



**Parochial Church Meeting  
Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2025**

Parochial Church Meeting to receive the Annual Report and Financial Statements of  
the Parochial Church Council

for the year ending 31st December 2024.

Chair of PCC: Mike Gee Lay Vice Chair

The Parish Office, Parsonage Street, Halstead, Essex CO9 2LD

**Administrative Information:**

The Parish of St Andrew with Holy Trinity Church is part of  
The Halstead Area Team Ministry.

It is situated within the Deanery of Hinckford and is part of the  
Diocese of Chelmsford within the Church of England.

The correspondence address is  
The Parish Office, Parsonage Street, Halstead, Essex CO9 2LD  
Our Parish Administrator is Rae Haylock

Bankers: Barclays Bank PLC  
Independent Examiner: Tracey Whittle

**Electoral Roll:** At our last annual meeting the Electoral Roll stood at 104. Within a worshipping community of 137, the average attendance throughout the week was 60-65 people, including 45 at our main service on a Sunday. There were 5 baptisms, 6 funerals and no marriages held during 2024.

**Carolyn Brown, Electoral Roll Officer**

## **The Parochial Church Council**

Mike Gee	Acting Chair, Warden Team
Helena Gee	Secretary, Mustard Tree lead, Safeguarding lead, Lay Chair of Deanery Synod
Claire Ford	Treasurer, Wonderkids and Kids' Church lead
Melanie Black	Warden Team
Arthur Dodd	Warden Team, Pastoral leader
William Jensen	Organist and Choir Master (invited member)
Angela Kerrison	Hundred Club
Rachel Morris	Warden Team, Messy Church and Kids' Church lead
Rachael Simpson	Community Outreach worker, Soul Food lead (invited member)
Pauline Tilsley	Deanery Synod Representative

### **Team Rector's Introduction**

2024 has been a year of significant change, with Rev'd Katie's last service on Sunday the 2<sup>nd</sup> of June and we then entered into a period of vacancy for both the Rector and Team Vicar (Three Saints) roles. I was successful in my application for the Team Rector role, a post that I was licensed to on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2025. May I take this opportunity to thank Rev'd Katie for her many years of ministry, and we are delighted for both Katie and Gary in their new chapter together.

Continuing the theme of thanks, we are extremely grateful for the ministries of Reverends Richard, Elizabeth, David and Matthew, all of our lay leaders, churchwardens, PCC members, Rae in the office and all who have contributed in any way.

On average, incumbent vacancies within the Church of England last for about 18 months, I am pleased to say that as I write this, we are about to advertise the new role after several months of developing the Parish Profile. A very big thank you goes to all of those involved in this process.

As part of the Gateway Project, WonderKids, Messy Church and Soul Food have drawn alongside people with the love of God, and it was particularly joyful to see the Christmas Day communal meal bringing light and love to people who needed fellowship on this day.

As we look ahead into 2025, we pray for the discernment process of the new Team Vicar and a new chapter of ministry within the communities of the Three Saints.

**Revd Mark Payne, Team Rector – Halstead Area Team**

## Report from PCC Secretary

Together the PCC are responsible for the overall wellbeing, practical as well as spiritual, of the church, the church members and the church buildings. The Incumbent is the Chair with the officer positions being filled by laity. As I report on our work this year, I have to begin by reminding everyone that Revd Katie moved to her new post a week after the last APCM, so we have been a full year without an incumbent to chair the group. As Deputy Chair, Mike has led meetings. All of the PCC team have worked diligently to keep abreast of our collective responsibilities and to manage effectively. We are hardworking and sincere and desire to do our best for the church community. We have had to learn and respond to new things. We hope that we have not just 'kept things going', as we have a desire for this church to grow and flourish and are seeking appropriate, sustainable ways to do this. There are so many ways to support the life and growth of the church, and everyone is able to contribute to this. For this reason, we make a personal appeal to each of you to get involved and help us. Do not think that you have not been here long enough. You have talents that God wants you to share. The APCM is the ideal time to commit to a year on this team.

**Staffing and Duties:** We have run for the last two years without church wardens. The duties of the wardens have been covered by the PCC and in particular by four PCC members. The PCC would very much appreciate that dedicated Wardens come forward to support the running of the church. They will still be fully supported by the PCC team and by an experienced group of sides-persons (welcomers). This will give the PCC more bandwidth to support the broader administrative functions of the church.

Three members of the PCC stepped down during the year, one as a consequence of ill health. The other two because of increased pressures from other commitments. In addition, one of the PCC was not able to fulfil their PCC role due to ill health. We are so pleased that they are now able to actively support the team and are blessed with better health.

During the vacancy we have been blessed with additional support leading services from the retired clergy living in the area. Services are regularly lay led providing congregants with an opportunity to take part as lesson readers and leading intercessions. Welcome and hospitality teams support each service.

We have a new PCC Treasurer and Claire presents her first treasurer's report this year. Malcolm Willis' exceptionally long service to church and the role means that Claire feels that she has big boots to fill. We are thankful for her energy and aptitude to the role. Charlotte stepped down as auditor with Tracey Whittle taking on the task for us. Charlotte has been helping Rae and Claire move finance systems to new software over the year.

Membership of the Finance and Premises sub-committee has changed too. Mike has been acting chair of the group, with Helena acting up as note keeper since Revd Katie's departure. This position will continue until we have a fuller PCC, and roles can be distributed accordingly.

**Capacity:** With fewer members of the PCC, we have all increased our roles attempting to ensure that as many things as possible move forwards. Inevitably we have not been able to manage all as we had wished so some things have proceeded at a slower pace or have been put on pause until capacity is back.

We have just come to the end of an interesting year.

**Vacancy:** The vacancy for Team Vicar has meant that PCC time has focused on working with the other two churches in The Three Saints team to develop a profile which will attract a new incumbent. Initially, we focused on the advertisement and appointment of a Team Rector and latterly, once Revd Mark was confirmed in the rector post we focused on the Team Vicar position. As we write this the post has been advertised and we await the interview process to begin. Trusting that The Lord will bless us with an appropriate new Team Vicar.

The vacancy time has meant that Rae and Helena have been working closely with the Diocese, who own the Rectory in preparing it for a fresh tenant. A great number of church members have quietly supported us in that role, and we thank you all for this.

**Strengthened by others:** We appreciate the work that Revd David, Revd Eizabeth, Revd Richard and Revd Matt have put in to ensuring that the services each week are planned and led. You are aware I'm sure that each Thursday a Holy Communion service takes place. This is supported by the wider clergy team providing us with a chance for fellowship with an even greater number of clergy. Part way through the year Suzie and Arthur Dodd were licensed as Pastoral Leaders. We thank them for leading morning prayer on a regular basis and for establishing a weekly service and fellowship time for residents in four of the care homes in our area.

**Church Warden team:** The team operated once again to manage the weekly services. Working together with St James' and St Catherine's wardens meant that services across the team were considered. Revd Elizabeth helped by coordinating this.

Our desire is to **nurture and grow what we have**. To do this we have planned and supported two weekly services at St Andrew's. Our interdependence as a congregation is evident. We have many people who contribute to our worship and fellowship times. This year, in particular, we have worked more closely with Rae, William, Jim, Ros and Kevin and I thank them on your behalf for all that they do to

maintain church life. Church cleaning, flower arranging and bell ringing teams of volunteers support services, quietly and without fuss.

The Gateway Project, Messy Church and Wonderkids all have full PCC backing. Rachel Morris and Claire Ford leading the missions to children with Rachael Simpson, our Community Outreach Worker maintaining the Gateway project.

**Future Growth:** A team from the church have volunteered to attend the 'Leading your Church into Growth Conference' in May. Growing in personal commitment to each other through practical involvement and deepening relationships is key to this.

**Financial custodians:** A key contributor to healthy finances comes through parish giving. The PCC thank everyone for supporting us in this way. There are a range of ways that parishioners can give. These are all appreciated. Anyone wanting to find out more about how to give do speak directly to Claire. Leaflets about parish share will be available at the APCM. In the past we have benefited greatly from legacy giving. Historic legacy funds for St Andrew's are almost gone so it is with urgency we are considering ways to gain funds to support the day to day running of the buildings of which we are the custodians. Please remember these situations in your prayers.

We thank Angela, Jan and Carolyn who encouraged us all to contribute to general fundraising by taking part in the Hundred Club. There are no limits on how to raise funds and if you have a good idea, please do share it and have a go at running it. Jay has been making and selling jam since the £10 challenge initiative, which was announced the year after Katie arrived. All of the money Jay raises goes back to church and supports us. We are also completely blessed with exquisite preserves. Thank you and bless you, Jay.

We are indebted to the Friends of St Andrew's who give substantial funds to support church maintenance that has been identified in the quinquennial report.

The Mustard Tree Project requires a massive injection of funds to come to fruition. The team will be looking outside of church for these monies in order to take the project to its next phase.

**Helena Gee, PCC Secretary**

## **Safeguarding**

The PCC continues to comply with section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 (duty to have regard to House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults) with an annual review from our Parish Safeguarding Officer, Helena Gee.

## **Report from Church Wardens**

The wardens of the three churches have collectively planned the rotas for services for each church as well as occasional joint team events. During the vacancy we have been blessed with additional support leading services from the retired clergy living in the area. Services are regularly lay led providing congregants with an opportunity to take part as lesson readers and leading intercessions. Welcome and hospitality teams support each service.

We have received criticism when service patterns are 'not the same as last year'. Whilst understanding that people like what they know, we are not able to always provide this. We are custodians in the middle of a vacancy. Being in vacancy means that we are a member of the clergy down. The impact of this is seen on what we have been able to staff regarding services. We have been pleased to offer joint services, which ensure that more of the congregation across the team can access a service led by clergy. We have been criticised for poor communication and feel that this is also unfair. We are genuine and sincere in what we offer and endeavour to do. Each member of the warden team has additional PCC and employed work responsibilities.

Please pray for the warden position at church. Wardening roles in addition to, rather than within, the PCC would be appreciated. Please talk with Revd Mark, any of our supporting clergy, or any member of the PCC if you feel you wish to help with this.

**Mike Gee, Church Warden Team**

## **The Fabric Goods and Ornaments of the Church**

The Church building is in a good state of repair and has been maintained according to the requirements of the quinquennial inspections.

## **Church Cleaning**

Rachel Morris has continued the organisation of the monthly cleaning schedule for the church. She is very grateful to the dedicated team of colleagues, who support this important work to keep the church looking at its best. We are always looking for new people to join the team and if you can help, please speak to Rachel or simply turn up on the Saturdays when cleaning takes place. There are always refreshments to keep everyone going during the cleaning sessions. It is so encouraging when visitors to the

church comment on how well the building is kept and this is in part down to the work of the cleaning team.

## **Church and Churchyard**

This year has seen some development work by the Mustard Tree Project team looking at how we can improve the welcome, accessibility, and hospitality provided in our church building. We have worked with two architects, who have endeavoured to be sympathetic to the current building and all its historical features.

The proposals include improved access, the provision of toilet facilities and a server's area in church. We have also investigated the provision of a modern, efficient, and environmentally friendly heating system which is dependent on an updated electricity supply for the church building. Given the demands of the vicar vacancy work on this major development has been largely paused. However, we were very pleased to have the formal visit of the Diocesan Advisory Committee for the Care of Churches in August 2024 to review and confirm our plans for the building. The formal report is awaited, but the informal feedback was very positive and encouraging about the plans and overall the plans and project should be fully supported by the Diocese.

The Friends of St. Andrew's have allocated money to support the repairs to the organ loft roof, which were identified in the Quinquennial Report. The early planning and approval stages of this project have been delayed because of the vicar vacancy, but we hope to have the Diocesan Faculties in place in the next few months. A focus on raising funds will remain a major task for the church family going forward.

**Mike Gee, Church Warden Team**

## **Hinckford Deanery Synod 2024**

With Revd Katie leaving the Diocese in June, the November meeting at Earls Colne, saw Revd Mark Payne appointed as the new Area Dean and Helena Gee as Lay Chair. The opening worship and commissioning of Revd Mark and Helena were conducted by Archdeacon Kate Peacock.

At this meeting the speaker was Carrie Prior, Director of Education for the Diocese, and she spoke about the work done with church schools. There are 13 church schools in the North Hinckford Deanery.

The March meeting was held here at St Andrew's with Wendy Lidgate, Programme Manager for the Diocese, speaking. She told us about an exciting bid the Diocese

are putting together from the national Church SMMIB (Strategic Mission and Ministry Investment Board).

The Deanery Synod met three times this year. The June meeting focused on Parish Share. Our reps Pauline and Jan gave a detailed presentation to PCC about this, for which we thank them.

**Pauline Tilsley and Helena Gee, Deanery Synod Representatives**

### **Altar Servers**

A small team assist as acolytes and crucifer. Their dedication enhances the worship at St Andrew's, through the year. They support the parish by completing practical tasks after each service. All of them are deeply committed to St Andrew's through their other roles which support the mission and life of the congregation.

**Kevin Metson, Sacristan**

### **Report from The Bellringers**

Sending the Holy Spirit into the Hearts of us all. St. Andrew's Church has a fine set of 8 bells, the tenor bell weighing 15 1/4 cwt. We boast that we have a pre-reformation bell in the ring, which we think is dated C1380. This bell has a Latin inscription and is No 7 in the ring of 8; Dulcis Sisto Melis Campana Vocor Gabrielis. We try to ring the bells on the 2nd Sunday in the month when we can get enough ringers to form a band, and also for weddings, funerals and special church services.

At present we struggle with 6 Halstead ringers, but fortunately we can get help when required from our ringing friends in nearby parishes. We are saddened to lose Paul Osborne, he was one of our 3 new learners that I have been teaching during the year. Elizabeth Jordan and Mark Rickett continue to make good progress. Gabriel, Mark's son, who is only 6 always comes to practise with his dad. He loves the bells, and Dave Martin has made him a working bell model!!

We sometimes have a Saturday morning practice, and on the 1st of February a 1/4 peal of Grandsire Triples was successfully achieved. Our recent tabletop sale proved to be fruitful, we have raised £107 towards buying 3 new ropes, which are needed to keep our bells in good ringing order. We have been successful to gain a grant to cover the cost of two more ropes as well.



Lastly, we always are looking for new members to keep the Halstead bells ringing. If you are interested, please give me a 'phone call on 07421729751

**David Kerrison, Tower Leader**

## **Church Cleaning**

Rachel Morris, one of the PCC members, organises the monthly cleaning schedule for the church. There is a very dedicated team of colleagues, who support this important work to keep the church looking at its best. We are always looking for new people to join the team and if you can help, please speak to Rachel or simply turn up on the Saturdays when the cleaning takes place. We meet once a month, usually on the third Saturday for a couple of hours. We have between 4 and 8 people involved. Refreshments are provided. There is also a cleaning list on the side table in the church for people who can't come on the day with a list of tasks.

**Rachel Morris, Church Warden Team**

## **Special Projects**

We desire to share our faith with those in the community and within the Gateway Project provide practical support for those who live in our parish.

## **The Gateway Project**

The Gateway Project grew throughout 2024 even though there continued to be a shortage of food donations, so more food needed to be bought as well as a new commercial fridge from our grant funds. Debs, our part time cook told us she was homesick and wanted to return to the Midlands, so she left in February 2025 and will be greatly missed after being with us for almost 18 months. We are in the process of onboarding another self-employed cook who, once trained, will regularly cook at the communal meals. Our Community Outreach Worker and volunteer team are keeping the meals running and owing to the success of the communal meals we have taken on a couple more volunteers to help.

**Soul Food** continues to run weekly takeaway meals, feeding around 40 people alongside our monthly communal meals and recipe bags at Bank Holidays. Christmas dinner was a particular highlight with 51 people attending, we held

quizzes, raffles, did face-painting and biscuit decoration as well as the food and Christmas gifts. Meals were also delivered again into the community, 'United In Kind' joined us again to help with all the activities. We conducted a survey of our takeaways and communal meals and made some changes to the communal meals including some entertainment which is going down well. We held an 'Ask the Vicar' communal meal in January and March and will be holding a thanksgiving service on June 8<sup>th</sup> at 4pm, to which you are all invited, and then for food afterwards (please let Rachael know if you would like to come).

Our team of Soul Food volunteers play a vital role in the success of the Soul Food project. Every role is valued by our clients, with the relationships formed being the most significant thing.

Soul Food also worked with Wonderkids during the year on a number of events. We catered for over 70 adults and children at our Emergency Services event, where we invited the Fire Brigade, Police and 'United In Kind' did a huge art installation project with the children, which will be erected in the hall. We held a free swim session at Halstead Leisure Club before returning for games in church, and an Easter Extravaganza in church with fun and games.

The Essex Community Foundation Grant runs into 2026 and, together with funds raised in other ways, gives the opportunity to buy those little touches that make the meals and volunteer events all the more special. The project funding for our Outreach Worker post ends this year and we are seeking grants to extend that post to oversee the project.

**Rachael Simpson, Community Outreach Worker**

## **Wonderkids**

Wonderkids runs every Tuesday morning during term time. The stay and play sessions run from 9.30 until 11am in the church hall. We have a regular group of 4 volunteers as well as a few willing parents available ad hoc, although more volunteers are always welcome.

We have a variety of regular attendees comprising of parents, grandparents and child minders. Currently, we have 30 regular families who join us at least once a month, with another 10 visiting more infrequently. We are still welcoming new families to our sessions. We run a pre-booking system via Facebook or email and limit numbers to 25 adults and their children for each session.

During 2024 we ran three events during the school holidays with support from Soul Food and the Gateway Project. Easter in the Church, a swim and play supported by

Halstead Leisure Centre and our Emergency Special where we were joined by the Fire Brigade and Police Service. These events were well attended and brought us some new regulars in the winter term.

This year we secured a grant of £500 from Halstead Town Council. This money has been used to continue to refresh our toy selection, providing further opportunities for role play, imaginative play and fine motor development.

**Claire Ford, Wonderkids Lead**

## **The Mustard Tree Project**

This major project is a response to the PCC at St Andrew's aspiration that worship, fellowship, mission and community will be enhanced through improved welcome and hospitality at this church. They see the parable of the mustard seed as an image of God's generous hospitality and welcome to all, so a fitting reference for the project which has inspired our vision of what we want St Andrew's Church to offer.

The Church of England speaks of 'proclaiming the gospel afresh in each generation', and part of how we do this is through our buildings and what they say about who we think God is, what church means to us, and how we love and care for those who make use of our buildings. The key strands of the work are:

**Make our church more accessible, inclusive and hospitable Reflecting God's generous welcome to all**

**Building community and growing faith**

The mustard tree team has developed a project plan to improve the beautiful, sacred church building which will meet today's needs and expectations and be fit for mission and ministry over the next few decades. We want to show and share God's love in the best way that we can, meeting the needs of as many people as possible, so that the church building might better support our mission and ministry. We want to be a blessing to our community, and a place where those seeking spiritual support can encounter Jesus and explore Christian faith.

### **What will be different?**

- A new and more powerful three-phase electricity supply
- A sustainable electric heating system. Zoned heating areas to improve energy efficiency and comfort.
- An accessible toilet facility inside the west vestry

- Improved circulation and access for disabled people around church by removing a section of pews and installing ramps
- A larger dais
- A modern server's facility with cafe style seating at the back of the church
- The font located by the North door.
- Sound desk relocated
- New storage areas
- Glass inner doors to improve the church entrance and make access more welcoming

This is a major project, with an estimated cost of £750k. The aim is to seek grant funding for this in addition to small funds that are currently in church funds. To date, we have got to the stage of a detailed architectural drawing and plan and there has been a supportive DAC visit, which has been favourable to what has been planned in terms of changes to the building. The project was launched to the congregation last April. From April till October feedback was received. We were delighted with the positive support we received, and the endorsement is appreciated. We planned to go to broader consultation and gain feedback from community groups that use our facilities but found that our capacity to move the project on was diminished. This will be the first activity we undertake when the project is resumed once we have an incumbent to manage PCC matters and free up members of the Mustard Tree team to focus on it.

**Helena Gee, Mustard Tree Project**

## **Ignite Report**

Ignite continues to offer a monthly evening opportunity for a more informal service. We meet on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of every month except August and December. We start with time for a drink and a chat, and this is followed by a time of worship, where the band (recently enhanced by Richard) lead us in a variety of music. Services can then include a talk or activity and a time of prayer or reflection. A particular favourite was the one where members of the congregation chose their favourite hymn or chorus and explained why it was special. The service is run by a small lay team and attended by people from a variety of churches in the area. Numbers tend to be smaller than they were before Covid, but we are always looking for new members of the team, or people willing to share their spiritual journey with us.

**Linda Davis, The Ignite Team**

## **Kids' Church Report**

We mainly have children under 6 in one group (though we can adapt if older children come). The format is the same as previous years with a continuous play that connects to the theme, a story and discussion, 2 or 3 craft activities, a game, a song and we finish with a prayer before going over to church, where we join the end of the service and have refreshments. We sometimes have families from Crossways Church joining us, which supports them with provision for their children. This is a planned joint provision supporting Children's Ministry. We have at least 2 leaders for each session and most parents stay and join in. We are developing good relationships with them.

**Rachel Morris and Claire Ford, Kids' Church Leaders**

## **Messy Church Report 2025**

Messy Church is an interactive experience aimed at children of primary age and below and their parents, allowing them to encounter Jesus through a range of activities, which are fun and sometimes messy.

We have made some major changes this year as we found numbers were dwindling. The first change is dates. We have planned around set dates in the calendar, for example Easter, a light party on November 1st and Christingle in December.

The second change is times. We are avoiding mealtimes, so have some morning or early afternoon sessions.

The third change is we are no longer having a meal together at the end of Messy Church. Instead, we have a cafe area, where drinks and snacks are available throughout the session free of charge.

The fourth change is we now have a booking email system, so we have an idea of how many children are coming, so know how much to prep and how much food to buy reducing waste.

Our first Messy Church this year went well. Although only 2 booked, we had 9 children each with a parent. Our theme was 'Learning to Live Together'. All the children enjoyed the activities, and the feedback was that the cafe worked well. Using online booking for the first time meant that 24 children and their families joined us for our Easter Messy Church.

Messy Church wouldn't run without volunteers. I would like to say a big thank you to everyone who is involved.

**Rachel Morris, Messy Church Lead**

## **Monday Evening Home Group Report**

Our Home Group continues to thrive with 5 to 9 people meeting once a fortnight in someone's home. This year we have studied The Twelve Disciples and some of the Psalms. We had a tree at the Christmas Tree Festival and decorated it with Tree Hangings, with the positive sayings and thoughts from the Psalms. The Home Group WhatsApp is useful for requests for prayers, support and information.

**Pauline Tilsley and Jay Ainge, Home Group Leaders**

## **St Andrew's Friday Coffee Morning**

The Friday Coffee Morning is now in its 37<sup>th</sup> year. It was held weekly in St Andrew's Hall throughout 2024 and provided an opportunity for both our regulars, plus many others to drop in for a coffee and a chat as well as to look through the many bargains that were always on offer. In 2024, although our coffee morning is mainly a social event, we raised around £700 for parish funds and we appreciate those who come along week by week to support us. Donations of unwanted gifts, bric a brac, books or other small items that we can sell are always welcome.

**The Coffee Morning Team**

## **League of Friends Report**

The League of Friends was established to raise funds to support the maintenance of the grade I listed building that is St Andrew's Church, Halstead. Funds are raised through sponsorship, membership, and participation in a range of events. If you would like to become a member of The Friends, to offer help on the committee or assist with planning an event, or if you wish to find out which events are coming up, visit [www.friendsofstandrewshalstead.co.uk](http://www.friendsofstandrewshalstead.co.uk) or speak to a member of the committee who are: Lisa Baxter, Claire Cannon, Carolyn Brown, Helena Gee, Mike Gee, Penny Hill, Pauline Tilsley and Margaret Tyler.

The PCC thank Claire Cannon and her team for their generosity and hard work, raising funds for the fabric of the building. The current Quinquennial Report highlights urgent work required on the roof over the organ loft and vestry, and this has been the focus for fundraising this year.

The programme for this year has included: tabletop sales; organ concerts; Colne Philharmonic Orchestra and a recital by Chris White and the annual Christmas Tree Festival. There is an ambitious music festival being planned for the summer 2025, for which we would appreciate support and practical help if you can. This will take place on the weekend of 27th,28th,29th June the festival will include 5 concerts across the weekend.

Worth remembering:

- A) Membership of the friends is not big; the committee is extremely small.
- B) The League of Friends was established to raise funds for major repair projects for the church building. All money raised is used for this and is an essential source of money in support of the church building.

We would appreciate it if you could promote all of these fundraising events to others in church, your friends and family and to anyone whom you feel will be interested.

Membership of the Friends is open to anyone in the community and would interest anyone interested in preserving this historical building and focal point in the town. If you would like more information please speak to Claire Cannon.

**Claire Cannon, Chair of The League of Friends**

## **Our Church Schools**

The parish is served by a secondary academy and three primary schools in the town. Two of the primary schools are church schools. There are regular opportunities for the children, parents and staff in our schools to come to church for special services, this year Harvest, Christmas, Ash Wednesday and Easter services have been held. Church representatives serve as governors or trustees at the church schools, and it is anticipated that the new incumbent will serve as a trustee at All Saints Academy Trust, where St. Andrew's Primary is the lead school and as a governor at Holy Trinity Primary School, which is a maintained local authority school. Schools are of a high standard and are currently rated 'Good' by Ofsted, both of our church primary schools have excellent SIAMS inspection reports.

**Mike Gee, PCC Lay Vice-Chair**

## **Holy Trinity Primary School**

Holy Trinity Church of England Primary School has enjoyed another enriching and successful year.

In May last year, we received an outstanding SIAMS report, which highlighted numerous strengths and identified only one achievable development area. Our Diocesan adviser, Julie Sarti, was delighted with the outcome, describing it as well deserved.

In recognition of our dedication to courageous advocacy, Bishop Roger visited the school to witness the impactful work taking place. In his letter to the school, he remarked that he had “met some of the most engaged and well-mannered children he has ever encountered.” He also stated that “the work the school has undertaken as part of the Courageous Advocacy programme is exemplary,” a sentiment that was later featured in a local press release.

Holy Trinity recently completed an exceptionally successful inclusion review, with key advisers commending the school for “going above and beyond for our families and young people” and demonstrating “a strong and unwavering commitment to inclusion.” This recognition is a testament to the welcoming ethos we are proud to uphold. As part of our ongoing commitment to supporting children with special educational needs, we plan to expand the existing Zen Den to create an additional sensory space for upper Key Stage 2 pupils.

As part of ‘The Essex Year of Numbers’ initiative, we participated in the Lord Lieutenant’s competition in February, which encouraged students to explore the presence of mathematics in everyday life. Holy Trinity was not only the winner of the whole-school category but was also deemed the overall winner of the competition by the judges. We were honoured to welcome the Lord Lieutenant, Jennifer Tollhurst, and her Deputy, Catharine Hutley, to present prizes and certificates. Mrs. Catharine Hutley DL praised the children’s mathematical creativity, stating, “Your results were wonderful and so imaginative. Who could imagine that numbers could come in so many different permutations?!” The school received a £125 book voucher, along with books and class certificates. The Lord Lieutenant commended the children’s mathematical achievements, their exemplary conduct, and the contributions of Mrs. Raven, the school’s maths lead. Both visitors expressed their admiration for the school, remarking, “It was a real pleasure to visit such a vibrant and creative school. Everyone was delightful, and we found the pupils to be incredibly engaging and interesting. It is a great credit to you and all the staff for making their learning experience so enjoyable, which is clearly reflected in their enthusiasm.”

Holy Trinity was one of only a handful of schools selected to participate in an art project for Oxfam, creating a banner on the theme of climate justice and collective solutions. The banner was displayed at Oxfam House in Oxford before being transferred to Oxfield at the Glastonbury Festival site.



Additionally, we took part in the Courageous Advocacy Pop-up Exhibition at Chelmsford Cathedral, where students exhibited artwork—including collages, sculptures, and paintings depicting themes of social justice.

Our commitment to character education and raising aspirations is embedded in the rich experiences we provide for our pupils daily. These experiences are rooted in our theologically grounded Christian vision, which aligns with the values of honesty, love, and respect that is reflected in the biblical teachings “Love thy neighbour as thyself” and “Love one another as He has loved us.”

Throughout the year, we have continued to foster strong connections with our local community. Our pupils collaborated with Halstead in Bloom through a weekly gardening club, and as part of the Braintree Cultural Partnership, some of our students' presented visitors at Halstead Day Centre with books and artwork inspired by The Year of Numbers and environmental themes.

We have also supported our local Empire Theatre by staging both our Nativity play and end-of-year productions at the venue.

Our close relationship with St. Andrew's Church remains integral to school life, with students participating in services for key events such as Remembrance Day, Harvest, Ash Wednesday, Christmas, and Easter.

We are now in the final stages of developing our bespoke Holy Trinity curriculum, which is designed to address the diverse needs and abilities of all our pupils.

Other themed events throughout the year have included engineering workshops, wellbeing sessions, guest talks from charities and organisations, the construction of a new bee byway through the school's newly established Eco Council, and an orchestra visit.

Furthermore, Holy Trinity was featured on BBC Look East for its involvement in a dental pilot project focused on oral health. This initiative provided workshops and informal dental screenings, enabling pupils to access free NHS clinic appointments.

**Sarah Rowe, Headteacher**

### **St. Andrew's Primary School: A Year of Growth, Action, and Recognition**

Over the past year, St. Andrew's Church of England Primary School has been on a journey — one rooted in faith, action, and community. As a church school, we hold tight to the values of compassion, responsibility, and hope. This year, those values were not only taught in classrooms but lived out through our pupils' actions and recognised on a national level.

We're proud to share that St. Andrew's became the first school in the area to be awarded the Global Neighbours' Silver Award (September 2024), a distinction given

by Christian Aid to schools that show a strong commitment to global citizenship. The award recognises how schools are helping children understand the world around them — especially the challenges faced by communities in other countries — and take practical steps to make a difference. For us this wasn't a one-off project or box-ticking exercise. It was the result of a more than a year-long focus woven into daily life at school. Children took part in learning about global issues such as climate change, poverty, inequality not in an abstract way, but in ways that connected to their own lives and our own Learning for Life Behaviours.

One class wrote letters to local MPs about environmental policies. Another led a campaign to reduce plastic waste in school. Others raised money for international charities and organised assemblies to educate their peers about what they'd learned. Staff, students, and families all played a part. We wanted the children to see that their voices and actions matter, and they truly rose to the occasion. Our SIAMS report, now available online, details much of this work and reflects the heart behind it: to raise children who are not just kind but also courageous, informed, and active in their faith. It's a vision that aligns deeply with our mission as a church school - to love one another.

On Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> October, the school was proud to participate in Season of Creation Evening Prayer at Chelmsford Cathedral. The children sang and gave a talk to the congregation about the work the school has undertaken encouraging our pupils to have a "brave voice" about a range of environmental and social issues.

During the spring term, as part of our school's diversity project, pupils also wrote and delivered speeches on the theme of countering stereotypes. These speeches were shared with our two link schools — one a multi-faith school in Birmingham, and the other in Kenya. The exchange sparked meaningful conversations between students and allowed them to hear different perspectives from children in very different communities. This international connection was made possible through the support of our Diocesan Advisor.

Just before the Easter break, the school hosted an Easter Enterprise Event, giving every class the chance to tap into their entrepreneurial spirit. With small start-up budgets, the children set up and ran stalls selling both goods and services. Visitors were persuaded, with great enthusiasm, to make purchases at every turn. There was a real buzz throughout the building, and the children showed creativity, teamwork, and persuasive flair. The funds raised are being pooled with generous donations from the Essex Free Masons and supporters to enhance our school's outdoor reflection area this summer. As part of this project, we're excited to install a new water feature, kindly sponsored by Halstead in Bloom. Alongside this, we'll be welcoming an Artist in Residence in May, who will guide the school in creating a clay installation inspired by the natural elements. Every child will take part, with older

pupils supporting our youngest, as we craft handmade tiles to be permanently displayed in this special space. It's a beautiful way to bring art, nature, and faith together in a shared expression of community.

As we look to the year ahead, we're inspired to keep going - not just to earn awards, but to keep shaping a school where children are empowered to live out their faith with purpose and joy. For example, just a few weeks ago the children in our choir went to visit local care home residents and sang some of the uplifting songs they have been learning. The journey continues, and we're glad to be walking it together with our children enjoying opportunities to be part of community near and far.

**Bridgette Gough, Executive Headteacher - St. Andrew's Primary School  
Part of All Saints Academy Trust**

### **St Andrew's Church Vacancies**

Are you able to support the church by offering your help with any of the vacancies described below?

**Member of Hospitality team** (Occasional serving of refreshments after services)

**Welcomers** (Monthly greet church attendees)

**Warden** or warden team (Supports the incumbent with the provision of weekly acts of worship) supported by welcomers and the PCC)

**PCC Member** (Members of the PCC are elected annually at the APCM. During the one year term you will be expected to attend 5 formal meetings, you may wish to join a sub-committee. The PCC support the Church Wardens with the running of the church. The PCC focus on missional opportunities and how to nurture the church community that we have as well as welcome others. We have duties to maintain the fabric of the buildings in our care. As a registered charity we report annually to the charity commission and to the diocese.

Each year we receive a request for parish share from the diocese and manage a strategy to support the payment of this)

**Eco Representative** (Encourages our stewardship of Gods Earth and keeps us up to date with CofE initiatives to strengthen this)

**Cleaning Team Co-ordinator** (Monthly)

**Positions Filled:** Thank you to all of you who support the well-being of our church by taking these roles

Parish Administrator, Safeguarding Officer, Choir and Organ Master, Caretaker, Community Outreach worker, Magazine Editor, Social media manager, Deanery Synod Representatives, Team Council Representative, All Age Service Co-ordinator, Worship Band Leader, Ignite Leaders, Ignite Set Up team, Messy Church co-ordinator/leader, Pastoral Care Leaders, Messy Church table leaders.

## **Finance**

To ensure that our church is generous towards the wider church and community, we support a number of appeals and charity projects throughout the year. These include supporting the Children's Society through our Christingle service, the Samaritans Purse Shoe Box appeal and the annual Christian Aid Appeal.

The annual accounts are appended to this report.

**Claire Ford, Treasurer**

Parish of St Andrew with Holy Trinity Halstead  
Financial Statement for the year end 31st December 2024

**General Fund - Unrestricted Current Account - Receipts and Payments**

Receipts	2024		2023	
<b>Voluntary Giving - Regular</b>				
Planned Giving	27710		28515	
Income Tax Recovered	7079		7588	
Service Collections	759		2018	
Gift Aid Envelopes	983	36531	1124	39245
<b>Other Voluntary Receipts</b>				
Donations	2651		2279	
Restricted Collections	461		866	
Collections from Other Services	33	3145	243	3388
<b>Receipts from Other Activities</b>				
Fundraising events	3480		2600	
100 Club	395		0	
Friends Fundraising to be re-imbursed	501	4375	0	2600
<b>Receipts from Church Activities</b>				
St Andrew's Centre Receipts	15870		17430	
Diocesan Fees	1639		2688	
PCC Fees	1347		2676	
Clergy Fees	864		2096	
Energy Fees	500		600	
Parish Magazine	548		130	
Funeral fees to be re-imbursed	130		0	
		20898		25620
<b>Receipts from Investments</b>				
Richmond Trust Investments	826	826	813	813
<b>Grants and Transfers</b>				
Grants from Vicar and Churchwardens account	21586		20000	
Grants From Sant Trust	4500		5000	
Other Grants	12500		3495	
Transfer from Deposit Account	5000	43586	0	28495
<b>Gateway Project</b>				
Gateway Grants	850		0	
Transfers (Soul Food Funds from Deposit AC)	0		8530	
Gateway/Soul Food Receipts	25769	26619	22919	31449
<b>Total Receipts</b>		<b>135979</b>		<b>131610</b>
<b>Payments</b>				
<b>Church Activities</b>				
Parish Share	53860		53064	
St Andrews Centre	12802		14093	
Payment to V+CW for boiler(contra with grant) Note 10	10586		0	
Parish Administration	9301		7640	
Church Insurance	5134		5019	
Church Utilities	4155		4234	
Professional Fees	4040		4040	
Diocesan Fees	1442		2688	
Maintenance of Buildings	1650		2511	
Clergy Fees	879		2096	
Christian Education + Outreach	368		1133	
Charitable and Other Donations	457		866	
Clergy Expenses	287		854	
Music + Choral	473		772	
Cost of Services	331		313	
100 Club Expenses	210		0	
Other Costs	136		127	
		106112		99450
<b>Gateway Project</b>				
Gateway Project Expenses		31561		31793
<b>Total Payments</b>		<b>137672</b>		<b>131243</b>
<b>Excess/(Deficit) of receipts over payments</b>		<b>-1693</b>		<b>367</b>
PCC Current Account 1st January 2024		8462		8095
PCC Current Account 31st December 2024		6768		8462

Parish of St Andrew with Holy Trinity Halstead  
Financial Statement for the year end 31st December 2024

**PCC General Fund Deposit Account - Mixed Funds**

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
<b>Receipts</b>		
Interest from CBF Deposit Fund	528	388
 <b>Payments</b>		
Transfers	5000	8530
Excess/(Deficit) of Receipts over Payments	-4472	-8142
Opening Balance 1st January	9946	18088
<b>Closing Balance 31st December</b>	<u><u>5474</u></u>	<u><u>9946</u></u>

**Fabric Fund Receipts and Payments Account - Restricted Fund**

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
<b>Receipts</b>		
Grant From Friends (Organ Roof)	40000	0
Interest from CBF Deposit Fund	4838	2297
Grant to replace boiler	0	5158
Legacy	0	504
Grant for Bell Clapper	0	250
Grant (CDBF Mustard Tree Project)	2000	0
	<u>46838</u>	<u>8209</u>
 <b>Payments</b>		
Bank Charges	100	97
Notice Board	1272	0
Mustard Tree Project Costs	7385	2751
Hall Boiler Transfer to PCC account	12000	0
Outdoor equipment (from RCCE grant)	0	829
Repairs to Bell clapper	0	370
	<u>20757</u>	<u>4047</u>
Excess/(Deficit) of Receipts over Payments	26081	4162
 <b>Opening Balance 1st January</b>		
Barclays Current	5628	3763
CBF Deposit	73969	71672
Current and Deposit Accounts 1st January	<u>79597</u>	<u>75435</u>
 <b>Closing Balance 31st December</b>		
Barclays Current	6372	5628
CBF Deposit	99307	73969
Current and Deposit Accounts 31st December	<u><u>105679</u></u>	<u><u>79597</u></u>

Parish of St Andrew with Holy Trinity Halstead  
Financial Statement for the year end 31st December 2024

**John Hill Organ/Music Fund - Receipts and Payments Account - Restricted Fund**

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
<b>Receipts</b>		
Interest from CBF Deposit Fund	518	303
<b>Payments</b>	0	0
Excess/(Deficit) of Receipts over Payments	518	303
Opening Balance 1st January	9751	9448
<b>Closing Balance 31st December</b>	<u><u>10268</u></u>	<u><u>9751</u></u>

**Buck Fund - Receipts and Payments Account - Restricted Fund (Restated)**

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
<b>Receipts</b>		
Deposit and Investment Income	2607	1802
<b>Payments</b>	0	0
Excess/(Deficit) of Receipts over Payments	2607	1802
<b>Opening Balance 1st January</b>		
CCLA Current	1009	1009
CCLA Deposit	35012	33209
Note 11	<u><u>36021</u></u>	<u><u>34218</u></u>
<b>Closing Balance 31st December</b>		
CCLA Current	1009	1009
CCLA Deposit	37618	35012
Note 11	<u><u>38627</u></u>	<u><u>36021</u></u>



**Parish of St Andrew with Holy Trinity Halstead**  
**Financial Statement for the year end 31st December 2024**  
**Registered Charity No 1127357**  
**Statement of Assets and Liabilities at 31st December 2024**

<b>Cash Funds</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
PCC Current Account - unrestricted	6768	8462
PCC Deposit Account at CBF - mixed funds	5474	9946
PCC Fabric Fund Current Account - restricted	6372	5628
PCC Fabric Fund at CBF - restricted	99307	73969
John Hill Fund - restricted	10268	9751
Lilian Buck Fund - restricted	38627	36021
<b>Accounts Total</b>	<b>166816</b>	<b>143777</b>

**Investment Assets - Unrestricted**

	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
Ernest Richmond Trust Fund;	30422	29742
CCLA - CBF Investment Fund	30422	29742
Valuation based on market value at year end		

**Investment Assets - Restricted (Restated)**

	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
Lilian Buck Fund; Note 11		
CBF Investment Fund Accum Shares (capital)	36029	34279
CBF Investment Fund Accum Shares	35282	33568
CBF Investment Fund Income Shares	27294	26684
BLK Charities UK Equity Fund A (Acc)	40607	38173
BLK Charities UK Bond Fund A (Acc)	12313	12360
Valuation based on market value at year end	<b>151525</b>	<b>145064</b>

**Notes:**

- 1 The financial Statements of the PCC have been prepared in accordance with the Church accounting Regulations 2006 using the Receipts and Payments basis
- 2 The following assets are recognised but not valued in the Statement of Assets and Liabilities: Moveable church furnishing held by the church warden team on special trust for the PCC and which require a faculty for disposal
- 3 The expenses paid to clergy may include a small immaterial proportion, which relates to their function as PCC members. No expenses were paid to PCC members
- 4 The League of Friends of St Andrew's is an independent registered Charity (no 1019270) which raises funds to assist the parish in maintaining the fabric of St Andrew's Church.
- 5 The Rector and Churchwarden team are trustees of the Sant Residuary Trust Fund which is registered with the Charity Commissioners (no 269570) and provides grants to further the teaching of the church, and relieve poverty in the parish.
- 6 The figures in these statements have been rounded to the nearest pound.
- 7 The sum recorded under 'Restricted Collections' relates to receipts for specific objects or charities and hence is classified as restricted income.

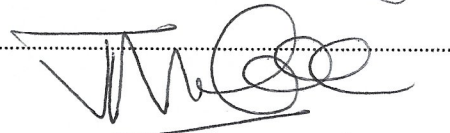


**Parish of St Andrew with Holy Trinity Halstead**  
**Financial Statement for the year end 31st December 2024**  
**Registered Charity No 1127357**  
**Statement of Assets and Liabilities at 31st December 2024**

**Notes cont.**

- 8 The balance of the PCC Current account is holding £1000 for Messy Church and £380 remaining from a Wonderkids Grant. A balance of £3181 is being held by PCC for the Soul Food project.
- 9 A Sum of £500.91 is being held by PCC for the League of Friends of St Andrew's, and a funeral expense of £130 remained outstanding at the end of the year.
- 10 £12,000 was transferred from the Fabric Fund to the current account in readiness for the purchase of a new boiler. However, the boiler was paid from the Vicar and Churchwardens account by mistake. The Vicar and Churchwardens account is an external account.  
A decision has been made to donate the value of the boiler payment from the Vicar and Churchwardens account and therefore a payment and receipt in the PCC account for £10,586 has been included in receipts (grants), and in payments.
- 11 The Lilian Buck Fund which consists of both a current and deposit account and also five investment accounts has been included in the Parish of St Andrew with Holy Trinity Halstead accounts in the year to 31 December 2024. The comparative balances for the year ended 31 December 2023 have also been restated. The Lilian Buck Fund had been treated as external to the Parish of St Andrew with Holy Trinity accounts in the past as it was a restricted fund only to be used for the upkeep/improvement of the church building(s). The PCC have recognised the fund in the Parish of St Andrew with Holy Trinity Halstead accounts in 2024, as the Trustees are planning a church building project and therefore the fund has been recognised in readiness for the project to begin. The fund's cash accounts total £38,627 (2023:£36,021), the investment accounts total £151,525 (2023:£145,064).

Approved by the PCC 27/10/25 and signed on their behalf by Pauline Tilsley - Churchwarden



Lay Vice-Chair PCC



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees

Parish of St Andrew with Holy Trinity Halstead

On accounts for the year  
ended

31 December 2024

Charity no  
(if any)

1127357

Set out on pages

1 to 6

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/12/2024.

Responsibilities and  
basis of report

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent  
examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns (other than those shown below Section B) and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:

TD Whittle

Date:

30-10-2025

Name:

Tracey Deborah Whittle

Relevant professional  
qualification(s) or body  
(if any):

N/A

**Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.**

See note 11 on page 5.

The Lilian Buck Fund which consists of a current account and a deposit account and five investment accounts, has been treated as external to the accounts of the Parish of St Andrew with Holy Trinity Halstead, until the year ended 31 December 2024. The fund is restricted for the upkeep and improvement of the church building(s). The PCC have decided that as there is a new building project starting, to recognise the Lilian Buck Fund in the accounts of Parish of St Andrew with Holy Trinity Halstead. The fund's current and deposit accounts total £38,627 (2023:£36,021), the investment accounts total £151,525 (2023:£145,064). The current account has not been verified at the time of writing this report, although a verbal confirmation of the balance from the bank was given to one of the trustees. No original documentation regarding the terms of the fund has been obtained, although the trustees have said that the fund is to be used for the church building, and that the trustees have authority over the fund accounts. I cannot confirm this as no original documents were available at this time.