

Financial Review

The Trustees have every confidence that the charity will meet its financial obligations when they become due.

We continue to produce our accounts on the simplified Receipts and Payments basis, and this is the first year that we have used the online financial system, 'MyFundaccounting', to record individual financial transactions and to help produce the accounts reports. We continue to 'fine tune' our 'MyFundaccounting' system, but in conjunction with a few supporting spreadsheets, our new accounting system is now much more powerful than the old complex spreadsheet based system, but is much simpler and easier to use.

During 2024 we received a legacy of just over £61K. This led to a total Receipts for the year of just over £181K (up £62.5K from 2023). However, the underlying income. (i.e. excluding the legacy). was £119.8K (up £1K from 2023). Total Payments for the year amounted to £130K (up £9K from 2023), resulting in an overall surplus for the year of just under £51K (compares to a deficit of £2.9K for 2023). However, this means that £10K of the legacy we received was used up to meet normal expenditures during the year.

The key features of the year are highlighted on TABLE 1 overleaf, with boxes around some of the main differences and numbered 1 through 4.

In summary:

1. We received a £61,260 legacy during the year, but excluding this legacy, overall Church Giving has continued to decline (down by £3.6K or 4.9%);
2. Church fees (weddings, funerals, hall lettings) were up by £3.6K, which includes a Parish Share rebate of just under £1.2K;
3. Overall Church costs and expenses were £51.8K, up £6.4K or 14%);
4. NEWT costs differed from 2023 by £1.3K, but this was simply due to the lower 2023 figure including only 3 quarterly payments;
5. These principal factors led to an overall surplus of just under £51K.

Planned Giving (before gift aid recovery, and Service Collections amounted to £55.6K (up from £53.5K in 2023). Gift aid recovery during the year was £9.7K (cf £13.4 for 2023).

Church costs have continued to increase (£2.2k in the year) due to general inflation (e.g. higher energy costs), resulting in higher, overall running costs of £27.1K. Staffing costs have increased (by £3K or 19%) mostly as a result of new costs related to our Youth worker, Livia. There was also an increase in costs (£1.2K) associated with the Church Houses.

Mission Giving remains similar to 2023 and we continue to expend around 22% of our General Fund Income. A detailed analysis of Mission Expenditure is presented in TABLE 2.

TABLE 1

Parochial Church Council of St John and St Stephen, Reading Financial year ended 31 December 2024 2024 Accounts Summary (Receipts & Payments Basis)			
<u>INCOME</u>	Total 2024	Total 2023	Diff'ce 2024-2023
Church Giving (inc Legacies)	£132,425	£74,939	£57,485 1
Church House Rent	£20,890	£20,040	£850
Hire of Church Facilities	£4,371	£5,058	(£687)
Investment Dividends + Interest	£18,698	£17,513	£1,185
Church Fees, Lunches, Rebates	£4,551	£938	£3,613 2
TOTAL INCOME	£180,935	£118,489	£62,446
<u>EXPENDITURE</u>			
Parish Share	£47,111	£44,845	£2,266
Clergy & Staffing Costs	£18,596	£15,570	£3,025
Church Running Costs	£27,096	£24,804	£2,292 3
Church House Running Costs	£6,155	£4,958	£1,197
Mission Giving & Donations	£21,309	£23,242	(£1,933)
Sub-Total Church Activities	£120,268	£113,421	£6,847
Publicity (NEWT)	£4,863	£3,532	£1,331 4
Accounts Authorisation	£870	£720	£150
Equipment & Bank Charges	£4,368	£3,775	£593
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£130,368	£121,447	£8,921
INCOME LESS EXPENDITURE	£50,567	(£2,958)	£53,524 5

NOTES:

1. Includes a £61,260 legacy; Net giving declined by £3.6K (4.9%)
2. Significant increase in Church Fees & Lunches (£1.2K due to P. Share rebate)
3. Church costs and expenses have increased by c.14%
4. NEWT costs for 2023 reflect only 3 quarters
5. Results in a £51K surplus for the year **after using up £10K of Legacy**

TABLE 2

Parochial Church Council of St John and St Stephen, Reading				
ANALYSIS OF MISSION EXPENDITURE				
	2024	2023	2022	2021
	£	£	£	£
Home Mission				
A Rocha	£500	£550	£500	£500
Christian Aid	£2,000	£3,125	£2,000	£2,400
Christian Aid Ukraine appeal (match funding)	-	-	£393	-
Christian Aid East Africa famine appeal	-	-	£729	-
Christian Aid - Quiz Night	-	£1,810	-	-
Christians Against Poverty (CAP)	£400	£400	£600	£600
Church Missionary Society (CMS)	£2,000	£2,000	£2,000	£2,000
Circles UK	£1,000	£500	£1,000	£1,000
Churches in Reading Drop-In Centre (CIRDIC)	£500	-	-	-
CTEER Schools Project (RE-Inspired)	£1,000	£1,000	£550	£500
Communicare Trust	£5,000	£5,000	£5,000	£5,000
Disasters Emergency Committee Pakistan floods appeal	-	-	£728	-
FAITH (ReadiFood)	£2,000	£2,000	£2,000	£2,000
Hope into Action	£1,000	-	-	-
International Nepal Fellowship	£1,000	£1,500	£2,000	£2,000
LAMB Healthcare Foundation (Bangladesh)	£1,000	£1,000	£1,000	£1,000
Novi Most	-	-	£250	-
Reading Refugee Support Group	£500	£500	£500	£500
Reading University Christian Union	£400	-	-	-
St John's School Projects	-	-	-	£400
The Leprosy Mission (match funding in 2021)	-	-	£250	£720
World Land Trust / Green Christian	£500	£500	£500	£500
Total Home Mission	£18,800	£19,885	£20,000	£19,120
Other Mission Giving & Donations				
A Rocha	£102	-	-	-
Cancer Research UK (June Russell Memorial)	-	-	-	£70
Care4Calais (Enthuse)	-	-	£161	-
Christian Aid	-	-	£1,556	£285
Christian Aid Ukraine appeal	-	-	£438	-
Christian Aid - Chorate concert	-	£540	£338	-
1 Christian Aid - Mid East Crisis Appeal	£1,510	£445	-	-
2 Christian Aid - Xmas Appeal	£439	-	-	-
Church Missionary Society (Joel & Fiona Kelling appeal) *	-	-	-	£570
Churches in Reading Drop-In Centre (CIRDIC)	£584	-	-	-
Communicare (Church Lunch Proceeds)	-	£71	-	-
Contact Centre (Church Lunch proceeds)	-	£181	-	-
Disasters Emergency Committee Ukraine appeal	-	-	£386	-
FAITH (ReadiFood)	£567	-	-	-
3 Hope Into Action	£123	£1,000	£430	£173
Kishore Prasanna appeal	-	-	£318	-
ODBF (Bishop's Outreach Fund)	-	£75	-	-
Reading Refugee Support Group (Gas Tower Exhibition)	-	-	£50	£200
Ripple Effect - Church Lunch Proceeds	-	£157	-	-
St John's School (Bibles for School Leavers)	£849	£857	£1,022	£474
Simeon's Trustees *	-	-	-	£200
Tearfund	£265	-	-	-
The Leprosy Mission	-	-	-	£914
4 Other (incl. Parish Relief) **	£20	£31	£19	£17
Total Other Outward Giving	£4,458	£3,357	£4,717	£2,903
TOTAL Mission Expenditure	£23,258	£23,242	£24,717	£22,023
* ex General Fund 2021 (£250 re Kellings' appeal)				
** 2024 amount paid from Petty Cash				

Notes:

- 1 Agency collection - Christian Aid
- 2 Agency Collection - Christian Aid
- 3 Hope in Action Purchases for House
- 4 Paid out of Petty Cash

As concerns our longer term investments and associated dividend payments, the Total Capital value of our investment funds increased from £624.4K in 2023 to £639.1K in 2021, a small increase of 2.4%. A summary of the Church Investments is given in TABLE 3.

TABLE 3

Parochial Church Council of St John and St Stephen, Reading					
Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024					
INVESTMENTS - DIVIDEND PAYMENTS & FUND VALUES					
	DIVIDEND INCOME			FUND VALUE	
	2024	2023	Ch Fund	2024	2023
x CBFIF - Churches Expenses Fund	£69	£68	General	£2,544	£2,487
x CBFIF - Curacy Endowment	£1,758	£1,731	Curacy	£64,794	£63,344
x CBFIF - Benefice Endowment	£98	£97	General	£3,611	£3,531
x CBFIF - Princes St Mission Rooms	£4,812	£4,739	General	£177,328	£173,360
x COIF - Princess St Mission Rooms	£618	£607	General	£21,802	£21,220
Sub-Total Endowment Funds	£7,356	£7,242		£270,079	£263,941
xxx CBFIF - Arthur Clark Legacy	£2,141	£2,109	General	£78,908	£77,142
xxx CBFIF - Marjorie Wilkinson Bequest	£5,945	£5,854	General	£219,053	£214,152
xxx COIF - PCC Benefice & General Funds	£1,920	£1,883	General	£67,667	£65,812
xxx COIF - PCC Curacy Fund	£66	£67	General	£2,417	£2,349
Sub-Total Unrestricted Investment Funds	£10,072	£9,912		£368,045	£359,455
Reading Hydro Project	-	-	General	£980	£1,000
TOTAL DIVIDEND PAYMENTS & FUND VALUES	£17,428	£17,154		£639,104	£624,396
	1.6% increase			2.4% increase	
x Endowment funds (Held in perpetuity)					
xxx Unrestricted expendable funds					

The Church investments are held through the CCLA, who manages its funds in accordance with the policies of the Church of England's Ethical Advisory Group. The funds we have hold shares in the CBF Church of England Investment Fund (CBFIF) and the COIF Charities Investment Fund, a so-called common investment fund. We have 2 types of funds – unrestricted and restricted funds.

The Endowments are investments that we cannot sell, but we do benefit from the quarterly dividends. The Unrestricted Investment Funds also provide a regular stream of quarterly dividends. These Unrestricted funds are expendable and the Church could, for example, sell some, (or all), of the shares in these funds to raise money for a Church project. In doing so however, we would lose any future dividends that would otherwise accrue from the shares sold. With the exception of the Curacy Endowment, where dividends are directed to the Curacy fund, all other dividends are directed to the General Fund for general use by the Church. Our dividend payments during the year amounted to £17.4K, an increase of 1.6% over the 2023 level of £17.1K.

At the end 2024, the total cash at bank and in hand, (i.e. excluding Agency Fund Collections related to Christian Aid), was £70.9K.

Bridget Barwick & Alan Denny

P Parochial Church Council of St John and St Stephen, Reading
Financial Review for the year ended 31 December 2024

Trustees' Responsibilities

The Trustees confirm that they have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the Charity.

The Charities Act 2011 requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which presents a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity and of the surplus of the Charity for that period. In preparing those financial statements the trustees are required to:

- i) Select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- ii) Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- iii) Prepare financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the trust will continue in existence.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records, which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approved by the Trustees on 24th March, 2025

Signed on their behalf by Trustee:

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Claire Alcock', written in a cursive style.

Name: Revd. Claire Alcock (Chair of PCC)

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST JOHN AND ST STEPHEN, READING

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT ON
THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2024**

I report to the trustees/ members of The Parochial Church Council of St John and St Stephen, Reading on the accounts for the year ended 31st December 2024 which are set out on the following pages.

Respective responsibilities of the Trustees and Independent Examiner

As trustees of the charity, the members of the PCC are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. They consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to

1. examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
2. follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
3. state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of Independent Examiner's Statement

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

Independent Examiner's Statement

In connection with my examination, no matters have come to my attention (other than that disclosed below)

1. which give me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
 - a) to keep accounting records in accordance with s.130 of the 2011 Act; or
 - b) to prepare accounts which accord with these accounting records have not been met; or
2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed: *Rachel Belshaw*

Dated: *8 May 2025*

Rachel Belshaw, MA ACA CTA

Hill Top Accounting Ltd
Hill Cottage, Church Lane
Ufton Nervet
Reading, RG7 4HQ

DISCLOSURE

The accounts show a minor difference of £18.45 between the cash at bank at 31 December 2023 and 1 January 2024.

RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS ACCOUNTS STATEMENTS

ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The Financial statements of the PCC have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 together with applicable accounting standards. In preparing the financial statements the PCC follows best practice as laid down in the Statement of Recommended Practice "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" (SORP 2015).

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost basis of accounting in accordance with the Charities Act 2011 and in accordance with applicable accounting standards, except for the valuation of investment assets, which are shown at market value. The financial statements include all transactions, assets and liabilities for which the PCC is responsible in law. They do not include the accounts of church groups that owe their main affiliation to another body, nor those that are informal gatherings of church members.

The accounts have been prepared under the "Receipts and Payments" basis as prescribed by the Charity Commissioners and they meet the appropriate legal requirements.

Funds

General funds represent funds of the PCC that are not subject to any restrictions regarding their use, and are available for the general purposes of the PCC. Funds designated for a particular purpose may also be unrestricted.

Income & Endowments

Voluntary income and capital sources

Donations and collections are recognised when received by or on behalf of the PCC. Planned giving, is recognised only when received. Tax recoverable on Gift Aid donations is recognised when the donations are received. Grants and legacies to the PCC are accounted for as soon as the PCC is notified of its legal entitlement, the amount due is quantifiable and its receipt by the PCC is reasonably certain.

Activities for generating funds

Rental income from letting of church premises is recognised when the rental is due.

Income from investments

Dividends and interest are accounted for when received. Such payments are received without deduction of income tax.

Income from church activities

Income and expenditure relating to various church activities are accounted for gross.

Gains and losses on investments

Realised gains or losses are recognised when the investments are sold. Unrealised gains or losses are accounted for on revaluation at market value, as at 31st December (or nearest date available).

Expenditure

Grants Grants and donations are accounted for when paid over, or when awarded, if that award creates a binding obligation on the PCC.

Church activities

The Diocesan parish share is accounted for when paid.

Fixed Assets

Church Centre and Church House The value shown in the balance sheet for the Church Centre and for nos. 1 and 2 Church House is the acquisition cost of the land and building of the property in 1976 plus the Refectory extension building cost in 2009. This does not include the value of the land which was exchanged with Reading Borough Council for that previously occupied by the former St. Stephen's Church in accordance with an agreement with the PCC dated 30/11/1976. No valuation of the property is carried out, but the PCC is of the opinion that the open market value is not materially less than the balance sheet value.

No value is placed on movable church furnishings. All expenditure incurred on buildings, furniture and fittings, whether maintenance or improvement, is written off as expenditure in the Statement of Financial Activities, unless separately disclosed.

Current Assets Amounts owing to the PCC as at 31st December in respect of Gift Aid reclaims, fees, rents or other income are shown as debtors less provision for amounts which may prove uncollectable. Short Term deposits include any loans currently held.

Investment Policy

The PCC's policy is: (a) to invest endowment funds and other major legacies in dividend-bearing shareholdings, principally those of the CCLA Central Board of Finance of the C. of E. Investment Fund; (b) to invest other surplus funds in dividend-bearing shareholdings of the CCLA COIF Charities Ethical Investment Fund; (c) to invest selectively in local projects with a strong community interest; and (d) to hold other day-to-day funds in a charity bank account.

Reserves Policy

The PCC relies substantially on the regular inflow of donation, letting and Gift Aid tax recovery income to meet day-to-day commitments. It endeavours to hold sufficient cash reserves to meet at least two months' gross running costs.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Parochial Church Council of St John and St Stephen, Reading Financial Statement for the Year Ended 31 December 2024 Receipts and Payment Accounts

	Note	Unrestricted Fund	Unrestricted Designated Fund	Restricted Fund	Total 2024	Total 2023
RECEIPTS						
Voluntary receipts:						
Planned Giving		£53,839.16	-	-	£53,839.16	£52,120.79
Collections at Services		£1,793.40	-	-	£1,793.40	£1,406.63
All other Giving / Voluntary Receipts		£65,487.40	-	£1,648.07	£67,135.47	£7,972.90
Gift Aid Recovered		£9,656.75	-	-	£9,656.75	£13,439.17
		£130,776.71	-	£1,648.07	£132,424.78	£74,939.49
Activities for Generating Funds						
		-	-	-	-	-
Investment Income	1	£13,545.91	£24,855.98	£1,186.18	£39,588.07	£42,461.35
Church Activities	2	£6,580.02	£4.95	-	£6,584.97	£1,088.45
Other Receipts		£1,155.03	-	£1,182.11	£2,337.14	-
TOTAL RECEIPTS		£152,057.67	£24,860.93	£4,016.36	£180,934.96	£118,489.29
PAYMENTS						
Church activities:						
Parish Share		£47,111.13	-	-	£47,111.13	£44,845.41
Clergy and Staffing Costs	3	£16,119.20	£2,476.60	-	£18,595.80	£15,570.36
Church Running Expenses	4	£26,754.79	£301.67	£40.00	£27,096.46	£24,804.08
Church Houses Expenses		-	£6,155.22	-	£6,155.22	£4,958.48
Mission giving and donations		-	£18,820.00	£2,489.16	£21,309.16	£23,242.28
		£89,985.12	£27,753.49	£2,529.16	£120,267.77	£113,420.61
Costs of generating funds	5	£4,863.00	-	-	£4,863.00	£3,532.00
Governance Costs	6	£870.00	-	-	£870.00	£720.00
Other Payments	7	£2,623.64	£271.16	£1,472.87	£4,367.67	£3,774.61
TOTAL PAYMENTS		£98,341.76	£28,024.65	£4,002.03	£130,368.44	£121,447.22
Excess of Receipts over payments		£53,715.91	(£3,163.72)	£14.33	£50,566.52	(£2,957.93)
Transfers between funds		(£19,037.83)	£19,037.83	-	-	-
		£34,678.08	£15,874.11	£14.33	£50,566.52	(£2,957.93)
Cash at bank and in hand at 1 Jan		£19,957.29	-	£418.40	£20,375.69	£23,352.07
Cash at bank and in hand at 31 Dec	8	£70,576.81	-	£365.40	£70,942.21	£20,394.14

- Notes:
- 1 Includes Dividend Income, Church House Rent and Church Facilities hire
 - 2 Includes Church fees, Parish Share Rebates
 - 3 Includes Administrator wages, Clergy related costs and expenses, Hospitality costs
 - 4 Includes Church running costs, upkeep of services, maintenance
 - 5 Publicity - mainly costs of NEWT magazine
 - 6 Independent Examiner costs for 2023
 - 7 Bank & Subscription charges, Equipment purchases
 - 8 Excludes Agency Collections

ASSETS & LIABILITIES STATEMENT

Parochial Church Council of St John and St Stephen, Reading
Financial year ended 31 December 2024
Statement of Assets and Liabilities
(Receipts & Payments Basis)

	Note	Unrestricted Fund	Unrestricted Designated Fund	Restricted Fund	Endowment Fund	Total 2024	Total 2023
CASH FUNDS							
Bank Accounts	1	£70,576.81	-	£365.40	-	£70,942.21	£20,394.14
Deposit Fund		-	-	-	-	-	-
		£70,576.81	-	£365.40	-	£70,942.21	£20,394.14
<u>Other Monetary Assets</u>							
Other Debtors	2	£1,260.00	-	-	-	£1,260.00	£1,366.00
Income Tax recoverable		£5,658.97	-	-	-	£5,658.97	£3,138.86
		£6,918.97	-	-	-	£6,918.97	£4,504.86
<u>Investment Assets</u>							
Inv'mt Fund Shares at Market Value	3	£287,700.38	£81,324.74	-	£270,078.92	£639,104.04	£624,396.42
Assets Retained for Church Use	4	-	-	£200,369.40	£307,650.00	£508,019.40	£508,019.40
Liabilities	5	£392.96	-	£201.76	-	£594.72	£5,708.13

- Notes:**
- 1 Includes CAF Bank Balance at 31/12/2024, plus Petty Cash & BOOM Community Bank
 - 2 Best estimate of other receipts due at year end
 - 3 COIF Shares valued at £91,885. CBFIF Shares valued at £546,238; Reading Hydro Project £980
 - 4 Endowment - Church and Church Houses; Restricted - Refectory Extension
 - 5 Includes monies owed to Vicar & Christian Aid

Approved by the Trustees on 24th March 2025 and signed on its behalf by Trustee:



Revd. Claire Alcock (Chair of PCC)