process of making the Charity Commission official custodian our Holding Trustees. We took the decision to do this as we needed to replace most of our Holding trustees for varying reasons and this would not only be a permanent change but also a cost-effective one. Holding Trustees do not have any power but simply 'hold' the deeds to the building for us as required by law.

This process, which was a legal and involved getting the building revalued, has now been completed.

Worship

I include worship in this report because while we are privileged to have lots of people involved, there is no single designated department leader for this group. Currently Graeme Smith takes responsibility for the first Sunday of the month and also leads our monthly worship practice, and Darren and Veronica Spencer take responsibility for the last Sunday.

This is a standard pattern unless it is changed for particular purpose. I generally take responsibility for all other Sundays, with Graeme and Darren and Vron leading additional weeks when needed. We are supported by a good group of musicians, many of whom now play most weeks.

I believe that worship has gone from strength to strength over the last 15 months with new members joining the team and a real sense of unity and connection between members. The monthly practices are fun, and team

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members are learning each other's styles and learning to play together well. As a church we are also getting better at worship and have experienced some beautiful times in the presence of God.

New Milton House

I have included this update as there is no one leader for New Milton House, although Eric and Miriam and Anne often take the lead other than Laura and myself. There are also others who wonderfully support us each month.

Our turn for the service at New Milton House happens on the 1st Sunday of the month with other churches taking the other weeks, although sadly, one of the other churches has had to come off the rota recently.

This is in part due to what has been a frustrating time with this ministry as we were moved from the lounge to the 'activities room', which effectively resulted in no one coming as the staff didn't have the capacity to bring the residents up to the meeting. That the meeting happened at change-over time did not help.

This has largely now been resolved now with a move in time from 3pm to 1:30pm and a change in venue to the Dining Room, so that residents can choose to stay after lunch.

The Annexe

Following Alsager Community Support becoming independent and finding new premises back in 2023, we renamed the building 'THE ANNEXE.' New signage was made, and it was hoped that 2024 would see us deciding on new purpose and vision for the building. Unfortunately, due to pressures including financial, time and logistical ones, we have not been able to have those discussions. We hope to do so in 2025.

In the meantime, the Foodbank has been able to use the larger area available and the space has also been used for prayer and other meetings. We have also been able to increase the number of items we keep in the storeroom since there is now no property in there belonging to ACS.

Funerals

This year saw the loss of two respected and highly loved pillars of the church Mike Collett and Roy Pitcher. Both of these men made long term significant contribution to the life and ministry for the church over many years and we will continue to miss them. We honour them in this report. Pete led both funerals with Mike's held at ACC and Roy's held at Wesley Place.

In addition, Pete led the funeral of Tom and Richie Parry, father and son who were tragically killed in an accident in the Scottish Highlands. The funeral was held at St Marys, jointly led by Rev. Michelle Goodrich and the wake was held at ACC.

We supported other church members through loss of close family members.

Other activities and matters arising

There are separate reports included below for some of these activities and matters.

- Ran Special events including 2 Kids weekends with Safari and Space themes, Pilgrims Progress film, Unsuccessful Course by 24/7 Prayer.
- Continued with our Life Groups, weekly prayer meetings and monthly Reflective Prayer sessions and in addition, prayer days and weeks of prayer and fasting.

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- Continued to run our coffee shop 4 days a week.
- Repurposed our monthly Café Church to play Church with a different format.
- We ran a successful Alpha in the Autumn term.
- We launched regular Men's Breakfast events and a Men's ministry.
- Continued with our monthly after church fellowship lunches on the 3rd Sunday of the month.
- Continued with our involvement in local schools with assemblies and occasional lessons.
- Along with the other Alsager Churches, we distributed Hot Cross Buns at Easter on Holy Saturday.
- Along with the other Alsager Churches, we have continued to take a service in New Milton House once a month.
- We have continued to hire our premises to local organisations: U3A, Slimming World, Rhythm Time, Alsager Spinners and Weavers, Polling Station and others.
- We again held a stall at the Alsager Carnival distributing hundreds of poppet toys to the children and advertising the presence of the church.
- We have had guest speakers: Anthony Bhunu, Andrew Cannon and Richard Brunton
- We have continued to work with Christchurch and Wesley Place Methodist Church to run a youth group on Thursday evenings and took young people to the 3generate youth event.
- We held 2 annual Leadership Seminar Days with Middlewich Community Church and Sandbach Community Church

Church Manager's Report (Nessie Howard)

The church building continues to be a busy place whilst trying to remain a welcoming and God filled space.

We employ Sue who works as our cleaner for 12 hours a week and Rob, Phil and David have continued to provide a level of maintenance and care for our building as well as completing our 6 monthly H&S reviews. We are needing some DIY/decorating doing soon and I'm sure they would appreciate the offers of help.

We have 3 groups who regularly use and hire the building, as well as some that use us occasionally. We are currently looking to increase this back to previous levels as a revenue stream.

Kids church/Ablaze on Sundays (Nessie Howard)

We currently have 4 children and 5 young people who regularly attend church. It is a wide age range, but the children care for and support each other well.

Once a month we have Ablaze on Sundays where we connect with the young people from Christchurch, alternating between meeting at our venue or at there's. On that Sunday Kids church has a different feel as we make the session bespoke for a younger age which the children have enjoyed as much as the youth have.

On Sundays we use the TV for worship songs, have access to craft activities, have bible studies, play games, share and care for each other, provide space for faith to deepen and meet with God. All whilst having fun. Our curriculum has been adaptable and bespoke this past year as we have responded to a wide age range and a

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smaller number of children. We are currently deciding whether to go with a new scheme or whether to follow the church's curriculum in the main meetings and continue to design our own sessions.

We have a great team of teachers who love both God and our youngsters. They lead with compassion, laughter and skill.

Pastoral Team (Pete Bird/John Hammond/Anita Wilson)

The Pastoral Team has been set up recently in order to give support to Pete and Nessie in the church's pastoral ministry. If you have a need and would like someone to pray for you over the phone, or you would like someone to pay you a visit, then please ring one of the team.

The Meeting Place Coffee Shop (Nessie Howard)

This continues to be open Tuesday to Friday mornings between 9am and 1.30pm. Some days are quieter than others, but this has given the opportunity to get to know people better. 'The Meeting Place' is a place we hope that people will meet and connect with each other and perhaps more significantly, where they might meet Jesus. There have been opportunities for prayer and conversation, and we pray this might happen more and more.

Phil D is organising the 'help yourself' bookshelf with second hand/donated Christian books which has continued to be popular. We also have two people who produce cards for us to sell as a way of fundraising.

We are so grateful for the volunteers who serve each week, with two new volunteers coming on board this year, and are also grateful for the kind volunteers who bake/bring us cakes. They are always so popular and add something special to our menu. We are desperately in need of more cake volunteers and if you can help us with this, please speak to me. We would also appreciate help with washing tea towels, shopping and even having you as customers!

The car parking charges have affected the footfall coming into the Meeting Place, so we have produced some vouchers for Little Treasures parents to use in an attempt to attract new customers. Our play area is a brilliant, yet under used attraction. We have also introduced a card payment system.

We received a 'Stardust' grant from Sainsbury's via Neighbourly to purchase a new oven and contribute towards replacing the dishwasher which has greatly helped the work of the coffee shop as well as the wider church activities.

Finally, we are really pleased to report that we have once again achieved a level 5 in our food safety inspection. This is something we have consistently done but it is always a source of celebration for us to feel we are doing things well and this is recognised. Here are some quotes from some of our customers...

- 'Family atmosphere!'
- 'The highlight of the week!'
- 'A place of friendship.'
- 'An important part of our weekly routine...come from Newcastle every week because it is an Oasis and as place of fun!'

And we thought you might also enjoy this little poem written by one of our Wednesday volunteer staff...

*'There is a café, across the road. It is so very cosy,
When you go in, it's nice and warm and everyone is rosy.'*

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The food is good, the price is low, It's everybody's pocket.

Just sit down and have a chat, we'll make it like a rocket!

We have a little kitchen, which serves up pretty well,

With chocolate cake and nice mince pies, that will make your belly swell!

Cup of coffee, cup of tea. Nothing's too much trouble,

Just give us your drinks order, And we'll make it on the double!

'When we've finished for the day, we grab our bags and coats.

We say goodbye to one and all and set off, with scarves around our throats.

And when next week comes around, we'll start it off all over,

And all the clients and the staff, think they live in clover!

Sally, Richard and myself, we get on pretty good.

We share the jobs quite happily, but Sally does the food.

So please come in when you pop by, we'll give you a big smile.

And when you put your order in, we'll go the extra mile.

What next? It would be fantastic to have a manager of the coffee shop again- someone who could lead it forward! We always try to have a church rep on each shift too.

Foodbank (Nessie Howard)

We were able to help feed and support 168 referred households during 2024 consisting of:-

251 Individual Adults and 205 Individual Children in 2024

To fulfil the needs of these households in 2024 we issued:-

1638 Adult units and 1557 Children units (1 unit = 1 weeks' worth of food) in 2024 and gave out 50 Christmas hampers. This has been our busiest year to date.

We provided food for an average of:- 6.5 weeks to each adult/ 7.6 weeks to each child. This year we saw a swing to supporting more families than single people though we have seen a significant increase in the amount of people needing support due to medical conditions.

We have been blessed with many donations – both monetary and goods. These donations come from individuals, churches, schools, charities and businesses in our area. One of our biggest challenges was physically stocking the shelves but we have seen many groups not only raising funds for us but also actively shopping on our behalf. We continue to be very grateful for the community support we receive.

We continue to work in partnership with other organisations, referring people on to other organisations if appropriate. We still operate on a referral basis which means people receive help from ourselves as a result of them being referred to us. This can be from schools, medical or welfare teams, housing associations and churches to name but a few.

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We continue to give fresh fruit and/or vegetables, bread, cheese and eggs when we can. We are enrolled with Neighbourly, so Sainsburys give us their surplus bakery most days and occasionally fresh fruit and veg. We have also enrolled with Olio, a scheme used to reduce waste from shops which has helped on an ad hoc basis with bread, potatoes and vegetables.

We currently have 4 Coordinators, all taking a week at a time to run the foodbank and we have 13 volunteers helping to pack and sort stock on a rota basis. We have continued to have 4 people who will deliver, a few folks we can call on to help sort stock and others who have offered to shop for us.

We have also continued to give out vouchers for drinks and food at the Meeting Place and for the Big Breakfast at Christchurch. We also give vouchers to those with preschool children so that they can come along to our Little Treasures on Thursdays.

Prayer (Wendy Walker)

Over the past 12 months we have had an average of 12 attending Thursday evening intercessory prayer, which is slightly down from last year. I took the decision in the middle of the year to stop the Zoom connections, as we were getting very few people logging on [all of whom now attend in person].

Prayer and Fasting. We have had 3 periods of prayer and fasting since July. The first of which was as a result of a significant word from God, which required focused prayer. Having periods of 7-4-7 prayer along with fasting can only enhance our corporate prayer life.

Prayer day in November – this was a wake up call to be ready for the times ahead.

Looking forward. [Anne and I intend to continue going away on retreats, roughly quarterly, to seek the Lord's guidance for us as individuals, and for ACC.] Our next retreat is 3 – 6 February.

15th February – 'How to be Un-successful' course. A 24/7 Prayer International course.

15th March – the first Ladies Prayer breakfast. This is a new initiative which I trust will be a really blessed time where we as ladies can pray for a move of God in ACC and Alsager.

31st March to 4th April – 7-2-7 prayer and fast, culminating in a time of worship. 5th April – prayer day. The content of this will become clear nearer the time.

I am always listening out for new ways to encourage our folks to engage in corporate intercessory prayer. The boiler house of the church needs to be continually stoked, so that we keep moving forward.

Wendy Walkers's Life Group

Over the last 12 months our numbers have decreased a little from 15 to 12. We are a diverse group and are very much a family. Our Whatsapp group is a place for us all to share and reach out.

Leadership of a small group of believers is an incredibly humbling and privileged thing, the responsibility of which I do not carry lightly.

Currently [as of January 2025], we have just completed a 7-session series on Nehemiah, using Selwyn Hughes study guide. All have enjoyed the discussions and have been blessed by them.

While we wait to hear what the Lord would like us to do next, we are going to learn about and pray for the persecuted church [using Open Doors World Watch List].

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AND we still have cake on birthdays – most of which are baked by Rob and are yummy!! The following was on last years' report and still very much stands:

At the beginning of my 'tenure' as leader of this group, I declared Ephesians 2:22 over us all. '....in Him you too [as a group] are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by His Spirit'. I also gave a promise, to God, to myself and to the group. "to be a leader who doesn't seek to 'climb the ladder', but who digs deeper; to be a servant to all". The declaration and promise are still and always will be at the very heart of the wonderful group of brothers and sisters I have the awesome job of leading. We will encourage one another; grow together; and praise our Heavenly Father for all His blessings.

Anne Beard's Daytime Life Group

Our Friday Life-group meets in ACC every two weeks 10.30 - 12.30...or whenever we finish. Six to ten people gather in fellowship, prayer and worship as we study God's word.

Recent studies have included "The Lord's Prayer" and Contemplative worship relating to Easter and Christmas.

Our current study is following a book called "Golden Bowls of Incense." The author describes the purpose of this book, is mainly to inspire more fervent intercession for our nation and encourage us all to pray without ceasing. Also to encourage house groups in their role in revival of this nation.

The contents cover asking, seeking and loud persistent prayers and draws us to meditate on.....

Elijah; Hezekiah; Nehemiah; Abraham; Ananias; Cornelius; Habakkuk and Paul.

An exciting and challenging journey through the scriptures. How applicable to our broken world we live in today.

We support and care for one another in listening to and praying for our needs as we meet in our life-group and within our WhatsApp group.

"Best thing I ever did was coming to ACC and joining a life-group. Learn something each time and will forever be grateful for my church family."

"It is incredible the support you all give..."

"We are sharing a journey together. I'm learning all the time, and the love, friendship and support of the group is incredible. The Holy Spirit is guiding us on a journey and there is more to come!"

"Life-group has helped me feel a sense of belonging. The Lord has been my only helper in my life, and my brothers and sisters in Christ are very important to me. I'm so grateful that the Lord led us to ACC."

"Thank you, Lord, we can meet in freedom to study your living word and encourage one another."

Thank you, Lord, for your faithfulness and your blessings each and every day.

Graeme Smith's Life Group

The last year has seen several changes to our group. Alan, one of our long-standing members, moved away, but we have been joined by new members.

We have moved our meetings from church to a home (thanks Tony and Laura!) And we temporarily moved to Monday evenings during Alpha. But our format has stayed the same - fellowship, fun (weird and wonderful

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quizzes), study, sharing and prayer. We have worked through a course on Romans by Andrew Ollerton and the Blessings course by Roy Godwin and have just started Max Lucado's "anxious for nothing" course based on Philippians 4:4-9.

Mike Keenan's Life Group

We meet in Crewe on alternate Wed. mornings commencing 10.30.

The emphasis of the group is fellowship, sharing and prayer so as to encourage each other and build up our faith without being too formal. Also, if a member of the group has a problem or burden, we are free to share and pray about it. We also spend time in worship with my keyboard as accompaniment. Therefore, we often each bring a passage of scripture to present to the group to study and discuss which always works very well.

We have covered a series on the Beatitudes, also several studies on the life of David based on an old classic book by Alan Redpath. We have also looked at some of the parables of Jesus from the Gospels.

We have also had teaching from Dr John Barnett of Calvary Bible Church on YouTube who I can recommend as a sound bible teacher. Other teaching we have had from David Pawson and Brian Broderson.

Also, on YouTube we have looked at the Welsh Revival of the early 20th Century and the effect it had on the communities throughout Wales.

Alpha (Janice Bird)

Alpha ran from 18th September to 27th November 2024, every Wednesday evening for 11 weeks and included an Away Day early November, where we focused on the Holy Spirit. The Away Day was opened up for any members of the congregation who wanted to know more about the Holy Spirit and perhaps experience the Holy Spirit's infilling. One person took advantage of the invitation and reported that they had a wonderful experience.

Each Alpha session started with a hot meal which, the guests and team shared together. This enabled us to quickly build up relationship with the guests and likewise enabled the guests to get to know the team better. Various members of the congregation provided meals and some donated cash for the meals which was amazing.

Initially there were nine guests signed up for the course but sadly four chose not to continue and one was unable to continue due to ill health. We finished the course with four guests who all gave very positive feedback and said they would recommend the course to others. Three of the guests made a commitment to Jesus and one was baptised with the Holy Spirit.

There were nine on the Alpha Team, all amazing and fully committed to making the course happen. We were particularly helped by the prayer team led by Wendy, who met to pray at church during the Alpha sessions. This prayer made a huge difference to the success of the course.

A De-brief for the team was held shortly after the course finished and all of the team felt that it was a positive experience and running it again in the future should be a strong consideration.

Outreach in the Town (Phil Dabbs)

We went out several times during 2024. The first was before Valentine's Day when we gave out chocolate hearts and a credit sized "God loves you" card. We also went out before Easter with several other churches for the annual giving out hot cross buns and where we could, sharing something of the meaning of Easter.

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We then went out before Christmas, giving out chocolates, “Jesus is the Greatest Gift” cards and invitations to our services. On all these occasions we spoke to many people on the streets and visited the local shops and had a great response with very few declining.

Praise God that we had many good conversations with people and had the opportunity to discuss faith and pray with some when it was appropriate. Thank you to the team who supported this: Anne, Graeme, John, Peter B and Rob (apologies if I've missed anyone). Thanks also to those who couldn't come but prayed for us.

Little Treasures Playgroup (Sarah Humpreys)

Firstly, I would like to thank Suzanne for her many years of commitment and dedication to Little treasures. Through Suzanne's hard work, Little Treasures is known as a well-recognised, well established and above all a well-loved asset of the church and community. We are extremely grateful for all that Suzanne has done over the years and respect that it was a difficult decision to step down from Little Treasures, as she has been such an integral part of every Thursday morning.

Over the last year Little Treasures has gone through a transition, whilst the structure of the morning remains the same it has naturally evolved. Gina, Gemma and I, with additional support from Pete, Nessie, Phil and Andrew work together to ensure the smooth running of Little Treasures. In the summer we were concerned that many of our wonderful children were leaving to go to preschool, parents were returning to work and that this would impact on our numbers. However, come September recommendations from our parents ensured we had a full house and before Christmas had 25 children and 30 parents.

We have parents and Grandparents, who join us weekly, and it is a lovely safe space for children to flourish and thrive, make lasting friendships and for adults to have a welcoming place where they can recharge, share, have a laugh and a chat and make friends. Together we lovingly create a special environment, we spend time with the adults, the children and getting to know the families better. We tailor and adapt our activities, each week to the children we have and make sure the families feel they can talk to us and tell us if there is anything they need. We have parents who share with us about their children's physically and sensory needs, dietary requirements and we ensure that we incorporate support and that their needs are met. Our parents and grandparents regularly share with us how much they love Little Treasures. They say in their words it is 'loving and holistic, a very special place which makes sure all children are included and a treat that they would not miss.' We have families coming to join us from Bradwell, Kidsgrove, and Nantwich as well as Alsager and the local area, and tell us there is nothing else like it. We have had parents express their love of Little Treasures on Facebook and we now have several families which come as a whole family children, Mum and Dad. It is lovely to see that all parents and grandparents feel so welcome. Many that live in Alsager, will stop us and talk in the street and share their experiences not just of Little Treasures but the joys, and their ups and downs. It is a privilege to be a part of this group.

Little treasures enable friendships between adults, as well as children grow, we have grandparents that have started to meet up regularly, parents that also attend other play groups together now, share lunch and play dates and it is lovely to see that parents are now meeting at the church coffee shop. The availability of the card machine has made a difference and also providing our parents with vouchers will hopefully encourage visits to the coffee shop

We also frequently provide support to parents on a 1:1 basis, as we are part of the church, the food bank and have links throughout our community ensures we are able to connect parents to relevant support swiftly, in a caring manner. Initially, the new car parking charges impacted our attendance, but this seems to have been resolved.

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We are confident that the relationship between ourselves and with those that come to Little Treasures will continue to grow. We look forward to an exciting year ahead which as well as providing for our community, Little Treasures continues to lovingly provide a special place for our team. Gina, Gemma and I feel truly blessed that we can be apart of this wonderful service, it brings such joy and allows us to personally share and develop our relationships with each other, within the church and our community.

Below are some comments our parents and grandparents have shared about Little Treasures, 30.01.2025.

‘A great place for both the children & mums to meet, chat and play. The story time and snack time is always a hit with the children. When the guitar comes out for song time, the kids love that!’

‘Lovely group and kind to provide toast and a drink.’

‘Everyone is very welcoming, lovely group.’

‘Very welcoming and friendly, the children make friends, cater for all ages. Lovely story time and toast and juice time, for parents and nanny’s to catch up on news. Nicely structured and set up craft table, staff are very friendly.’

‘Little Treasures is a very friendly playgroup. They are always very welcoming. And are happy to help. Always there for a good chat. And my little girls have all loved playing here and meeting new friends.’

‘Both of my children have attended Little Treasures, and it has been a great place for them to gain confidence and make new friends.’

‘Lovely friendly playgroup with lots to keep the children entertained and engaged.’

‘Little treasures is a friendly environment where children can play safely. The staff are kind and lovely, I’ve been coming for years.. I am grateful I can come and go as I please, Thank you’

‘We love the range of activities little treasures each week and the toast and snacks’

Ablaze Youth-Group (Pete Howard)

We work with Christchurch and Wesley Place, two other churches in the town to run a youth group. The group meets at Wesley Place and is very much one youth group among 3 churches. This last 15 months we have seen the group continue to grow, with a programme which includes games, interaction, Biblical teaching and is interspersed with social activities. The programme also regular includes eating meals together and we ran Youth Alpha in the last year and are considering running another this year. Last term we looked at Spiritual disciplines from the same book we are currently using for our notices devotions.

We are encouraged that some of these young people continue to attend ACC on Sundays and others attend other churches. This year we expanded with a monthly Sunday morning programme called ‘Ablaze on Sundays.’ This meeting either at ACC or Christchurch and aims to go deeper than is possible Thursday nights. We are currently looking at the subjects from the Freedom in Christ course.

We hope to play a video in our service which was made by the youth speaking about why they enjoy Ablaze and what they get from it.

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Men's Breakfast Group

The first Men's breakfast was held in October and saw 11 men join together for fellowship and an introduction to the vision for the group. Meeting every six weeks, we've now held three breakfasts in total with around 18 different men attending across the three, both from ACC and outside.

The vision for the breakfast and broader men's work is two-fold. To build up men in their faith and then to see that spill out with those men sharing their faith with their friends. To do this we:

- Use resources from Christian Vision for Men to help encourage men in their own personal journeys with Christ
- Provide a safe environment with time for men to generally share how they're feeling with those they trust and share opportunities to pray together
- Encourage each other to share our faith with our friends and colleagues and broaden our meetings to include social evenings which will be suitable for inviting friends along to

Whilst this is a fairly new group we have been encouraged by the number of men that have attended, including those that would rather be having a lie in! It has been such a joy to see men come along who took part in the Alpha course, allowing them to mix with other Christian men in an informal environment right at the start of their faith journey.

Our prayer for the year ahead is that God will unite a strong group of men who feel encouraged through fellowship, are more passionate about their relationship with Jesus and feel more empowered to share that faith with others.

Play Church (Pete Howard)

From September this year we rebranded and revamped Café Church to create Play Church. This event contained many of the same attributes as Café Church such as craft, worship, teaching and food, but increased the play element and made it less formally structured. We began to have activities in both halls and centred our teaching and worship time around the stage which made it more manageable and focused.

The reason for this change is a combination of the fact that a) we didn't think Café Church was really working in its then current format and b) Christchurch launched their own version of a family-based Café Church and we didn't want to create confusion. There was no clash as Christchurch's event ran on a Sunday morning, and although it is now moving to an afternoon slot, it will still be on a different day. Nevertheless, we felt two events of the same name would be confusing for people.

The change has been altogether positive with numbers increasing and a great vibe. We have seen this particularly in the last two months (December and January) and we are hoping to build relationships and present the gospel so as to see these families find Jesus and even become part of the church family.

Sandbach Community Church (Pete Howard)

The largest vision action taken by the church since December 2023 has been the establishment of a new church plant in Sandbach working in partnership with Middlewich Community Church. This is the fulfilment of a dream held since my arrival as Pastor of ACC and something we made plans for in our 5-year vision presentation back in 2019. The process towards this has not been the same as we envisaged for a number of reasons, not least Covid 19, but has been realised within the time frame.

Alsager Community Church

SCC is potentially still the only AoG church, we are aware of, being planted as an equal partnership between two churches, although that may not be correct, as Antony Bhunu (Pastor of Middlewich Community Church) and I, featured heavily at this last year's National Conference (2024) Church Planting presentations where we were interviewed and profiled, in the hopes others may also explore this model. Interestingly, this has also resulted in our picture being included in the book AoG has published to celebrate its centenary.

We launched SCC on 17th March 2024. The launch service was very well attended with over 80 people there. Since then, services have had anything between 14 and 40 in attendance, more recently settling around 20-25. This includes people who would consider Middlewich or Alsager as their primary church but regularly attend to support the work. Some of these live in Sandbach themselves. Most exciting however, is that there is a small group of people (around 8) who now consider SCC to be their home church and who are beginning to take responsibility for the life of the church.

Since our launch we have met consistently at 4pm every Sunday including over the Christmas period. We continue to keep things simple, with a single musician or use of 'ising' when this is not possible. Preaching is run on a rota (as with both ACC and MCC) and followed by refreshments. In addition, we have started a small group (Life-group) meeting fortnightly and at time of writing are establishing a prayer chain by email. Over this year, we have also run a church outreach picnic, opened the venue for coffee and connection on the Sunday during the town transport festival (the main community event), and held our carol service.

At time of writing, the vision for year 2 is still in prayer and discussion but we may well be looking to the Lord to help us...

- Establish local leadership including possibly a primary leader (Pastor)
- See some families come into the church (as well as others)
- See our first salvations
- Begin a regular outreach project of some kind and possibly run an Alpha.

ACC take responsibility for managing SCC's finances

Signed on behalf of the Church Council and Trustees

P Howard. REV PETE HOWARD

Dated: 14th April 2025

Alsager Community Church

Independent Examiners Report on the Receipts and Payment Accounts

To the Trustees/Members of Alsager Community Church, Registered Charity 1052554, on the accounts for the year ending 31st August 2024, set out on pages 17 to 18.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act"). The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year (as per Act Accounts and Audit Order 2015 SI 2015 No.321) so that an independent examination is needed and the accounts are to be prepared on a receipts and payments basis.

It is my responsibility to:

- Examine the accounts (under section 145 of the Act);
- Follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145 (5) (b) of the Act; and
- State whether any particular matters have come to my attention

Basis of the independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with these records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- (1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Act, and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Act and the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by Charities Financial Reporting Standard FRS102have not been met: or
- (2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed

Date 14th April 2025



Paul Barnsley B.A. (Econ) (Hons), A.C.A., F.T.C.L. (Chartered Accountant)

Heart Notes Ministries, 125 Crossefield Road, Cheadle Hulme, Stockport, Cheshire, SK8 5PF

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Registered Charity: 1052554

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Alsager Community Church

<u>INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT</u>	<u>Note</u>	<u>Unrestricted</u> <u>2024</u>	<u>Designated</u> <u>2024</u>	<u>Restricted</u> <u>2024</u>	<u>Total Funds</u> <u>2024</u>	<u>Total Funds</u> <u>2023</u>
Church Income						
Offerings		19,267.15	0.00	1,347.89	20,615.04	14,068.99
Gift Aid Offerings		24,037.00	0.00	0.00	24,037.00	30,519.00
Tax Recovered Gift Aid		7,963.47	0.00	0.00	7,963.47	7,981.55
Accounts Interest		378.59	0.00	0.00	378.59	38.24
Other Income	1	150.00	0.00	2,209.23	2,359.23	8,476.15
Room Hire	2	11,112.00	0.00	0.00	11,112.00	10,655.50
Subtotal Church Income		62,908.21	0.00	3,557.12	66,465.33	71,739.43
Coffee Shop						
Total Takings		9,866.26	0.00	0.00	9,866.26	13,368.12
Cost of Goods for resale		(3,938.65)	0.00	0.00	(3,938.65)	(4,208.34)
General Expenses		(200.25)	0.00	0.00	(200.25)	(24.35)
Subtotal Coffee Shop Net		5,727.36	0.00	0.00	5,727.36	9,135.43
NET INCOME church and coffee shop		68,635.57	0.00	3,557.12	72,192.69	80,874.86
Church Expenditure						
Pastors Salary		(35,439.08)	0.00	0.00	(35,439.08)	(34,356.58)
Church Ministry Costs	3	(17,491.51)	0.00	(30.00)	(17,521.51)	(17,653.88)
Missions	4	(4,228.22)	0.00	0.00	(4,228.22)	(6,890.11)
Building Running Costs	5	(19,187.62)	0.00	(380.00)	(19,567.62)	(17,600.25)
Building Capital Costs/Refurbishment	6	(75.99)	0.00	(1,509.00)	(1,584.99)	0.00
Subtotal church expenditure		(76,422.42)	0.00	(1,919.00)	(78,341.42)	(76,500.82)
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) for church		(7,786.85)	0.00	1,638.12	(6,148.73)	4,374.04
ALSAGER FOODBANK						
Foodbank Income						
Donations - regular		0.00	0.00	12,845.49	12,845.49	10,669.00
Donations - irregular		0.00	0.00	1,460.75	1,460.75	3,007.00
Donations - gift aid foodbank		0.00	0.00	1,135.00	1,135.00	1,960.00
Tax reclaim Gift aid claim foodbank		0.00	0.00	266.73	266.73	170.37
Subtotal Foodbank Income		0.00	0.00	15,707.97	15,707.97	15,806.37
Foodbank Expenses						
Food Purchases		0.00	0.00	(34,415.26)	(34,415.26)	(17,382.57)
ACSC Rent		0.00	0.00	(600.00)	(600.00)	0.00
Mobile Phone Costs		0.00	0.00	(97.59)	(97.59)	(110.21)
Subtotal Foodbank Expenses		0.00	0.00	(35,112.85)	(35,112.85)	(17,492.78)
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) for Foodbank		0.00	0.00	(19,404.88)	(19,404.88)	(1,686.41)
ALSAGER SUPPORT CENTRE						
Donations		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	415.00
Tax claimed on gift aid		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	61.10
Administration Salaries		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	(3,797.00)
Administration Pensions		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	(195.79)
Hardship fund payments		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	(4,971.00)
Building running - other costs		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	63.40
Receipt/(Repayment) of funds ex ASC		0.00	0.00	233.12	233.12	(17,678.05)
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) for Support Centre		0.00	0.00	233.12	233.12	(26,102.34)
GRAND TOTAL SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)		(7,786.85)	0.00	(17,533.64)	(25,320.49)	(23,414.71)

Alsager Community Church

	Note	Unrestricted 2024	Designated 2024	Restricted 2024	Total Funds 2024	Total Funds 2023
STATEMENT OF INCOME						
Sunday Offering & Donations		19,267.15	0.00	1,347.89	20,615.04	14,068.99
Gift Aid Offerings		24,037.00	0.00	0.00	24,037.00	30,519.00
Tax Recovered - Gift Aids		7,963.47	0.00	0.00	7,963.47	7,981.55
Accounts Interest		378.59	0.00	0.00	378.59	38.24
Room Hire		11,112.00	0.00	0.00	11,112.00	10,655.50
Other Income		150.00	0.00	209.23	359.23	8,476.15
Coffee Shop Takings		9,866.26	0.00	0.00	9,866.26	13,368.12
Alsager Support Centre Income		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	476.10
Alsager Foodbank Income		0.00	0.00	15,707.97	15,707.97	15,806.37
Grants		0.00	0.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	0.00
TOTAL INCOME		72,774.47	0.00	19,265.09	92,039.56	101,390.02
STATEMENT OF EXPENDITURE						
Pastor/Administrators Salary Costs		(35,439.08)	0.00	0.00	(35,439.08)	(34,356.58)
Church Ministry Costs		(17,491.51)	0.00	(30.00)	(17,521.51)	(17,653.88)
Missions		(4,228.22)	0.00	0.00	(4,228.22)	(6,890.11)
Building Running Costs		(19,187.62)	0.00	(380.00)	(19,567.62)	(17,600.25)
Building Capital/Refrubishment Costs		(75.99)	0.00	(1,509.00)	(1,584.99)	0.00
Alsager Support Centre Costs						
Running cost		0.00	0.00	233.12	233.12	(26,578.44)
Coffee Shop						
Cost of Goods for resale		(3,938.65)	0.00	0.00	(3,938.65)	(4,208.34)
General Expenses		(200.25)	0.00	0.00	(200.25)	(24.35)
Alsager Foodbank Expenditure		0.00	0.00	(35,112.85)	(35,112.85)	(17,492.78)
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		(80,561.32)	0.00	(36,798.73)	(117,360.05)	(124,804.73)
TOTAL SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) for year		(7,786.85)	0.00	(17,533.64)	(25,320.49)	(23,414.71)
Opening Funds		26,781.07	36,000.00	39,683.54	102,464.61	125,879.32
Transfers in/(out)		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
TOTAL CLOSING NET FUNDS	7	18,994.22	36,000.00	22,149.90	77,144.12	102,464.61
Breakdown of Fund balances						
General Reserves		18,994.22	0.00	0.00	18,994.22	26,781.07
Stardust		0.00	0.00	491.00	491.00	0.00
Sandbach church		0.00	0.00	1,147.12	1,147.12	0.00
Alsager Support Centre		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	(233.12)
Unforeseen cost Reserve		0.00	36,000.00	0.00	36,000.00	36,000.00
CRASH time		0.00	0.00	2,396.57	2,396.57	2,396.57
Alsager Food Bank		0.00	0.00	18,115.21	18,115.21	37,520.09
Total Fund balances		18,994.22	36,000.00	22,149.90	77,144.12	102,464.61
REPRESENTED BY						
Cash in Hand					368.90	291.12
Current Account					42,301.55	68,078.41
Savings Account					34,473.67	34,095.08
Total Net Assets					77,144.12	102,464.61

Alsager Community Church

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

	Unrestricted 2024	Designated 2024	Restricted 2024	Total Funds 2024	Total Funds 2023
1. Other Income					
Funeral contributions	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	206.00
Little Treasures	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	45.95
Contributions for pastor in training	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	6,000.00
AOG Ukraine & Earthquake Appeals	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,050.00
Contributions from Middlewich church for Sandbach	0.00	0.00	209.23	209.23	0.00
Grants - Cooker ex Sainsburys	0.00	0.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	0.00
Sundry Other Income	150.00	0.00	0.00	150.00	174.20
Subtotal Other Income	150.00	0.00	2,209.23	2,359.23	8,476.15
2. Room Hire					
Slimming World	6,510.00	0.00	0.00	6,510.00	6,160.00
U3A	1,862.00	0.00	0.00	1,862.00	1,957.50
Rhythm Time	2,269.00	0.00	0.00	2,269.00	638.00
Sundry Hires	75.00	0.00	0.00	75.00	0.00
Guild of Spinners & Weavers	156.00	0.00	0.00	156.00	492.00
Cheshire Carers	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	208.00
Overheads Charge Support Centre	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,200.00
Cheshire East Polling Station	240.00	0.00	0.00	240.00	0.00
Subtotal Room Hire	11,112.00	0.00	0.00	11,112.00	10,655.50
3. Church Ministry Costs					
Ministry Gifts - Visiting Speakers	1,400.00	0.00	0.00	1,400.00	1,000.00
Ministry Expenses	948.22	0.00	0.00	948.22	1,814.60
Ministry Resources	273.58	0.00	0.00	273.58	436.61
Administration Salaries	12,812.48	0.00	0.00	12,812.48	12,962.38
Communion Expenses	31.67	0.00	0.00	31.67	0.00
Copyright Licence	552.72	0.00	0.00	552.72	454.05
Childrens Church	52.20	0.00	0.00	52.20	172.58
Child Protection Advisory Services	235.48	0.00	0.00	235.48	240.40
Website Costs	22.00	0.00	0.00	22.00	0.00
Christmas costs	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	40.00
Alpha	160.28	0.00	0.00	160.28	0.00
Youth Group	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	19.40
CRASH Time (Messy Church)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	64.41
Flowers, Gifts and Presentations	10.00	0.00	0.00	10.00	2.99
Publicity and Advertising	224.30	0.00	0.00	224.30	326.59
CVS Cheshire	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	34.87
Pastoral Team Costs	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	50.00
Data Protection Registration	35.00	0.00	0.00	35.00	35.00
Sandbach Community Church expenses	733.58	0.00	30.00	763.58	0.00
Subtotal Church Ministry Costs	17,491.51	0.00	30.00	17,521.51	17,653.88
4. Missions					
Hope Uganda (HDCC)	750.00	0.00	0.00	750.00	750.00
AOG Annual Offering	1,200.72	0.00	0.00	1,200.72	1,200.72
AOG NW & M Region	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,000.00
AOG Ukraine Appeal	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,049.39
Living Hope Ministries	1,287.50	0.00	0.00	1,287.50	900.00
Andy Cannon	750.00	0.00	0.00	750.00	750.00
UCB	240.00	0.00	0.00	240.00	240.00
Subtotal Missions	4,228.22	0.00	0.00	4,228.22	6,890.11

Alsager Community Church

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (cont'd)

	Unrestricted 2024	Designated 2024	Restricted 2024	Total Funds 2024	Total Funds 2023
5. Building Running Costs					
Caretaker/Cleaners Pay	6,770.40	0.00	0.00	6,770.40	6,188.00
Carpet Cleaning	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	89.99
Cleaning Materials and Window Cleaning	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	27.72
Office Telephone and Broadband	623.62	0.00	0.00	623.62	409.26
Computer Software and consumables	408.74	0.00	0.00	408.74	426.74
Office Printer/Copier	515.10	0.00	0.00	515.10	409.21
Postage and Stationery	17.36	0.00	0.00	17.36	85.68
Insurance	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,192.35
Gas	1,454.20	0.00	0.00	1,454.20	997.42
Electricity	3,215.64	0.00	0.00	3,215.64	3,144.15
Water Rates	721.97	0.00	0.00	721.97	609.14
SITA Wheely Bin Charges	1,221.45	0.00	0.00	1,221.45	1,054.55
Accountant (Independent examination)	1,450.00	0.00	0.00	1,450.00	796.50
Equipment Purchases	1,181.90	0.00	0.00	1,181.90	578.07
Sundry Admin expenses	9.95	0.00	0.00	9.95	61.16
General Maintenance	964.49	0.00	0.00	964.49	530.31
Fire Extinguisher Maintenance	75.60	0.00	0.00	75.60	0.00
Gas Boiler Servicing	115.00	0.00	0.00	115.00	0.00
Legal and Professional fees	1,042.20	0.00	0.00	1,042.20	0.00
Hire of Premises for Sandbach Church	0.00	0.00	380.00	380.00	0.00
Recovery of heating costs from Foodbank	(600.00)	0.00	0.00	(600.00)	0.00
Subtotal Building Running Costs	19,187.62	0.00	380.00	19,567.62	17,600.25

6. Building Capital Costs/Refurbishment

Café Refurbishment	75.99	0.00	1,509.00	1,584.99	0.00
Subtotal Building Capital Costs/Refurbishment	75.99	0.00	1,509.00	1,584.99	0.00

6. Fund Movements

	Balance C/fwd	Balance B/fwd	Income	Expenditure	Transfers
General	18,994.22	26,781.07	73,374.47	(81,161.32)	0.00
Subtotal Unrestricted funds	18,994.22	26,781.07	73,374.47	(81,161.32)	0.00
Hardship	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Toilets Renovation	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Unforeseen cost Reserve	36,000.00	36,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Subtotal Designated funds	36,000.00	36,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Special Treasures	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Building	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Church refurbishment	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Stardust	491.00	0.00	2,000.00	(1,509.00)	0.00
Sandbach Church	1,147.12	0.00	1,557.12	(410.00)	0.00
Alsager Support Centre	0.00	(233.12)	0.00	233.12	0.00
CRASH time (Messy Church)	2,396.57	2,396.57	0.00	0.00	0.00
Give-Back Grant	(0.00)	(0.00)	0.00	0.00	0.00
Alsager Food Bank	18,115.21	37,520.09	15,707.97	(35,112.85)	0.00
Subtotal Restricted funds	22,149.90	39,683.54	19,265.09	(36,798.73)	0.00
Grand Total All Funds	77,144.12	102,464.61	92,639.56	(117,960.05)	0.00