



# ANNUAL REPORT

**THE PARISH CHURCH OF  
ST LUKE, ECCLESTON**

For the year ending December 2024



Knowsley Road, WA10 4PU



[stlukeeccleston.org](http://stlukeeccleston.org)

## REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

St Luke's Church Eccleston, St Helens. The parish is part of the Diocese of Liverpool and its official correspondence address is:-

St Luke's Church, Knowsley Road, Eccleston, St Helens, Merseyside, WA10 4PU.

Telephone Number - 01744 21173

The Liverpool Diocesan Board of Finance acted as Custodian Trustee for the inalienable property of the church. For the period 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024 until the date of approval of this report, the following people served as members of the Parochial Church Council:

St Luke’s PCC		Name	Term	Additional PCC Roles
Clergy		Rev Gareth Banton	Ex Officio	
Church Wardens	1	Mrs Lorraine Rose	Ex Officio	Treasurer Standing Committee
	2	Vacant		
PCC Members  There are 9 Elected members if the electoral roll has 50-99 members.	1	Mr John Crosby	2023 - 2026	Standing Committee
	2	Mr Thomas Kelly		
	3	Miss Ann Hayes		
	4	Mrs Lorna Llewellyn		Standing Committee
	5	Mrs Diane Kelly	Term Ended 2024	
	6	Mrs Karen Grant	Retired March 2025	
	7	Mr Michael Hughes	Retired March 2024	
	8	Vacant		
	9	Vacant		
Deanery Synod Reps (DSRs)  St Luke’s is allocated 4 DSRs	1	Miss Diane Wright	2023-2026	Vice Chair Standing Committee
	2	Mr David Thorpe	2023-2026	
	3	Mrs Kate Sawyer	Retired March 2025	
	4	Vacant		
Treasurer		Mr Peter Anderson	2024 – 2025	Gift Aid Officer
PCC Secretary		Vacant		

The following have responsibility roles: -

Safeguarding Officer:	Miss. D.L. Wright
Electoral Roll Officer:	Mrs J Thorpe
Gift Aid Secretary:	Mrs. J Griffiths MBE (Retired March 2025) Mr. P Anderson (Appointed April 2025)
Team Vicar: -	Rev Gareth Banton

Bankers: - Royal Bank of Scotland 1 Spinningfields Square, Manchester, M3 3AP

Independent Examiner: - Mr. P. Horton, c/o St Luke's Church, Knowsley Rd, St. Helens.

Architect:- Maggie Mullan, MMA.Design 59A Roscoe Street Liverpool L1 9DW

### **Structure, Governance And Management**

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) operates under the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956 and the Church Representation Rules as at 2017.

The PCC is a corporate body established by the Church of England. The PCC operates under the Parochial Church Council Powers Measure and is a charity currently accepted by order from registration with the Charity Commission.

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. All church members are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC. The PCC meets on a monthly basis with the exception of January, August and December.

Day to Day management of the church is exercised by the Standing Committee, the only committee required by law. It has the power to carry out PCC business between PCC meetings and considers strategic issues which may affect the church.

Member of the Standing Committee are:-

Miss D L Wright (Lay Chair)

Mrs L Rose (Church Warden)

Mr J Crosby (PCC Member) – retired May 2024

Mrs L Llewellyn (PCC Member) – appointed May 2024

Rev G Banton (Team Rector)

### **Related Parties:**

Queen's Park Primary School, St. Helens – the Priest-in-Charge of St Luke's Church, Eccleston is an ex-officio member of the school governors. This position is still vacant and Kate Sawyer as a Foundation Governor.

Individual PCC members receive external training as and when deemed necessary by the PCC. Training may include trustee responsibilities, basic health and safety, risk assessment and management and Safeguarding procedures.

**Financial Risk:**

The investments held by the PCC are only made in low-risk funds approved for charity use. All assets are insured and levels reviewed annually. The PCC has approved internal controls for annual accounts, cash and cheques handling are implemented.

**Compliance with Law and Regulation:**

The Diocesan Safeguarding guidelines (Parish Safeguarding Handbook - Promoting a safer church) have been adopted by the PCC. The PCC have the ultimate responsibility for all aspects of Safeguarding at St. Luke's.

Safer Recruitment procedures are followed as directed by the Liverpool Diocesan Safeguarding team. All appointments need to be referred to Rev. Gareth Banton, the Team Rector.

The Diocesan policy gives clear guidelines for procedures to follow regarding recruitment. It also gives clear guidance to follow in the event of a Safeguarding issue.

The Diocese use an online system for DBS checks and all those in positions requiring a check have gone through this process. These are renewed regularly.

All leaders and helpers are required to complete a confidential internal information form, with two references, following the diocesan 'Safer Recruitment' guidelines and procedures. Leaders and helpers are also required to complete safeguarding training.

All PCC members have been 'safely recruited' and have undergone an online DBS check. They have also completed basic and foundation safeguarding training.

Readers are required to complete Diocesan Safeguarding training and St. Luke's Readers have either completed the training or are due to attend training in the near future.

St. Luke's Church Warden has been 'safely recruited' and has completed the Church of England Leadership safeguarding training – a requirement for Church Wardens.

St. Luke's PSO (Parish Safeguarding Officer) has been 'safely recruited' and has completed the Church of England Leadership safeguarding training, 'Raising Awareness of Domestic Abuse' training, 'Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking' training and 'Safer Recruitment and People Management' training. The PSO has also completed training to enable her to facilitate safeguarding training to groups.

The PCC continues to be diligent in monitoring legal compliance and changes to legislation.

## Aims And Purpose & Objectives And Activities

The general functions of the PCC are stated within section 2 of the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956.

St. Luke's Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission of the church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. The PCC is also responsible for the maintenance of the Church & Community Centre, Knowsley Road, St Helens.

When planning the objectives for the year, the PCC gave consideration to the Charity Commission's guide on public benefit.

### **Mission and Outreach Support**

Due to the financial situation and the large deficit during the year, the PCC decided that only 5% of the regular income during the year would be distributed to our missionary partners and charities.

The distribution as follows: -

(figures in brackets relates to FYE 2023)

- CMS (Eric & Sandra Reed) -	£523	(£530)
- CPAS -	£131	(£135)
- Bible Society -	£131	(£135)
- SGM Lifewords -	£0	(£135)
- St Helens Street Pastors -	£262	(£266)
- Tear Fund -	£393	(£400)
- United Christians Broadcasting -	£131	(£135)
- Hope from Above (Tim & Carol Derbyshire) -	£262	(£266)
- Hope Centre -	£523	(£530)
- Simeons -	£131	(£135)
- St Helens Safer Families -	£131	(£0)
- <b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£2,618</b>	<b>(£2,667)</b>



### **Vicar's Report:**

I'm so grateful for everybody who has served the church throughout 2024. Whether it's leading worship, doing readings or prayers, counting the money, assisting with Kid's Church, arranging flowers, welcoming people or serving refreshments, I'm so grateful for it all. All our individual acts of service contribute to making Sunday mornings enjoyable, friendly and glorifying to God. There are many people doing roles quietly in the background, from gardening, to managing our finances, to safeguarding. All of these are a service not just to church but to God, and again I express my thanks for all that people offer.

At last year's APCM a big topic for us was the financial deficit. We've seen some improvement on that in 2024 since we reopened our community centre and usage has gently picked up. I suspect 2025's finances will be improved again as we had some regular users begin hiring the premise in the last quarter of 2024.

I want to say a big thank you to all our generous givers and make an encouragement any members who attend and love our church to think about making a regular donation to fund the mission and ministry of the church. We're not funded by the government at all, we rely solely on individual giving, fundraising efforts and our community centre income. The best way to donate to church is by making a monthly gift using the Parish Giving Scheme, which give you complete control over your giving, but also manages the collection of gift aid for us, saving valuable volunteer hours and effort.

Our regular ministries continued their important work week in and week out. You can read their reports below for more detail. I'm grateful to everybody who serves midweek to keep our church open to the community in a variety of important ways.

There are some key priorities for St Luke's going forward.

- It would be incredible to reopen our Teddies Toddler Group. Toddler groups are such a valuable (and valued!) service and outreach to our local community. As you may be aware we closed it in July due to a lack of leaders (though we did have a volunteer team). For a leader, we need a mature Christian, who is enthusiastic about sharing God's love with local families and is committed to attending St Luke's regularly on Sunday mornings. What's more a lot of the children in our churches are growing up and need a group or club suitable for early teens. For this to happen we need someone to help lead the group.
- We have so many people who are willing to help in lots of ways at St Luke's, but we struggle to recruit to governance roles such as PCC and Churchwardens. We've operated without a lead recruiter for a long time which has increased the burden on myself and our Safeguarding officer. These are demanding roles, but they're also rewarding, and without such roles being filled we cannot safely operate.

Finally, at the time of our APCM, we will be advertising for a new clergy person to join our team. Their role will be “Team Vicar in the Ecclestone Team, and Associate Vicar at St Mark’s North Road”. Please can I encourage you to pray that God would call someone to join in the mission and ministry here in our parishes. God bless,  
Gareth

### **Ecclestone Team Report**

When I speak to clergy in other team ministries throughout the country they are always shocked to hear how well our churches operate and collaborate with one another. This is expressed in lots of ways, from sharing employees and volunteers, cooperating in midweek ministries, to sharing resources and even beginning to worship together occasionally at team services.

### **Team Vision and Services**

At the end of 2023 our PCCs met and articulated a shared team vision. As a team, we want to:

- Put Jesus at the centre of all we do.
- Serve our community in meaningful ways.
- Provide faith opportunities for all age groups.

We began ‘All Together’ services at St Matthews on fifth Sundays. Our first was in June, our second in September and at the time of writing we just had our third in March 2025. Each service has focused on a particular part of the team vision. These services have been so well attended with over 100 people attending each service, and people seem inspired by the shared collective experience of worshipping together. This is something our PCCs would like to continue. As St Matthew’s building undergoes improvements over the next year or so, I would like our churches to regard it as ‘shared team’ space, a place where we can all meet together and feel as though we belong, without the sense that one of our worshipping communities is being prioritised or favoured over another.

### **Team Goals**

In Autumn 2023 our PCCs set a number of team goals which were:

1. To employ a shared team administrator.
2. To have one shared web presence.
3. To cooperate together on social events.
4. To gather older children from across the churches for a social event, and begin to explore what a ‘team youth ministry’ might look like.

By the end of 2024 we had made good progress on all of these tasks. For instance, in March we employed a team administrator, Mrs Sara Harrop, who has settled into the role well. She is formally employed by St Luke’s PCC, but each church contributes to her salary. Sara handles bookings and admin for life events, and all the room bookings and contracts for our many hireable spaces. We also cooperated on a number of social events in 2024, and we have begun to explore what a team youth ministry might look like. (This is ongoing - there is a clear need and desire but we need people to step forward and offer to lead such a ministry). At the start of 2025 the PCCs have commissioned a new team website (due to go live by the end of May). This will make managing our online presence easier and less expensive, but it will also express

our togetherness and shared mission more effectively than three individual websites. In 2025 the PCCs will need to meet once again to establish some new goals, so we can continue to develop and flourish.

### Clergy Update

In December 2024 I was interviewed and appointed as Team Rector for the Eccleston Team of Churches. I was also appointed as Priest-in-Charge of St Mark's North Road. The hope is that very soon we will appoint a Team Vicar for the Eccleston Team who will also be Associate Vicar at St Marks. The arrival of another colleague to our churches is *long* overdue. At the time of writing we appear to be days away from advertising. I wish to state that the delay has been procedural and due to the Diocese (partly affected by the sudden retirement of the Bishop a few months ago, leaving our diocese without any episcopal oversight). The delay has not been due to our PCCs who have been ready to advertise for a long time now. Can all members of our churches please be committed to asking God to send a vicar to assist in ministry and mission here and at St Mark's? Recruitment is hard in the North West, and has been especially hard in Liverpool in recent years. Many vacancies are advertised several times before candidates step forward, or the deanery restructures around a vacancy.

Personally, 2024 was challenging (at times extremely so) but I've been supported by so many of our members and volunteers in a variety of different ways, for which I'm truly grateful. Our willingness to work together as a team has made ministry possible in a variety of different ways, big to small. I particularly want to thank our wardens and readers for their support and encouragement. To Sara for helping so well with administration. I also need to express thanks to Rev Annie Houghton, curate in Lowton and Golborne and to Retired Bishop Geoff Pearson, both for being so generous with their time, often helping with funeral ministry.

I trust that God's faithfulness towards us will continue in 2025, holding on to these verses (Ephesians 3:20-21) as we do so:

*Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think. Glory to him in the church and in Christ Jesus through all generations forever and ever! Amen.*

Gareth

### **Achievements And Performance.**

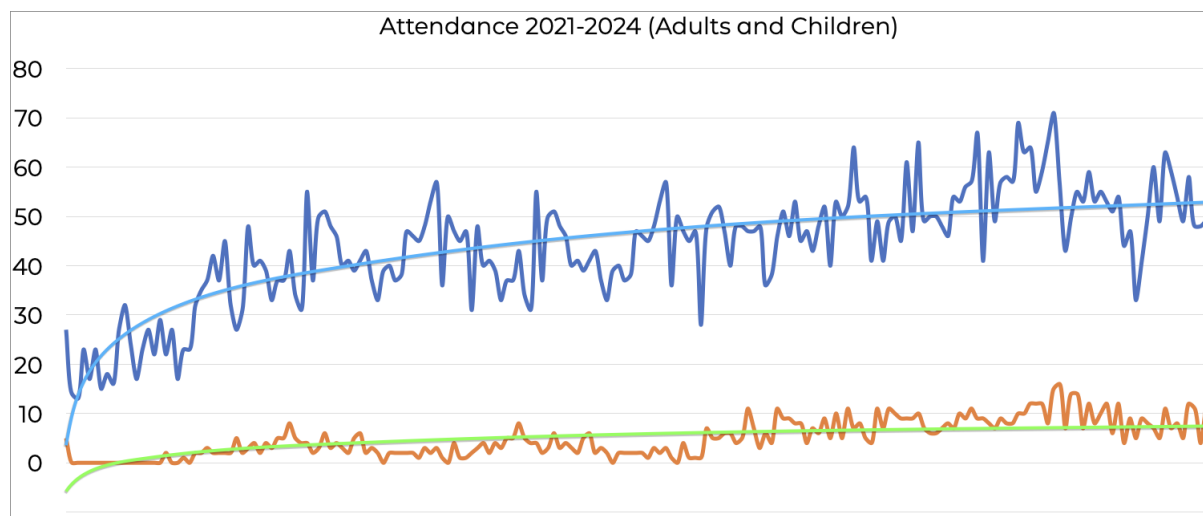
The PCC is delighted with its achievements set out in the previous and following section. The following section highlights the areas of activity and performance.

The electoral roll (April 2023-112) became 115 people in time for the 2024 annual meeting, 69 of whom were non-resident in the parish. During the year 5 people joined and 3 were deceased. In 2025 a new roll has been prepared.

Worship: - This average attendance over the year was 54 adults and 9 children. This is just based on 'ordinary Sundays' and does not take into consideration major festivals and baptism services which can artificially boost our numbers. The chart below shows attendance on ordinary Sundays throughout the last



four years. The blue line represents adult attendance, and the orange line represents children's (under 16s) attendance. The straight lines are linear trendlines.



	Total	Adults	Children
2024	65	54	9
2023	56	49	7
2022	45	42	3
2021	26	25	1

We average 2 connections on Zoom each Sunday. We have continued to provide a 'Zoom' service for all the churches in the Eccleston Team. This is later uploaded onto our YouTube channel.

We held 14 baptism services and 5 confirmations during the year. 12 funeral services were held at church, and we held 0 at the crematorium. There were 2 wedding services and 1 wedding blessing for a couple who had been married 25 years.

We have a small team of church family members who make handmade gifts for our baptism children to mark the occasion of Welcoming them into the church family and for the adults we give them a Bible.

## **Church Buildings**

At the start of 2024 we continue with upgrade works to the Community Centre by replacing the doors which lead on to the main corridor in the centre. This was 3 sets of double fire doors and 3 doors to the toilets being replaced. In May we had the 5 year Electrical Testing of the circuits and the test of portable equipment completed. The fire extinguishers were serviced in June. The Gas Boiler were serviced in October. Throughout the year small maintenance work was undertaken.

In October Maggie Mullan our Architect came to do our QQ visit. Following the visit additional investigations were required. A drone survey of the roof, plaster being knocked off wall in 5 areas to investigate further. Plus sorting out access to the back of the church involving a piece of land not sure if it belongs to the vicarage next door or the church. At the time of this Annual Report we are still waiting for the QQ report from the Architect.

The PCC would like to thank the volunteers who clean the church regularly, flower arrangements in church and look after the gardens around church throughout the year.

## **Staffing**

At the end of April 24 when Christ Church legally moved into Church St Helens the caretaker employed on behalf of Christ Church was ended.

From March 24 on behalf of the Eccleston team we employed a part time Team Admin person. Each church contributes financially to the administrator's salary, though St Luke's currently pays a smaller share as we make efforts to tackle our deficit.

There are many volunteers who fulfil roles at St Luke's in a variety of ways. There are too many to name individually and if we had to pay for this work, it would cost us thousands of pounds. During the year a number of volunteers due to personal issues have had to step back on the work they do for the church and we especially like to Thank them for the many years of serving in their ministries. The PCC are truly thankful and appreciative to all the people who serve the Lord in St Luke's and within the Eccleston Team in whatever role that is.

## **Finance Report**

Regular giving and donations increased slightly by 0.17%, compared to the same for 2023, and our regular commitments (gas, electricity, water, insurance, etc) have decreased by just below 19% during the year, with the bulk of this decrease being due to the combined decrease in gas and electricity costs of 10%, partially due to lower rates but also due to less usage, and also reduction in insurance costs of 44% achieved by changing our insurance provider towards the end of 2023.

Our Parish Share contribution for 2024 was maintained at more or less the same level as 2023.

Although people joined the Parish Giving Scheme when it was initially launched, as per 2023, the uptake of this did not continue through 2024 with only 2 people joining the scheme but 3 people leaving the scheme.

Payments associated with the vicarage have remained consistent compared to 2023, as they now do only account for the telephone line and broadband connection.

A large one-off cost was incurred during 2024 for the replacement of various doors throughout the church centre, this was paid for from general funds rather than the restricted church upgrade works fund.

We have received a total of £7,199 in tax recovery from regular and donations income. This is lower than during 2023 as a large donation was received during 2023 which was gift aided.

Income from hall lettings was 13% higher than that in 2023, as groups returned to using the centre and new groups started along with various private bookings for parties.

We have received investment income totaling £1,254 from the bequest investment fund, which is available for the PCC without any restrictions. This was lower than that received in 2023 as some funds had been withdrawn from the investment funds during 2023.

Performance of Investments from the fund accounts held with the Central Board of Finance from the sale of the school have been good with dividend payments and interest achieving £2,288 which is available to the PCC for restricted items.

#### Financial Review

At the end of the year, the main deposit and current accounts would have been overdrawn by a total of £4,470 if all outgoing payments had been made.

The market value of the investment fund from the bequest donations, which is available to the PCC without any restrictions, was £48,031, an increase of £1,240 during the year. There was also a further £1,302 in restricted funds which are available for the PCC to use for restricted purposes.

#### Agent Transactions

The PCC acted as a financial agent for the following people / organisations: -

- Liverpool Diocese - £1,877.00 was received in regards to Assigned Fees for weddings and funerals from the wedding couples and funeral directors which has been forwarded to the diocesan board of finance
- Retired Clergy, Self Supporting Ministers and Lay Readers - £533.00 was received in regards to Funeral Fees from funeral directors which have been paid to the various people who officiated for funerals in place of Gareth, these fees would have otherwise been paid to LDBF with the above assigned fees.
- Fundraising events were organised for MacMillan Cancer Care (Coffee Morning), Tear Fund (Harvest Service and Big Quiz) and Children's Society (Christingle Service) which raised £653.57, £496.60 and £84.41 respectively and these have been forwarded to the organisations concerned.

## **Pastoral Support**

### Whatsapp Prayer Group - Co-Ordinator Stina & Dave Foxford

Eccleston Team joint Prayer Group take place on the Eccleston Team WhatsApp, which has recently been renamed as "Prayer Space." Anyone is welcome to join our Prayer times together in real – time or alternatively use the ready prepared Prayer Guide at a more convenient time later.

We meet up fortnightly on Mondays at 8 pm for about half an hour. We have a break during summer and Christmas. In addition to prayer pointers, we have two worship songs, a reflection, and information about the set topics of the day.

It is not possible to say how many people join our Prayer times together, but we do get positive feedback every now and then from people across the Team. We do know that a couple of people from other individuals use the Prayer Guide and join us in prayer - as well as Stina's Mum from Finland.

During 2024 we had 22 Prayer times, of which one was an Extraordinary meeting.

Our prayer topics were: New year 2024, World Watch List, Post Office Legal case, Sudan, Kids' Ministry in the Team, Russia - Ukraine war, Mission Partners, the Elderly linked to our Team Churches, Hamas – Israel war, Easter and Easter events, Christians and Ramadan, Middle East Crisis, Haiti, School children's and Students' exams, Special Service at St. Luke's, Elections of Metro Mayor and Police Commissioner, Thy Kingdom Come Project, Holy Spirit and Pentecost, Persecuted Christians, Hope From Above, the UK General Elections, Brownies pack holiday, General summer holidays, Carers, Emergency Services, Our relationship with God, the UK Prison System, Mpox virus, Burkina Faso and Sub – Saharan Africa, National Week of Prayer with set prayer topics, Modern Slavery, the US Presidential Election, International Day of Prayer (IDOP) topics, Remembrance Day prayers and soldiers, veterans and military families, Philippines and Spain Floods, Iraqi women, Christian Churches in Cuba, Christmas Season, winter illnesses.

We certainly covered a lot and appreciate all the prayers! Thank you!

*Blessings, Stina and Dave Foxford.*

## **COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES**

### "Teddies" Toddler Group – Team Leader Julie Parry

Our numbers remained constant this year. We covered our outgoings with incoming fees. The volunteers worked diligently and with the focus on Jesus. The families are grateful for our provision and were sad to hear that we needed to close for the foreseeable future. This was due to volunteers having to stand down for personal commitments. Unfortunately we closed Teddies doors July 2024

### **5<sup>th</sup> Eccleston St Luke's Brownies – Leader Eagle Owl Gill Crosby**

The spring term started in January with a trip to St. Helens Theatre Royal to watch the annual pantomime, followed by lunch at McDonald's. It was a fantastic way to start the new year and a good time was had by all. Our badge themes this term were "Girls can do science" the girls really enjoyed it, but I think I enjoyed delivering it more. They gained a very large badge for this program of work which included chemistry –we made a Litmus solution for testing Acid or Alkaline, Physics, Biology - we extracted the DNA of a pea! Polar science and Geology. Our other theme was "Express myself" during which we made Mother's day cards and Easter cards and also had fun making jewellery from a whole box of things that had been kindly donated to us.

We also celebrated Thinking Day in February with activities designed to get us thinking about the whole Guide movement and our promise.

Summer term started with us having a jewellery stall at the church fayre, the girls got to try different aspects of jewellery making. We had a collection of Meetings run by our Young Leader (Riley Parry) who explored our International Centres in the UK, Switzerland, India, Ghana and Mexico. We also took part in a brand new badge in conjunction with Blackpool Sea life centre. "Sea Savers" this badge looked at what lives in the oceans, how we are polluting the oceans, how we can help to stop this. It was a fun and educational topic which involved creating visuals of the food chain, how deep the sea is, and what lives where. The girls really enjoyed this badge.

Our much-anticipated pack holiday this year was at Sherdley Hill in Ormskirk. The theme was Alice in wonderland and involved various themed activities, that culminated in a Mad Hatter tea party, which was out of this world, the girls were thrilled by the experience. And a big thank you goes to Helen Brindley (tawney owl) for organising it all and Sue Brindley (wise owl) for arranging the wide game activities.

With summer holidays on the horizon, we had one last important meeting, our Badge giving meeting. This was to be a very special meeting that will probably never be seen again. We said good buy to 6 girls all at once, some of them should have long since moved to Guides but wanted one last pack holiday with us. (the last of our Pandemic girls) we also were proud to present 2 gold Awards (the highest award a Brownie can achieve) 1 silver award, and 3 Bronze awards.

Autumn term is always busy, and this year was no exception, we kicked it off with another stall at the church fayre. Our badge theme this term was "Be well" we felt this would help with any anxiety left over from the sad events in Southport during the summer. As a unit we also tightened up our on-site security procedures this term too, though Girl Guiding policies are very robust anyway.

Hannah Davies (Rainbow owl) left us to give birth to a baby boy, but Amanda Mcmanus (Barn owl) arrived as an answer to a prayer to become a helper.

We also made Christmas crafts and had a lovely Christmas party. And finally, we once again visited Parkside care home and sang some carols and Christmas songs for them.

*Gillian Crosby (Unit Leader), Riley Pary (unit helper),  
Amanda McManus (unit Helper), Sue Brindley (occasional leader)*

### **Schools Ministry Team**

Being part of the Schools Ministry Team this year has been a true gift from God. It is a joy and privilege to work together, using our individual strengths to tell His story in creative, engaging, and meaningful ways. Whether we're leading collective worship, supporting RE sessions, or planning hands-on activities, every moment is rooted in the desire to share God's love with the children in our local schools.

Throughout 2024 and into 2025, we've welcomed school groups into our churches and taken the good news into classrooms. Sessions often include storytelling, crafts, games, and reflective prayer — all designed to help children connect with the Bible in a way that is accessible and real to them.

We've continued to build a wonderful partnership with one of our team church pantries. Through this connection, children not only learn about the pantry's role in serving the wider community but are also inspired to take action — especially around harvest, when many contribute generously to food collections.

A real highlight of our year is the "It's Your Move" session hosted at St Luke's. We meet with Year 6 pupils preparing to transition to secondary school — a big moment in any child's life. Through faith-filled activities, thoughtful conversation, and prayer, we help them to place their hopes and worries into God's hands, and remind them they're never alone on the journey.

None of this would be possible without our incredible volunteers. Each person brings something unique — from storytelling to craft, quiet prayerfulness to boundless enthusiasm. We are so thankful for their continued time, energy, and faith.

If you feel God may be calling you to join us in this ministry, we'd love to hear from you. There is always room for more hands and hearts as we continue to grow this team and share God's love with the next generation.

*Gill Dixon – SMT Coordinator*

### **Food Pantry – Co-ordinator Tom Kelly / Lorraine Rose**

At the start of 2024 we continue to operate within the church until April when the community centre was ready for us to move the Pantry back into.

At the end of March 2024 Jean Moore our Co-ordinator left due to moving away from St Helens. We are very grateful to Jean for all the hardwork and dedication she put into getting the Pantry up and going and giving us a template to work to. We presented her with a Thank You gift and card and wished her well for the future.

From April a small team of us (Tom & Diane Kelly, Anne Hayes & Lorraine Rose) took on the responsibility of the Pantry and divided up the jobs between us. Tom Kelly took on the main contact person in place of Jean.

Unfortunately in September due to Tom health condition needing treatment both him and his wife Diane have stepped down for now. From October Lorraine Rose is now the main contact for the Pantry. Geoff & Hazel Horton have stepped up into the Leadership Team

For 2024 the membership attendance each week average around 60 per week. With other Pantries within the St Helens Borough opening up we no longer have a waiting list so people can join straight away. In November in-line with the other Pantries within the borough we increased the weekly membership fee from £4 to £5. We did give 6 weeks notice to the member and we didn't receive any complaints it was more the member appreciate costs are going up. On a few occasions we have given food to people who have been referred who are in a crisis and need help.

During the year we received funding from the following:-

Neighbourly Grant £280

Providence Hospital £1,000 towards running costs

Arnold Clarke £2,000 towards running costs

Rainhill Rotary Club £500 towards running costs

Neighbourly Foundation £ towards Toy gift vouchers at Christmas

Halton & St Helens Household Fund £3,325 towards food provision, heated blankets, hot water bottles and fan heaters

We are grateful to our funders for their support to the Pantry.

We continue to invite pantry members to come to Church events whenever we can. At Easter we gave out Easter Eggs and for Christmas we gave out hot water bottles with knitted covers to each member attended Pantry the last week in December, for some of our vulnerable families we gave out toy gift vouchers and we did goody bags and extra fresh vegetables to each Pantry member who attended. On a personal note, I would like to thank all the volunteers for all their hard work during the past 12 months and wish them well as they continue to provide this valuable service to our community in 2025.

#### **Tea and Toast – Co-ordinator Lorraine Rose, Julie Parry & Lorna Llewellyn**

During 2024 we continue to operate from the Jubilee Lounge at the back of church. On a Tuesday morning 9-11am for the year. We only closed for 2 weeks between Christmas and the New Year. From January 2025 the times are changing to 9.30am – 11.30am as we recognised we have people coming a bit later rather than early.

We now have a few regulars who come each week. A mixture of ages from young to old, New friendships continue to be made and we have seen people just pop in because they are passing and saw the church doors open. At times we had people who come in who just want a listening ear and to pray with them. It's also a time when our Church Warden meets people she needs to speak to. We have nicknamed it "Wardens Hour". We will continue to serve God and try encourage more people in the community to call in.

### **Hobby Hub – Co-ordinator Sarah Murphy**

Once again, we have enjoyed a happy and successful year at Hobby Hub.

We have several members who attend on a regular basis and few further members who attend on a more ad hoc basis and all are welcomed. We meet from 7-8.30pm in the church lounge. Members contribute a £1 donation each week which we pass onto church as a contribution to milk and overhead costs.

We have a variety of crafts on display from our members, from needle felting, crochet, colouring and modelling. We also have noticed that we all benefit from the supportive and friendly nature of the group. A regularly used what's app group ensures we can keep in touch with each other and check in with absent members. We also enjoy a cuppa, chat and a biscuit of two together!

We look forward, in 2025, to continuing to add to our membership and attracting more members from the Eccleston Team, our new friends at St. Mark's and the community at large. Please feel free to direct membership enquiries to me at [sjmurfs@sky.com](mailto:sjmurfs@sky.com)

*Sarah Murphy.*

### **St Luke's Indoor Bowls – Co-ordinator Alan Cresswell, Allan Taggart & Charles Johnson**

2024 covers the second half of one winter's bowling and the first half of the following winter. Both half seasons saw good attendance with between 10 and 12 people bowling most weeks. The later months in 2024 brought a couple of new bowlers to join our group, so that was encouraging. The system of picking a ball from a bag in order to decide on which mat you bowl and with which partner has become more popular than was the case at first: it has been interesting to play with and against different bowlers. The quality of the refreshments has remained high with cakes and some excellent biscuits being on offer. Each year in April we are able to contribute towards church funds from the 50p which each bowler pays to play. We are grateful for the use of the facilities and after our summer bowling on the green at the Bowling Club from the end of September we shall be meeting on Thursdays at 1.00pm. All new bowlers are welcome.

### **St Luke's Men's Group – Co-ordinator Alan Cresswell, Charles Johnson & Allan Taggart**

2024 was another successful year of Wednesday evening meetings at St Luke's. We saw the return of a couple of our most popular speakers and were also introduced to some new faces. Jamie Jones-Buchanan, former international rugby league player, entertained us with stories relating to his rugby career and his Christian faith, and Paul Griffiths came back twice to educate us on both "Treks and Teashops" and, perhaps more importantly, on how to use a phone to avoid getting lost on the treks. We had more tales about rugby from retired referee and touch judge, Tony Brown. We learned some local history from Judy Lowe (a house in Rainhill was used to accommodate soldiers recovering from wounds in World War One) and Martin Jones (a blacksmith from Newburgh did great work looking after horses in the same conflict). Our Bowls Evening, when we were blessed with a rare sunny evening, was very well attended at Prescot and Odyssey Bowling Club. Our biggest problem was losing the venue at St Teresa's Club, which meant we met in the hall at St Luke's in the second half of the year. Thanks as always go to Bev, who books the speakers. We have had an extended winter break, but we should return in the spring of 2025.



### **St Luke's Events Team**

In January 24 a group of volunteers came together as a team to organize Social and Fundraising event with the message of the love of Jesus. The team is: - Bev Cresswell, Gill & John Crosby, Ron Lee, Christine Miles, Julie Parry & Lorraine Rose.

Our first event was on Shove Tuesday Family Fun Afternoon, where for a nominal fee per family we provided games, crafts and hot dog sausages and pancakes. After lunch we shown a film in the church with popcorn and drinks.

We also organized a Spring Fayre and Autunm Fayre, with craft stalls from local crafters. During our Shove Tuesday event we relised we need a quite space for people to come for a few minutes. So, at our Fayres and future events we use the Garden View Room in the community centre as a space where people come to reflect or want to pray. This as proved to be used quite a bit, we have trained volunteers on hand to talk or pray with people.

Bev Cresswell completed Food Hygiene training.

We also started a "Pennies from Heaven" fundraising towards building cost. Asking people to donate their copper and silver coins.

The amount we have raised from the fayres this year is £2,173 and the Pennies from Heaven £344.

The team would like to say "Thank You" to all the volunteers who help during the events and local crafters who come with their stalls. Also the community who come and enjoy and support our events."ThankYou"

## Plans for the Future

We will continue to work with the other churches and develop relationships within the Eccleston team, developing and supporting best practices, worshipping styles and new ideas across the Team. Together we will continue working towards our vision to be a team of churches that:

1. Puts Jesus at the centre of all we do.
2. Serves our community in meaningful ways.
3. Provides faith opportunities for all age groups.

We will continue to pray for our church, trusting God for growth.

God of Mission

who alone brings growth to your Church,

send your Holy Spirit to give

vision to our planning,

wisdom to our actions,

joy to our worship

and power to our witness.

Help our church to grow in numbers,

in spiritual commitment to you,

and in service to our local community,

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

## DECLARATION

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees 'report above.

Signature 

Full Name: - Rev. Gareth Banton

Position: - PCC Chair

Date: - 8th May 2025

**The Parish Church of  
ST LUKE, ECCLESTON**

**Financial Statement for the year ending 2024.**

**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF**  
**St Luke's, Ecclestone**  
**FINANCIAL STATEMENT**  
**For the year ended 31 December 2024**  
**Receipts & Payments Account (Rev 3)**

	Unrestricted funds £	Designated funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
<b>Receipts</b>					
<b>Voluntary receipts</b>					
<b>Regular Giving</b>					
Planned Giving - Gift Aid	22,674			22,674	22,139
Planned Giving - Parish Giving Scheme	5,100			5,100	5,793
Planned Giving - Ephesian Fund		302		302	0
Planned Giving - Other	4,316			4,316	4,095
Loose Plate Collections	5,157			5,157	4,488
Tax Recovered - Gift Aid	7,199			7,199	9,983
Tax Recovered - Gift Aid on Small Donations in memoriam	2,500			2,500	0
members' payments		831		831	1,757
grants				0	684
other donations	1,411	179		1,590	2,654
special appeals	344			344	0
				<b>50,013</b>	<b>51,594</b>
<b>Receipts from activities for generating funds</b>					
refreshments	419			419	426
copy printer income				0	5
hall lettings	6,485			6,485	5,703
other income (incl cards)	5,083			5,083	692
				<b>11,987</b>	<b>6,825</b>
<b>Receipts from Church activities</b>					
PCC Fees	3,011			3,011	1,608
Donations from Verger				0	0
				<b>3,011</b>	<b>1,608</b>
<b>Receipts from investments</b>					
Bank & CBF interest/dividends	1,361		2,288	3,649	4,279
				<b>3,649</b>	<b>4,279</b>
<b>Other receipts</b>					
Weekend income / outings				0	0
Insurance claim				0	2,584
Curacy Income				0	-412
				<b>0</b>	<b>2,172</b>
<b>St Luke's Pantry Income</b>					
Grants			7,105	7,105	4,350
Donations		2,683		2,683	3,705
Members Payments		12,542		12,542	13,126
Other Payments				0	216
				<b>22,330</b>	<b>21,397</b>
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>65,060</b>	<b>16,537</b>	<b>9,393</b>	<b>90,991</b>	<b>87,875</b>

**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF**  
**St Luke's, Eccleston**  
**FINANCIAL STATEMENT**  
For the year ended 31 December 2024  
Receipts & Payments Account (Rev 3)

	Unrestricted funds £	Designated funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
<b>Payments</b>					
<b>Church activities</b>					
Missionary giving	2,618	506		3,124	3,344
Parish share	50,177			50,177	50,175
Working expenses	392			392	1,172
Vicarage costs	674			674	630
Curacy Costs				0	612
Wages				0	354
Church heat/light	6,678			6,678	7,404
Church insurance	1,639			1,639	2,933
Evangelism (incl anniversary)	139			139	452
Church Maintenance	1,582			1,582	3,398
Upkeep of services	73	137		210	595
Equipment	102	316		417	1,042
Copier lease/mtce	1,120			1,120	1,326
Community centre maintenance	807			807	7,586
Community centre running costs	8,317			8,317	10,336
Weekend accommodation/ outings				0	0
Refreshments	639			639	347
Other working exps	2,496	336		2,832	3,029
Church upgrade works	6,634			6,634	15,328
				<b>85,381</b>	<b>110,064</b>
<b>St Luke's Pantry</b>					
Fees		2,939		2,939	1,473
Equipment		733		733	987
Purchases (Grants)			3,924	3,924	10,705
Purchases		9,464		9,464	8,253
Other Purchases				0	214
				<b>17,058</b>	<b>21,632</b>
<b>Total Payments</b>	<b>84,086</b>	<b>14,429</b>	<b>3,924</b>	<b>102,439</b>	<b>131,696</b>
<b>Excess of Receipts over Payments</b>	<b>(19,026)</b>	<b>2,108</b>	<b>5,470</b>	<b>(11,448)</b>	<b>(43,820)</b>

**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF**  
**St. Luke's, Ecclestone**  
**STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES**  
**For the year ended 31 December 2024 (Rev 3)**

	Unrestricted funds £	Designated funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
<b>Cash Funds</b>					
Bank current account	(10,830)		1,106	(9,724)	(5,782)
Bank deposit account	5,254			5,254	18,036
Community Centre account		15,481	269	15,749	10,478
Church Board of Finance Deposit Fund (Closed)				0	0
Church Board of Finance Deposit Account (764001)			1,302	1,302	1,014
Fund bank accounts and cash		844		844	1,127
Total bank current and deposit accounts	-5,576	16,325	2,677	<u>13,425</u>	<u>24,873</u>
<b>Investment Assets</b>					
CBF Investment Fund (Old School Sale) (764002) **			42,353	42,353	41,405
CBF Fixed Int Investment Fund (Old School Sale) (764003) **			42,355	42,355	41,114
CBF Fixed Int Investment Fund (Bequest) (764004)	23,832			23,832	23,134
CBF Investment Fund (Bequest) (764005)	24,199			24,199	23,658
				<u>132,739</u>	<u>129,311</u>
** Investment Assets were previously managed by the trustees of Greenhalls Ecclesiastical Charity. These have now been transferred to St Lukes Parochial Church Council.					
<b>Other Monetary Assets</b> (all in respect of unrestricted funds)					
None				0	1,760
<b>Liabilities</b> (all in respect of unrestricted funds)					
None				0	0

Approved by the PCC on 8th May 2025

And signed on their behalf on 8th May 2025 by



Rev Gareth Banton  
Team Vicar

Mr Peter Anderson  
PCC Assistant Treasurer

## NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS:

1. These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 using the Receipts and Payments basis.
2. The following assets are recognised but are not necessarily valued in the Statement of Assets and Liabilities:  
Freehold land and buildings comprising the Church Centre  
Various items of ICT and audio visual equipment  
Various tables and chairs purchased in 2010
3. The expenses paid to clergy may include a small, immaterial proportion which relates to their function as PCC members.  
No other payments were made to PCC members.
4. The movements in designated funds during the year were:

	<b>b/fwd</b>			<b>c/fwd</b>
	<b>1 Jan 2023</b>	<b>Receipts</b>	<b>Payments</b>	<b>31 Dec 2023</b>
Discretionary fund	<b>366</b>			<b>366</b>
Flower Fund	<b>6</b>	222	228	<b>0</b>
Hospitality	<b>99</b>		99	<b>0</b>
Teddies Tuesday	<b>771</b>	1,812	2,249	<b>334</b>
Luke There	<b>428</b>			<b>428</b>
	<b>1,669</b>	<b>2,034</b>	<b>2,576</b>	<b>1,127</b>

5. Receipts and payments for the Community Centre are included within the PCC accounts but are identified separately as follows:

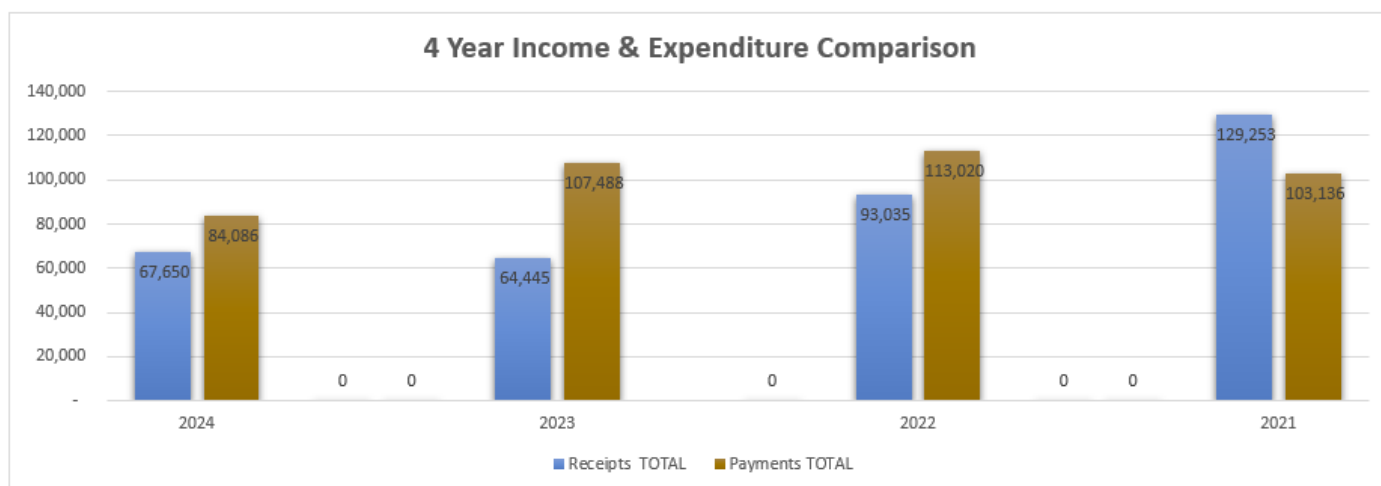
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
Receipts		
Hall lettings	5,703	5,587
Grants	0	0
Contribution from (to) St Luke's Church	12,219	5,748
Total Income	<b>17,922</b>	<b>11,335</b>

Payments		
Community centre maintenance	7,586	1,679
Community centre running costs	10,336	7,976
Centre Cleaning Costs	0	1,680
Total Expenditure	<b>17,922</b>	<b>11,335</b>

6. Movement of monies in investment funds.

<b>Fund</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Balance at</b>	<b>Payments In /</b>	<b>Investment</b>	<b>Balance at</b>
		<b>31.12.2022</b>	<b>(Withdrawals)</b>	<b>Gain (Loss)</b>	<b>31.12.2023</b>
764002	Restricted	37,816		3,589	41,405
764003	Restricted	38,802		2,312	41,114
764004	Unrestricted	50,291	(29,264)	2,107	23,134
764005	Unrestricted	41,066	(20,373)	2,965	23,658
		<b>167,975</b>	<b>(49,637)</b>	<b>10,972</b>	<b>129,311</b>





	2024		2023		2022		2021	
Receipts	67,650	(1)	64,445		93,035	(2)	129,253	(3)
Payments	84,086	(4)	107,488	(5)	113,020	(6)	103,136	(7)
Surplus (Deficit)	(16,436)		(43,043)		(19,985)		26,117	

(1) - includes £2,500 in memorium donation

(2) - includes £16,111 in memorium donation & £11,238 in curacy income

(3) - includes £57,336 in memorium donation & £11,525 in curacy income

(4) - includes £6,634 in church upgrade works for centre doors

(5) - includes £15,327 in church upgrade works for centre flooring, £3,170 in maintenance for painting & £2,800 in maintenance for boiler repairs

(6) - includes £18,200 in maintenance for asbestos removal works & £10,723 in curacy costs

(7) - includes £10,858 in church upgrade works for painting & hall lights & 11,756 in curacy costs



# CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

## Independent examiner's report on the accounts

### Section A

### Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/  
members of

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL  
PARISH OF ST LUKE ECCLESTON

On accounts for the year  
ended

31<sup>st</sup> DECEMBER 2024

Charity no  
(if any)

1127818

Set out on pages

20 - 24

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

Responsibilities and  
basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust, 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 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 (other than that disclosed below \*) in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

\* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

Signed:

*PHorton*

Date:

21/7/2025

Name:

PAUL HORTON (ACMA)

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

C.I.M.A

Address:

13 LAUREL DRIVE

ECCLESTON

ST. HELENS WA10 5JA

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

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