THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SOUTH PETHERTON WITH THE SEAVINGTONS AND THE LAMBROOKS

England & Wales · Charity number 1128940

Details

Other names	THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SOUTH PETHERTON WITH THE SEAVINGTONS, SOUTH PETHERTON PCC
Status	Registered
Legal form	Previously excepted
Registered	2009-04-01
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	The Rectory Hele Lane South Petherton Somerset TA13 5DY
Phone	01460 240377
Email	tracey.hallett@icloud.com
Website	www.southpethertonbenefice.org

Activities

Objects: Promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church.

Activities: Religious activities

Classification

- **How:** Makes Grants To Organisations, Provides Buildings/facilities/open Space
- **What:** Religious Activities
- **Who:** The General Public/mankind

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Geography

- **Area of benefit:** UNDEFINED. IN PRACTICE, LOCAL
- Somerset

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2024-12-31	£145,347	£88,019	-	-
2023-12-31	£150,895	£203,779	-	-
2022-12-31	£175,346	£133,700	-	-
2021-12-31	£170,507	£142,096	-	-
2020-12-31	£136,680	£127,722	-	-

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Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
ANNE SHAW		2016-04-25
Amanda Jaggers		2024-03-22
Arthur Cyril John Davis		2025-05-19
CAROLINE MARY IRELAND-JONES		2022-05-18
CHRISTOPHER EDWARD SHARP		2022-05-18
Crispin Kenneth Raikes		2023-05-15
Daphne Sylvia Woodhouse		2024-05-22
Diana Elizabeth Baker		2023-05-15
Janet Elaine Strugnell		2022-05-18
MARK STAINER		2024-05-22
Maggs Amanda Louise		2023-05-15
PHILIP JOHN ANDREWS		2023-05-15
Rev Simon Nicholas Hartland Baker		2024-10-28
STEPHEN MICHAEL HARRISON		2024-05-22
Sandra Wendy Robinson		2023-05-15
Shan Weston		2024-05-22
Susan Pamela Ogilvy		2023-05-15

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THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SOUTH PETHERTON WITH

England & Wales - Charity number 1128940

Accounts

The United Benefice of South Petherton with the Seavingtons and the Lambrooks

St James's, East Lambrook

St Peter & St Paul's South Petherton

St Michael's, Seavington

Annual Report of the PCC for the Year 1st January 2024 to 31st December 2024

Aim and Purpose

Parochial Church Council (the PCC) has the responsibility of cooperating with the Rector of the benefice, in promoting in the benefice the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. As well as the church buildings of St Peter and St Paul, South Petherton (Grade I Listed), St Michael, Seavington (Grade II listed), and St James, East Lambrook (Grade II* listed) together with the churchyard at St Mary's, Seavington, the PCC is also responsible for maintaining the Schoolroom, East Lambrook. (The church building of St Mary, Seavington is in the care of the Churches Conservation Trust, though the PCC retains a duty to hold services there at least 6 times in the year).

Objectives and Activities

The PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship in our Benefice, and to become part of our benefice family. When planning our activities, the PCC has considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, and in particular the specific guidance on charities for the advancement of religion. Our services and worship put faith into practice through prayer and scripture, sacrament, and music. We try to enable people to live out their faith as part of our benefice family, through:

- Worship and prayer: church communities learning about the good news of God's love for us, and developing knowledge and trust in Jesus;
- Outward focus towards our wider local communities: building relationships and trust within our local context – especially with our church infants' school in South Petherton – in order to exemplify a life of service and to reflect God's love to all;
- Respect for the traditions of the Church while also exploring new ways to be welcoming and responsive to those seeking more than a secular world can give.
- To facilitate this work, it is vital that we support one another, and are generous with our time and resources; we must also maintain the fabric of our church buildings and the Schoolroom at East Lambrook.

Administrative Information

Address for correspondence:

The Parish Office, The Rectory, Hele Lane, South Petherton, TA13 5DY
office@southpethertonbenefice.org

Benefice Administrator: Anne Perez

Bankers:

NatWest Bank plc, 2 Hendford, Yeovil, BA20 1TN

Hon Treasurer

Ellen Howard
Westholme
North Street
Martock TA12 6DH

Independent Examiner:

Mr N Laycock, 7 Bishopston, Montacute, TA15 6UU

Benefice website: www.southpethertonbenefice.org

PCC Members and Trustees during 2024

Rector (until 31st August 2024): Rev Tracey Hallett

Churchwardens: Steve Harrison (Vice-Chair), Manda Jaggers, Mark Stainer, Anne Shaw, Daphne Woodhouse

Elected Lay Representatives (including those as Deanery Synod representatives): Phil Andrews *[2026]**, Diana Baker *[2026]*, Caroline Ireland-Jones *[2027]*, Mandy Maggs *[2026]*, Susan Ogilvy *[2026]*, Crispin Raikes *[2026]*, Sandra Robinson *[2026]*, Chris Sharp *[2025]*, Janet Strugnell (PCC Secretary) *[2027]*. ** Denotes the APCM at which the term of office ends*

Co-Opted: Shan Weston (Head Teacher of South Petherton CofE Infants' School and Pre-School), David Chapman

Also serving for part of the year: Rev Simon Baker (appointed by the Bishop Michael Beasley as a priest licensed to the Benefice from October 2024). Roy Duffy (lay representative elected in 2023) took extended leave of absence due to ill health from March 2024.

The PCC should comprise 3 Deanery Synod representatives and 9 elected lay representatives; of the latter, at least 3 should be worshippers at St Peter & St Paul's, South Petherton, at least 2 worshippers at St Michael's, Seavington, and at least 2 worshippers at St James's, East Lambrook. As at shortly before the APCM 2025 there are: vacancies for 2 Deanery Synod representatives; and one vacancy for a worshipper at St Michael's, Seavington.

Achievements and Performance

The resignation of our rector midway through the year has been a hugely significant matter in assessing the achievements of the PCC during 2024. You might also think of it (in common parlance) as "a game of two halves".

Many of the matters in development early in the year, such as the review and development of formal policies and procedures, have necessarily had to be placed on the back-burner while our available capacity has been redirected towards maintaining worship and outreach, maintaining fundraising, dealing with the fallout and speculation from the resignation (including such practical matters as the renting out of the Rectory with the consequential removal of Benefice Office and of the Yurt from the Rectory) and taking practical steps towards making an appointment for a new appointment of a Rector.

Worship and Prayer

The PCC is keen to offer a range of styles of worship across the benefice. While wanting the Rector to be seen in and to value all three parishes appropriately, the PCC recognises that the Rector cannot be in different places at more or less the same time every Sunday. The range and quantity of services we want to offer therefore needs and benefits greatly from the support our 'retired' clergy with 'permission to officiate' (PTO). We are greatly blessed by them for their love and service, as much in ordinary times as we are in our current vacancy.

It has been our principal priority during vacancy to continue to offer the same range and timings of services, and in that we have been very successful. The pattern of worship established by Rev Tracey Hallett in 2023 across the benefice has continued almost entirely as in the previous year.

It is our privilege to be able to celebrate and thank God at the milestones of the journey through life. There have been 11 Baptisms, 4 weddings and 7 funerals in church (+5 graveside committals and 8 crematorium services) during the year. Those who are no longer able to come to Church are not forgotten; we are grateful to Rev Geoff Wade of the neighbouring Winsmoor benefice for his provision of 'Sunday Worship at Home' which we make available to some of our parishioners. When funds permit it is our intention to 'stream' our main services at St Peter & St Paul's, plus, on request, those for weddings and funerals. Completion of the installation of broadband was achieved early in 2025.

There are detailed reports from the churchwardens on the worship at each church in Annex 1 to this document.

Deanery Synod

Two members of the PCC (one of whom is a churchwarden) sit on the Somerset South Deanery Synod. This provides the PCC with a valuable link to the churches around us, and also to the Diocese as a whole. We actually have an allocation of three elected representatives, so as noted above, we have vacancies to increase our representation.

Church Fabric

(a) St Peter & St Paul.

Completion of the new heating system was achieved right at the end of 2023, and the new system has proved to be running effectively – it has certainly made services and other events in the church during the colder months of 2024 a lot more bearable. There were concerns early in the year about internal security of the building. While at the time this was on account of only low-level mischief-making, it highlighted a need to improve our arrangements. As a result, new cctv equipment has been installed – this was a gift from Steven Muxlow, Managing Director of SES Alarms, to whom we are very grateful. There are on-going issues with the draining of water from the dishwasher in the kitchen which have stopped us from continuing to benefit from having the appliance. Some repairs were made to the blue lias flooring although the fragility of the stone makes that an ongoing issue. The high-level lighting in the nave, the chancel and the north and south aisles has been replaced with low-energy LED fittings which, when broadband is installed, will enable dimming and alternative colours by using a phone app. The internal decoration of the ringing chamber in the tower needs improvement. Otherwise, the condition of the building remains fairly stable and acceptable. The external work done where the south-west side of the tower meets the roof has been effective in keeping us dry despite some severe testing by the weather. As ever, the PCC is very grateful to the *Friends of South Petherton Church* for their invaluable support in helping us meet much of the costs in maintaining the building. At the request of the *Friends*, the PCC commissioned a quotation for redecorating the internal sides of the outside walls of the aisles and the west end of the nave; unfortunately, the size of the estimate puts this project out of range for the time being until alternative sources of funding can be found. The PCC were advised late in the year that the organ is now due for a thorough clean and some refurbishment. The estimated cost at circa £20k means that we are searching for grant funding to make this a viable project. The church's quinquennial inspection is due in 2025.

(b) St Michael

In February it was decided we needed to review the maintenance of the churchyards both at St Michael's Church and St Mary's. Manda approached three gardening companies to tender for the contract for 2024 after a disappointing 2023 with the Council and deciding not to renew our contract with them. After consultation with the PCC, James Satterley Garden Maintenance was awarded the contract. Our working relationship with James has been excellent, and he has been very accommodating of any additional needs we have required especially around funerals. We hope the villagers of the Seavingtons have noticed an improvement in the maintenance of our churchyards.

(c) St James

The condition of the building both internal and external is in good order, with no issues or work needed, other than regularly clearing the gutters of leaves and debris due to the close proximity of trees. Several of the main lights have failed due to their age and these 100W bulbs have been replaced with low energy LED bulbs.

During 2023 we had some issues with the council ground maintenance team who maintained the cemetery, in particular the frequency of cuts, and they had to be chased up on a number of occasions as the grass was becoming long and untidy, and some villagers were to be seen

with garden shears tidying the graves of their loved ones. To add insult to injury the council's new contract had risen considerably from the previous year. After receiving new quotes for the maintenance of the cemetery, the PCC approved James Satterley, who is a local ground maintenance contractor from Stembridge.

Community Outreach

Our fundraising activities continue to be dual purpose: yes, we need to generate income, but also we want these events to model the generosity God's love and the joy of being together. Likewise, St Peter and St Paul's church and the East Lambrook Schoolroom are available for booking and used to enable community events such as concerts, photo and art exhibitions.

Not all our outreach – for example: the harvest suppers, agape supper, the men's 'No Name' group, hosting Foodshare, our Parish Magazine and Connected weekly newssheet, 'Pilgrimage' village walks – is intended to raise funds, or – as with our Monthly 'Open House' and our Lent Lunches – at least not funds for us but for other worthwhile causes. One of our ambitions for the future remains to be in a position to employ a children and families worker.

Other Activities

Published separately to this report are reports from the many activities and groups that fall within the umbrella of our churches and are critical to the principal objectives of worship and prayer and outward focus. These are diverse and rich …. and recommended reading for all. They include, for example: Choir, Bell Ringers, Greener Futures, Mother's Union to mention but a few.

Financial Review

Details of our financial accounts are published separately but suffice it to say that the state of our finances are a constant worry, a constant struggle and a constant handicap to achieving much of what we would like to do. What cannot be reported in the financial accounts is the drain on the time and energy of our ever-so willing volunteers in an attempt, if not to stand still then at least not to go too far backwards too quickly.

The numbers will speak for themselves; what is less visible is the cost firstly of the missed opportunities for outreach and for presence in our community, and secondly of the impact of relentless grind on the stamina of our volunteers.

We should perhaps celebrate the fact that we paid our parish share in full in 2024 (and have undertaken to continue to do so in 2025). Are we rightly fulfilling our duty to the diocese as we should or just being mugs? Moving into 2025 there is a new methodology for calculating Parish Share. It is supposed to be more transparent, though for parishes such as ours in vacancy it is critically not. It is also founded on a recognition that year-on-year increases in parish share are unsustainable, yet it oversees another increase in 2025 amounting to a rise in the baseline amount in the last three years of 28%.

With this backdrop there is a particular mean-spirited niggle that has surfaced recently. During vacancy, the diocese allows us to claim a fee to pay to our retired clergy for the services they take for us. This is highly laudable and a small, practical way in which we can thank them for all they do for us without cost to ourselves. Or is it? This allowance is limited to four services per week *across the whole benefice* and is strictly applied – that is no allowance

for ‘extra’ services even at Christmas or Easter. Really? Yes, really: can the leadership of the diocese be that much out of touch with its own purposes?

Looking forward into later in 2025, the PCC is looking into the practicalities of introducing the ‘Parish Giving Scheme’. This is intended to bring together all forms of regular giving (standing orders and giving envelopes) for those who do either of these. It works as a simple direct debit and critically it offers the option (and it is optional) to increase your giving by the rate of inflation automatically each year. Watch out for more information.

Reserves Policy

The PCC has previously resolved to maintain a balance on our General (unrestricted) Fund, which equates to at least four months’ unrestricted payments (around £40,000) to cover regular running costs and unforeseen expenditures.

It is our policy to ‘ring-fence’ monies from specific activities (such as Phil Andrews’s scrap metal collection) and from legacies by putting them into ‘designated funds’ to isolate them from general expenditure.

From time-to-time the PCC receives gifts and legacies which have specific conditions attached to their use; these are placed in ‘Restricted Funds’. Where it is likely that spending of these funds will be spread over a period of time and the amount is sufficient in size, it is our policy to invest these funds with CCLA, through the CBF Church of England Deposit Fund, their Investment Fund units, and their Property Fund units in order for them to attract interest payments.

Safeguarding

The PCC has complied with the duty under 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).

Maintaining good practice and high standards in safeguarding is a key priority of the PCC: reporting on safeguarding is a standing item at all PCC meetings.

Manda Jaggers, Parish Safeguarding Officer, writes:

> I would like to start by thanking everyone in the benefice for their support of safeguarding in our churches and keeping them as safe places.
>
> Our Parish Safeguarding Dashboard is now level 3, which is quite a target and I am grateful to the ministry team, wardens, Parish Administrator and volunteers for their compliance with training and having the necessary protocols in place. I know it involves a lot of work, alongside the other commitments we all have.
>
> May I remind everyone that “Safeguarding is everyone’s business,” basic training in safeguarding is available free for anyone who wishes to participate and can be face to face if that’s what you prefer. The training isn’t aimed at ensuring we don’t put others at risk, it is more that we can recognise signs of possible abuse (in its many forms) and are equipped to respond to someone reporting them, or just wanting to talk. I know this is out of our comfort zone for many of us, but sadly, abuse is a very present reality within our beautiful villages and, in many ways, living in what appears to be an affluent

and safe area, may make it harder for victims to report or even speak about their experiences.

Abuse does not just involve child victims, anyone, particularly those who are vulnerable (have any care needs) can be a "victim." Awareness of suspicious activity is a fundamental of all training.

I don't want to end on a sad or depressing note – I want to thank everyone for their acts of random kindness, for making people welcome in our churches (and in the wider community) for those friendly conversations over a cuppa. This is how we spread the gospel.

Volunteers

The members of the PCC would like to thank all the volunteers who work so tirelessly to make our benefice a lively and vibrant community. Nothing works without you.

Structure, Governance and Management

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. The Council comprises the Incumbent, the Churchwardens, those elected to the Deanery Synod, and other members who are elected at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting, by those on the Electoral Roll. Members of the congregation are always encouraged to join the Electoral Roll, and to consider standing for election to the PCC.

The PCC members are responsible for making decisions on all matters of general concern and importance in the benefice, and for all financial matters. The full PCC met eight times during 2024. The average level of attendance was 69%. All meetings were quorate. Given its wide responsibilities, the PCC has started to develop a number of subgroups, each dealing with a particular aspect of parish life, policy, or governance. These include Mission Action, Buildings, Greener Futures, Finances, Bell Ringing, and East Lambrook School Room, plus some ad hoc teams to work on specific policies. While each of these has made some progress during the year, the other priorities and calls on capacity consequent on the resignation of the rector have effectively brought much of that work to a standstill. This will need corrective action once a new appointment is made for rector.

The key posts on the PCC are all filled: Hon Treasurer (who is not a PCC member), Hon Secretary, Safeguarding Officer, and Vice-Chair. The Treasurer is supported by an Assistant Treasurer (who is a PCC member) and a Gift Aid Secretary (who is not).

Towards Appointing a Rector

A key priority for the later part of the year has been the procedures which will lead us to making a new appointment in 2025. By the end of the year, the churchwardens had held meetings with the Archdeacon of Taunton, Ven Simon Hill and the Somerset South Area Dean, Rev Jo Stobart, and also with Bishop Michael Beasley ; the PCC held a pre-Section 11 meeting in early November and had planned for December a 'discernment meeting' open to the whole benefice as a consultation process in preparation for creating our 'parish profile' (though this meeting had to be postponed until early January due to unsafe weather conditions. Work to

complete the profile and begin advertising the post in April 2025 has been ongoing with a view to holding interviews in May 2025.

Central to all these efforts has been the compilation of the 'Parish Profile'. It may have been assumed that this could be a simple re-hash of the previous one from two years ago. Well, not really. While some of the background information about the locality may still have been accurate and relevant, how the Benefice sees itself, its sense of direction, its worship and its priorities have changed during Rev Tracey's incumbency. All that needed to be reflected too – OK, maybe within a similar framework to that of the old profile – in a new version. We – the PCC – all of us - are greatly indebted to Chris Sharp who took on the poisoned chalice and has led the way (and done the donkeywork) with great sensitivity, diplomacy, insight and good humour in the later part of 2024 and into 2025.

Electoral Roll 2025

The Electoral Roll is regularly updated as our church membership changes. However, on a 6-yearly cycle, we are required to build a new Roll from scratch; 2025 is a year when we have had to do that.

The PCC is grateful firstly to Rod Page who has served as Electoral Roll Officer for as long as anyone can remember, and secondly to Tim Robinson who has kindly taken on that responsibility for us.

A clear timetable was set by the PCC for ensuring that a new Roll could be produced by the due date. The need to re-make the Roll in 2025 was well advertised through announcements at services at all three churches, through articles in the Parish Magazine and through reminders in the parish weekly news sheet, 'Connected'. At the initial closing date prior to the Annual Parish Church Meeting, the number on the Roll was 125.

Bristol Ensemble showcasing and explaining their musical skills to the Infant School children

Annex 1: Churchwardens' Reports on Worship and Outreach at the Three Churches

St James, East Lambrook ***Mark Stainer***

In February Simon Baker led a conversation regarding service patterns at St James's. This was to be a review after a year with the new service patterns being held in all three churches. There was a good turnout of the regular congregation, and all had an opportunity to put their views across. Overall, the consensus was everyone seemed happy with the pattern of services, maintaining the morning and evening services and much gratitude to the various clergy who make it possible to have a service every Sunday.

As we moved into Lent we had extra services. On Wednesday's we had Compline preceded by up to half hour of quiet prayer. On Palm Sunday, Rev Tracey Hallet led a service of Holy Communion. The Good Friday Liturgy with Canon Ian Gibson was well attended and all agreed it was a thoughtful and moving service. Finally on Easter Day, which was on a fifth Sunday, we had a special service of Holy Communion.

On 28th July we had our Patronal Festival. This was a Holy Communion service led by Rev Tracey Hallett and following the service everyone gathered around the font for food and drink which everyone had contributed. It was a lovely sunny morning so the door was left open to let in the sunlight.

This turned out to be Tracey's last service at St. James's and we would soon be faced with another interregnum.

Our congregation numbers had been good throughout September and October. In addition, we had our harvest festival. We had a congregation of 26 at the harvest service and supper. Rev John Tyler led this special Evensong service. After the service everyone made their way to the Schoolroom for a harvest supper of cheese, bread and cider. There were very generous harvest donations of fresh produce as well as packet and tinned food. Most of the fresh produce was taken to Burnworthy care home and the tinned and packet donations to the Lords Larder at St Peter and St Paul's.

On the Saturday before harvest we had the first of two weddings. This happy occasion was led by Canon Ian Gibson. It was a small gathering and for the first time that week the sun shone brightly.

In complete contrast the second wedding was in November and being late in the afternoon it was completely dark outside. Much of the light was provided by candles and night lights in the windows and on the altar.

On the last Saturday in November, we had our Christmas Fair in the Schoolroom, this was a great success and very well supported. The total raised this year was £1,558.94 which is a substantial increase from last year. It was heartening to see the Schoolroom full almost to the

end and with many new faces, everyone seemed to thoroughly enjoy themselves. Thanks to all concerned for the tremendous effort into making this such a success.

In the build up to Christmas we had good congregation numbers, and this culminated on Christmas Eve with a very well attended Carols by Candlelight service with a congregation of 104. Our hard-working retired clergy covered the many extra services during this period and on Christmas Day they were joined by the Archdeacon of Taunton, Simon Hill who led the morning service at St. James's and St. Michael's.

Although we have been in an interregnum since August all our services have been covered thanks to the tireless efforts of our wonderful retired clergy.

Finally, a big thank you to all those involved with the everyday working of the church, from the beautiful flower displays, compiling the various rotas, the cleaning and bell ringing and the many readers, all playing their valuable part in the life of the church.

St Michael, Seavington ***Manda Jaggers & Anne Shaw***

How can it be that time of year already to write about our 2024 celebrations at St Michael's Church? The early part of the year was quite turbulent, but thankfully we ended the year growing in strength and numbers. Our first service of the year was Cafe Church, led by Anne and Manda, exploring the subject "God Shakes Things Up" - I think we can all agree things were "Shaken Up" in the Benefice during 2024.

Lent time was then rapidly upon us with Rev Simon Baker leading an evening Ashing Service on 14th February for Ash Wednesday, perfect for the working congregation who were unable to attend the morning service at St Peter and St Paul's Church in South Petherton. During February, Rev Simon led Evensong and Conversation services, with Rev Tracey, to enable parishioners of the Benefice the opportunity to express their thoughts on the new service patterns that had been put in place during 2023. On Sunday 18th February a well-attended service was held at St Michael's Church. Rev Simon led a lovely Evensong service and everyone was given time to join in "the conversation". Plenty of notes were taken on a large flipboard; these notes became a very useful tool later in the year when sadly we had to start thinking about returning to the recruitment process when we moved into Interregnum.

March was a very busy month; Rev Simon led our Mothering Sunday service, marking halfway through Lent. Holy Week in the Benefice was well supported, a Holy Week Mediation Service with Rev Tracey on Tuesday at St Michael's Church. Rev Simon took an evening Holy Communion Service on Maundy Thursday for those who were unable to attend the Agape Supper in South Petherton, and the Good Friday Reflection Service. Easter Day fell on a fifth Sunday, so the main service in the Benefice was held at South Petherton. Rev Simon kindly offered to lead a Holy Communion Service at 9am at St Michael's Church to enable the parishioners of the Seavingtons to take Holy Communion in their Parish Church, also allowing

time for those who wanted to attend the Benefice Service too. Cafe Church Led by Rev Tracey and Sam Lloyd in May had a last-minute venue change due to the Cafe in Seavington having a fresh coat of paint - many thanks were sent to Frogmary Farm for allowing us to use their educational space.

We were lucky to be able to celebrate St Mary's Patronal Festival at St Mary's Church on 11th August, always a lovely occasion to worship in St Mary's Church. The service was led by Rev Simon who understands the sensitivity in our community for those who still feel saddened that St Mary's Church is now in the care of the Church Conservation Trust Church.

St Michael's Patronal Festival was held on 29th September at 3pm - we were thrilled to be supported by our Benefice choir, with Ruth accompanying them on the keyboard. This was a real treat for Rev Simon and Anne not to have the stress of downloading music to play through Bluetooth speakers!

We are so lucky to live in a farming community, so the opportunity to celebrate the Harvest Festival is always a blessed time. Rev Simon led our service on 13th October; we requested non-perishable items to be brought to the service for the Foodshare held in St Peter and St Paul's Church - the biggest celebration was the lack of marrows!

Manda and Anne led a Celtic Worship Service on Sunday 20th October. Liz Harper reflected on the Gospel reading and encouraged us all to join in with our own reflections. A very uplifting conversation was had by all. The year is now running away with us; our annual Gift Day in the Benefice was held on Saturday 9th November. Gift Day is always a time to be at peace in our beautiful church, time to stop and reflect. We have so much to be grateful for. We had another fabulous turn out for our Remembrance Sunday Service held at the war memorial in Seavington playing fields. This service is accessible to all and has grown in popularity over recent years. Again, we were blessed to have Rev Simon lead the service, followed by coffee and biscuits at the community cafe.

Again, we have so much to be grateful for! Our December Cafe Church explored "Hopeful beginnings and journeying through Advent". It seemed right that our Posada figures (Mary, Joseph and their donkey) set off on their journey around the Seavingtons, including visits to homes in Ilminster and South Petherton. They travelled with a book for every home to complete, reflecting on their time offering rest places for the soon to be new parents. They arrived into St Michael's Church on Christmas Eve at the very well attended Carol Service, in time for Mary to deliver baby Jesus on Christmas morning. On December 15th Rev Ian Gibson led our Christingle Service at St Mary's Church. This is always a popular service and St Mary's Church was a perfect backdrop for the candle lit service. Mary, Joseph and their donkey popped in too to join in with the merriment. A generous collection was forwarded to Save the Children charity to aid with their good works.

Our final two services for 2024 were very well attended; Christmas Eve Traditional Carol Service and Christmas Morning Family Holy Communion, both led by Rev Simon.

In September, Manda and Anne attended the Churchwarden Training Day at Flourish House in Wells - we had an excellent day with lots of helpful information provided and good conversation with other Churchwardens. It was lovely to come away from the training feeling like maybe we aren't doing too bad a job!

Everything we achieve at St Michael's Church could not be done without the amazing support of our retired PTO's. We are so incredibly lucky to have Rev Simon supporting us on a day-to-day basis, not just on a Sunday! Also, many thanks go to Rev John Tyler, Rev Ian Gibson, Rev Tim Price, Rev Annie Gurner who have enabled most Sundays to be covered.

During our time of Interregnum, our Area Dean Rev Jo Stobart, has also come to our rescue fitting in services at altered times to enable the Seavingtons to be able to worship in our churches each week - we are thankful to our parishioners for their flexibility too.

Finally, Manda and Anne are grateful for the support from Liz Harper in helping them facilitate Cafe Church. These informal services require a lot of preparation and are often considered by the congregations as the most Spirit filled of all worship. These services are well attended, and we are thankful that the Seavington Community Shop and Cafe committee are still happy for us to use their facility. This really helps us to achieve the "accessible for everyone" which is so important to us. Thank you to all volunteers who help in so many ways, the "Flower Ladies" for their beautiful arrangements in both churches, those who clean the church, launder the linen and make the congregation and visitors feel so welcome.

St Peter & St Paul, South Petherton ***Steve Harrison and Daphne Woodhouse***

2024 began, as it did at our sister churches, with a special meeting at the church to discuss the pattern of worship, established by Rev Tracey during 2023. This kind of thing is healthy and welcome. Change and evolution is inevitable in any living organisation, including the church; the alternative is become moribund and to dwindle. But change also needs to be reviewed by everyone it affects – how well has it worked? what needs to be tweaked in the light of experience? what has been lost as well as what has been gained? It was important to ask these questions and to give opportunity for everyone of all shades of Anglican tradition to express their views in an atmosphere of mutual care and respect. The discussion is an end in itself, but the record of it has also been a valuable resource in compiling our Parish Profile and in shaping the PCC's thinking in articulating its person specification for the new post-holder.

It has to be said that 2024 was a tumultuous year! The impact on our church life of Rev Tracey's departure has been difficult to navigate and so many have worked hard to enable worship and areas of service to continue. I am thankful for all the encouragement and support so many have given me.

There was considerable uncertainty over the Summer as to what would actually happen but once the decisions were finalised and Rev Tracey left at the end of August, we were required to remove the yurt and empty the office which had resided in the rectory, in order for the Diocese to rent out the rectory. The tenancy commenced in December and ends in June 2025. Most of the contents and the yurt itself are being stored by kind permission of the Killens in a barn at Barcroft Hall. Our administrator now works from home and the copier and other contents of the office are in St Peter & St Paul's Church vestries.

During Rev Tracey's incumbency I feel we grew in our sense of being a church family and this contributed to the sense of loss that many of us experienced. We learnt more about how to be an outward-facing body of believers, and the pioneering spirit was sparked! This has enabled Sam, our community volunteer to progress her pioneer training, endorsed by Rev Tracey and the PCC.

People move away for many reasons and our Sacristan, David Ward, Jane who had drawn together our last profile, and their lively children, Marianne and Jonathan, went to live in Jersey and have been much missed. Sandra Robinson, changed her role from Assistant Churchwarden to Verger and also took over many of the weekly sacristan duties, supported by others who help care for the linen.

We have been blessed by the way our 'retired' clergy have supported the benefice in the provision of regular worship and the occasional offices of weddings, funerals and baptisms. Some mid-week services were lay led by Judy Bristow, Anna Chaplain, and by Daphne Woodhouse.

That said, it is nonetheless evident that Rev Tracey's resignation has brought about some decline in attendance at services. Let's look at some numbers over three four-week blocks:-

Attendance	**Feb 2024**	**Oct 2024**	**Feb 2025**
Average number at four 8am HC services (adults)	12	13	11
Average number at three 9:30 am HC services (adults)	56	53	47
Average number at three 9:30 am HC services (children)	4	1	1
Actual number at 10:30 am café church service (adults)	82	44	41
Actual number at 10:30 am café church service (children)	18	8	3

Following Rev Tracey's departure we see:

- not much change in the 8am HC attendance;
- a small decrease (5-15%) in the number of adults at the 9:30 HC services;
- children at the 9:30am HC services have nearly disappeared despite one of the services being billed as a 'Family Communion';
- a substantial decrease (of around 50%) in the number of adults attending café church;
- children at café church becoming a rarity.

We have continued to host the Foodshare and the South Petherton Carers Group who meet during Open House, our monthly café. Foodshare is in regular use; it operates on a help-yourself basis to support local families. There have been a few concerns over one or two individuals helping themselves rather disproportionally but, on the whole, the scheme serves a very good purpose. Pastoral care continued with the support of Judy who, with others, provided a short service in Burnworthy at intervals, and visited residents who expressed a wish to talk with her. Her deep spiritual care of Jo Goldie in her final weeks was much appreciated by Jo, her friends and family. Our love and prayers go with Judy as she relocates nearer family. Other valued members of our congregation left us for heaven or have needed to move either nearer family or into residential care homes.

Fundraising continued with 12 events between February and November. Some proceeds were shared with various charities, in line with our desire to express the generosity shown to us by the Lord. Phil Andrews continued to collect and sell scrap metal with fantastic results. See financial report for total added to church funds. Various ad-hoc opportunities for fellowship and a generous spirit - such as the Lent Lunches (supporting Christian Aid), an Agape Supper on Maundy Thursday, Folkfest hospitality, the Christmas Lights Switch-On event – have been well supported, as have the regular gatherings of such as Mothers' Union and Phil Andrews's 'No Name' men's group. Our many fundraising events don't just raise funds; they bring a wide cross-section of our local community into the church maintaining the strong sense in the

village that St Peter & St Paul's is *their* village church – and that is further reinforced by welcoming events from established village organisations, such as the SP Combined Arts Choir concerts and the SP Photographic Society annual exhibition. The church is well used for concerts and performances, the highlight of which in 2024 was surely the Bristol Ensemble's Vivaldi concert – or was it the Beach'd Boys Shanty Band? – there's something for everyone.

Two home groups have continued to meet for learning and mutual encouragement and the prayer ministry during communion on first and third weeks each month has seen a number of answers to prayer for different people for which we thank God. Morning prayer has been available each Tuesday 08.30, providing an opportunity to pray for God's work in the village and Benefice. All comers welcome.

Scope for working with the Infants School reduced temporarily from September due to Rev Tracey's departure and the school's preparations for its Ofsted inspection. The inspection went very well: "A school filled with sparkle and joy" is high praise indeed and thoroughly well deserved. The termly Open the Book session was suspended, as were the weekly assemblies in church. There is still mutual desire for church and school to work closely together, indeed it is a key task of the new incumbent to make this work well. The core 'Open the Book' team from the church remains committed to picking up where they left off when the time is right.

The year drew to an end as the PCC started work on the recruitment process for our new Rector and closed with services over Christmas being joyful, positive and well attended celebrations of the incarnation of Jesus. He is the reason for the season and for whom and by whom we live, breathe and have our being. Hallelujah!

Craft skills at the Christmas Lights Switch-On

Camera Club Exhibition

The School's Easter Bonnet Parade at St Peter & S Paul's

Annex 2: Report on the Proceedings of the PCC During 2024

Janet Strugnell (PCC Secretary)

This was another busy year which started with work on initiatives inspired by the Rector as well as the ever-present issues of maintaining 3 church buildings and administering the 3 parishes correctly. However, in August, with the resignation of the Rector, much attention went onto the smooth running of the benefice without an incumbent and arrangements for the recruitment of a new rector.

The PCC wishes to record its gratitude to Rev Tracey Hallett for her inspirational and dedicated work with our benefice. She worked tirelessly towards building relationships with all three communities, with a vision of a 'church without walls', sharing God's message of love, hope and salvation with everyone. She proved to us that we have capabilities greater than we had imagined, and we pray that this will enable us to support the work of a new Rector.

There were 6 regular meetings throughout the year, with 2 additional extraordinary meetings (to discuss the new method of assessing Parish Share and a policy on Living in Love and Faith), and in November a Pre-Section 11 meeting, required as part of the process to prepare for the recruitment process for a new incumbent. In February there were also 3 consultation meetings (one in each parish) considering the new pattern of services.

The major, ever-present issues were:

Buildings and maintenance - ensuring the upkeep of our buildings and grounds to a safe and suitable standard. Applications have to be made to the diocese for almost all changes within the buildings. We successfully applied for a faculty to install broadband within St Peter & St Paul's church, as well as replacement of the failing lighting. The organ at South Petherton is due for its 25 year maintenance in 2025, and also the Quinquennial Inspection (a survey of the structure of the building conducted every 5 years). Damp issues at St Michael's have necessitated work. We supported the East Lambrook Schoolroom Committee as they continue their efforts to maintain and update the building to create a safe and useful space for the church and community,

Finances – paying our Parish Share to the diocese (in 2024 this was almost £75,000), running costs for the benefice and fundraising for general funds as well as special projects. Assistance with help running and ideas for fundraising events is much needed. The annual Gift Day, Autumn Fair, Plant Fair and Folkfest are supplemented by quizzes and concerts, all of which entail much organisation.

Safeguarding – now an essential element in the administration of all church activities

Governance – the PCC members are Trustees of the charity that is the benefice, and there are strict rules on how the charity is run. We need to ensure that we are up to date with all our policies and procedures.

Outreach – The Greener Futures Group worked hard to engage with the congregation and community to enable us to achieve a Bronze Eco Award (and in January 2025 we made Silver!). The local Foodshare scheme is housed in St Peter & St Paul's and members of the congregation assist with its running. We have supported various charities through special events. After much discussion, we supported Rev Hallett in her desire to allow on request blessings for those in same-sex relationships (as outlined in the CofE Living in Love and Faith

initiative), although it remains to be seen how a new rector will approach this issue. Lent lunches supported Christian Aid as well as an envelope distribution during Christian Aid week in May. Efforts, chiefly by Phil Andrews collecting and selling scrap metal, are underway to raise funds for a dedicated children and family worker, but again, we will have to discover the priorities of the new Rector.

Schools – We continue to support the work of our Church of England Infant School and to build relationships with the Junior School.

This is by no means an exhaustive list but gives an indication of the work undertaken by PCC members. It also shows that there are several initiatives where efforts were begun, but their precise future will depend on our new incumbent.

Folkfest tradition of 'clipping the church'

The United Benefice of South Petherton with the Seavingtons and the Lambrooks

St James's, East Lambrook

St Peter & St Paul's South Petherton

St Michael's, Seavington

Reports from Church Groups

and Activities

2024

We have invited all who are involved in the life of our Benefice to contribute to the APCM and we do hope that you will take the time to enjoy their attached reports.

BELL RINGING

David Chapman

A lot has happened since my report last year.

Last year we were only managing to ring eight bells on Sundays but mostly it was only six. Recently, you might have noticed all twelve bells ringing on Sundays and on our Thursday practice nights we are ringing ten and twelve bells on a regular basis.

You might also have noticed than the ringing is smoother than is used to be with most of the spaces between the bells being the same. This has happened for two main reasons:

1. Rosemary Heard and I have continued to teach four of our beginners, who are now able to handle our bells and are competent to ring rounds and call changes. One of the four actually calls the changes and rings in other local towers to improve his skills. Another of them is learning to ring Methods, which is being able to learn the pattern which the bell she is ringing goes to link up with all the other bells which are doing the same. Another of them is almost there and so are most of our other ringers who at last May could only ring rounds and call changes.

2. Since May last year we have been joined by four new competent ringers: Emma Brooks, Wendy Bishop, John and Jaqueline Davis.

This brings our total local ringing members up to an amazing 16.

On our Thursday evening practices we have four or five visitors who practice with us and then we welcome back two past ringers who return from university and other destinations from time to time.

Rosemary Heard, who has been our Tower Captain in recent years, has decided to step down and has been replaced by John Davis, who has a lot of experience having been Tower Captain in many places including Truro Cathedral. Rosemary is now Vice Tower Captain also, she is our Association of Ringing Teachers trainer with me carrying, on my teaching role as an ART qualified teacher.

We are now in a good position to go from strength to strength.

Having been on the Benefice PCC for a year now, representing the St. Peter and St. Paul's ringers and bells, I feel that the other three church's bells and ringers (St Mary's, St. Michael's and St. James), need to be represented, so that any of their issues can be discussed at our Benefice PCC. This would provide the route for any improvements needed, in the other two towers as well.

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CHRISTIAN AID

Nigel Kinsman
for the Christian Aid (South Petherton) Group

Christian Aid Week 2024 was focused on rural women in Burundi. The posters and envelopes featured Aline who had been street homeless, attended a women's empowerment workshop in her area and went on to create a thriving business selling food products on behalf of local women. Aline learned to create adobe (essentially mud) bricks, built a house and was soon able to pay for her children's schooling. In partnership with a local organisation, Christian Aid funded the workshops and agricultural outreach work.

This story is another example of how Christian Aid lives out the belief that "Everyone is equal in the sight of God, yet we live in a world where the scandal of poverty, inequality and injustice persists".

In South Petherton a small team organised various awareness raising, prayer and fund-raising events in 2024. Sandra Robinson organised two Lent Lunches which drew people from across the Benefice including some from the Roman Catholic community. Together with a Bring-and-Buy stall, these raised £715.

Christian Aid Week began with a café church in St Peter & St Paul's. This attracted 70 -80 people and who gave £465 via the envelope scheme. For the rest of the week our volunteers delivered appeal envelopes to approximately 2,000 households organised by Tim Browning. Since Covid, we no longer knock doors to recover envelopes but label them with details of collection points. This scheme worked well and added £680.

Sandra also recruited hardy souls to stand with collection tins in St James' Street on Saturday morning and brought in another £135.

Finally, Daphne and her Open House team made Christian Aid their beneficiary of the month and collected a further £120. A few weeks later Claire Gordon and Nigel Kinsman presided over "The Count" and were delighted to take more than £1,400 to the bank.

Our overall total of £2,126 was down on 2023 but still a thoroughly worthwhile effort. Many, many thanks to the tens of volunteers who helped and the hundreds who contributed.

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GREENER FUTURES

Nigel Kinsman

Greener Futures were pleased to complete the requirements for the ARocha/EcoChurch Silver Award on deadline day in January 2025. Since gaining the Bronze Award we have ...

(Worship) Held services relating to caring for God's earth, highlighted ways to do this in the Parish Magazine and encouraged more frequent prayers for the environment.

(Buildings) Switched to a green tariff, installed LED lights, provided rainwater collection butt.

(Land) Promoted & engaged in wildlife surveys, changed mowing regime for part of churchyard.

(Lifestyles) Written about ethical investments, food waste, (LOAF choices) Local, Organic, Animal-friendly and Fairtrade and promoted a personal carbon audit.

(Community & Global) Organised litter-picks, joint activities with TWiG, Rectory Toilet twinning and financially supported an overseas environmental charity "TreeAid".

Since the award we have continued to represent how Caring for Creation looks to us ...

- Working with Churchwardens to collect data for the Energy Footprint Tool (an analysis of the energy costs of each church in the Diocese).
- Encouraged participation in the RSPB Garden Bird Count.
- Encouraged participation in the Earth Hour when global supporters turn out their lights for an hour and the Rivers Trust/Earthwatch River Watch.
- Joined with TWiG in organising a Village Litter Pick (Sth Petherton & Over Stratton).
- Contributed articles to the Parish Mag on pollution of our waters and #No Mow May.

We have been delighted to welcome Trish Harper at our group meetings as she is co-leader of the Trees & Wildlife Group and known in our Church. Sadly, Roy Duffy has not yet felt able to re-join us and we wish him well over his health issues. Greener Futures remains an activist group and would still welcome additional parishioners keen to contribute.

The group could not have achieved many of the things we do without the active support of Daphne, Steve, Janet and the Magazine Editor. Thank you to them.

Ultimately, the Greener Futures group remains committed to supporting the PCC over their efforts to lead our churches to Net Zero by 2030 (now a formal commitment as of Jan 2025) and exploring and supporting us all in Caring for Creation through prayer, activities and lifestyle change.

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MOTHERS' UNION (South Petherton Branch)

Hazel Ricketts

Membership has remained at 17 as Pat Preston has joined though the Revd Wendy Mitchell has resigned. One member, Sheila Frost, has moved into a nursing home.

Meetings began with the AGM in January which was held in St Peter and St Paul Choir Vestry. This was followed in February by the Wave of Prayer, when we particularly remember our linked dioceses around the world, led by Ann Lovick. The Revd Tracey Hallet led a Quiet Afternoon in the Church, "Lenten Reflections", in March. Mandy Maggs spoke about "Shared Lives, a new way of caring" in April and in May Judy Bristow told us about her Training and Work as an Anna Chaplain. In June Judith Riley reported on the Diocesan AGM, held in Wells, which had included a presentation and discussion about the future of the MU in Bath & Wells. Barbara Summers hosted a Strawberries and Cream Tea in her garden in July, to which several visitors came. In September Daphne Furey, with contributions from Sue Harrison, enlightened us about "Open the Book". Andrew and Ellen Howard talked about the Christian Response to Eastern Europe and the Shoebox Appeal in October and in November we had a general discussion including future plans. Sue hosted the Christmas Party in December when the Revd Annie Gurner enrolled Pat Preston. Sue continues to play her guitar for our hymn and carol singing.

The Cake Sale in aid of the Make a Mothers' Day Appeal raised £151: Sue's Simnel Cake being blessed the Revd Tracey being an additional feature. The strawberry Tea raised £55 for the Summer of Hope Appeal and £425 was donated for the Worldwide Fund. Sales of MUe cards, etc raised £263.90, including £19.25 on Palm Sunday.

Diocesan and Deanery Events were attended by several members during the year. These were the meeting in Yeovil to discuss what the future held for the MU in Bath & Wells, the Diocesan AGM in Wells, the Blue Christmas Service at Holy Trinity, Yeovil, and 2 MUe Committee Meetings. Following a request for prayers for the MU Diary, three members sent suggestions.

Two Committee Meetings were held. Judith Riley continued as Secretary, Anne Brunton as Treasurer and Hazel Ricketts as Literature Representative. Ann Lovick continued to send an anniversary card to those baptised and a knitted teddy bear was presented to those baptised. In December six members attended a baptism in St Peter and St Paul and it is hoped to maintain a link with the family.

Jane Bedford's contribution can be seen on the South Petherton Stitching Project. Postage stamps are collected around the area by Gill Beveridge which raise funds for the MU. Individual members participate in the life and work of the church and the Branch appreciates the support of the clergy and congregation.

Following a diocesan-wide vote in November, it is expected that Bath & Wells members will join the SW Cluster of Dioceses in 2025.

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NO NAME GROUP

We've never formally settled on a name for this group, but somehow 'No Name Group' or simply 'NNG' is affectionally what it seems to be known by. What is it? It is a very informal men's group.

It's the inspiration of one Phil Andrews who is its driving force, and as he both seems to know almost everybody in South Petherton and is seemingly boundless in reaching out to all and sundry, he is its *de facto* leader. What's it about? Basically, finding excuses for an occasional meet-up and an amiable evening together …… somewhere along the line a glass of fine ale and/or acceptable wine might also be involved.

Here's a flavour of what 'an amiable evening' constitutes: Fred Rumsey speaking on his role as a curator at the Natural History Museum – a skittles evening - Alan Davies telling us about his experiences of being a steeplejack (working with Fred Dibnah) and also travelling the world as a pylon and telecommunications tower constructor – a guided tour of Sherborne Minster – a Christmas meal at the Ranch Café.

Now, mostly the participants are gentlemen of a certain age (some might even say 'old fogies' but recently we've joined by a 'young fogey' which is brilliant). Applications to join are not needed – just talk to Phil and he will add you to his circulation list.

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OPEN HOUSE 2024

Daphne Woodhouse

It does not seem possible that Open House was first opened in early 2017! A team came together to provide drinks and cakes along with a welcome to all. We hope that all members of our communities are happy to join us on the third Wednesday of every month and bring friends to share in the welcome.

Tea and coffee, (including decaf) or soft drinks, and home-made cakes (we try to include 'free from' offerings), and when we can, savouries like sausage rolls or cheese scones, are supplied by the volunteers in a happy, friendly and beautiful setting. There is no charge made for refreshments, but each month donations are welcomed for our 'Charity of the Month'.

When weather (and availability of staff to accompany residents) permits, a party of residents of Burnworthy will join us. Many enjoy the opportunity to 'get out' and socialise and love our beautiful church.

Since September 2022 we have provided a safe and welcoming space for local carers (with their 'carees' if they wish) to meet. Cath Holloway of Somerset Carers attends and sometimes arranges guest speakers on issues of particular concern for carers, sometimes it is just time for relaxation and shared chat.

We try to support a range of charities and the donations in 2024 were as follows:

Transform Trade £100.45
Crisis x2 £213.34
Practical Action £75.80
Barnabas Aid £124.00
Christian Aid £120.00
Safer Families £127.40
St Margaret's Hospice £109.97
Anna Chaplaincy £111.00
CR2EE (shoeboxes) £131.13

Church Homeless Charity £92.90
Royal British Legion £93.30

We look forward to welcoming more visitors, and if anyone is a keen baker and able to supply cakes/biscuits, or just to help serving or providing welcoming chat we would be delighted for you to join us.

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PARISH MAGAZINE

Steve Harrison

With a regular circulation to over 300 subscribers, our parish magazine continues to be a significant part of our outreach and communication strategy. However, it is expensive to produce – I'm referring here not just to the printing costs, but to those costs that are less obvious: the cost of the time our Benefice Administrator has to give to collecting and assembling content, and the opportunity cost of not having some of her time for directly supporting the work of the Rector.

The income we get from our advertisers is very helpful (so a big 'thank you' to them – and a plea to you to use their services from time to time). So is the income we get from subscribers ('thank you' too for supporting it). Nevertheless, we really do need to look towards making up a volunteer team to take on the production work involved: someone to source content from contributors - someone to edit/format it on to the page – and an additional someone to proofread and polish up the presentation as needed. Could you help out? By building a team, we can keep the size of the job reasonable for all concerned.

Finally, a quick shout-out for the backroom effort: those who give us content, Anne Perez who brings it together, the proof-readers, the collators who organise the magazines into sets for distribution, and the delivery team who get them out to subscribers ..... it only works because of you!

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PCC BUSINESS

Janet Strugnell (PCC Secretary)

This was another busy year which started with work on initiatives inspired by the Rector as well as the ever-present issues of maintaining 3 church buildings and administering the 3 parishes correctly. However, in August, with the resignation of the Rector, much attention went onto the smooth running of the benefice without an incumbent and arrangements for the recruitment of a new rector.

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replacement of the failing lighting. The organ at South Petherton is due for its 25 year maintenance in 2025, and also the Quinquennial Inspection (a survey of the structure of the building conducted every 5 years). Damp issues at St Michael's have necessitated work. We offer support to the East Lambrook Schoolroom Committee in their efforts to update the building to create a safe and useful space for the church and community,

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PILGRIMAGE WALKS

Claire Gordon

Last year, a small group of us (Nigel Kinsman, Sarah Milrose and myself) came together to organise some pilgrimage walks within the parish.

They started last June with a walk through Stoodham and across the fields to East Lambrook and then alongside the River Parrett. We stopped at the Ranch for delicious refreshments. We then went through the Orchard and up over Cripple Hill to Joyler's Mill and back into the village past the hospital. On the way we stopped to admire the view, share some thoughts and readings and rejoice in God's glorious creation. About a dozen people shared fellowship on the walk.

Our second walk in October began in Lopen. We walked South West, crossed Summer Lane on the way to Mill Farm before turning North to Meade Farm and then onto the Seavington Community Cafe where we were joined by some other people, not able to manage the walk. After some lovely refreshments we returned via St Michael's Churchyard and across the fields to Lopen.

Our third walk, in April 2025 focused on spring with a series of meditations on different meanings of the word spring. We walked from Compton Durville to the beautiful National Trust property at Barrington Hall where we stopped for refreshments at the tea rooms.

We then enjoyed some tranquillity at Cowleaze Meadow as we came back via Shepton Beauchamp to Compton Durville. The walk began and ended with a prayer and along the way several people shared thoughts and poems. The numbers had increased to 18 people for this walk including a lady from the Nottingham area who was on holiday in the area. It was good to see people from several local churches there as the walks are open to everyone.

We feel the walks have been a blessing to those who have joined them, and we intend to continue this "church without walls" initiative. Our intention is to walk in Spring, Summer and Autumn, enjoying God's creation in different seasons. The next walk is planned for Thursday 17th July.

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3rd@3 Fran Cripps

Our entry in the parish profile:

There is also a group of young families and others who use the church on the 3rd Sunday monthly for informal worship, food and family time; led by participants, seeking to follow where the Holy Spirit leads, learning and experiencing together, exploring questions such as 'What does whole-family discipleship look like?' and 'How do we all practice the gifts of the Spirit in whole-family corporate worship?'.

I offer some background and our story so far:

3rd@3 started in March 2024, meeting on the 3rd Sunday of the month at 3pm in St Peter and St Paul's church. It was born out of a conversation between families, individuals and Rev Tracey, and brought together several ideas, namely the desire to explore intergenerational worship, what "following Jesus" looks like as a family unit, and a stirring from the Holy Spirit to make space for what God appeared to be springing up.

When we began, we started with craft, and open contemporary worship with the desire to make space for God, then we shared a meal together. We had 4-5 families and a few individuals coming along.

In August 2024, some of us went to a Christian Conference and discovered a model of intergenerational worship run by Worship for Everyone. We recognised that this was a model that we could adapt to our gathering.

So now our meet-ups usually involve sung worship, sharing and discussion around a biblical passage or topic (we are working our way through the "I am…" sayings of Jesus in John) and prayer/response activity. Then we share a meal together. The gatherings are run and led by everyone who comes along, It's a bit like a small group for families, meeting in the church to enjoy the greater space it offers.

We welcome all who would like to come and engage with this expression of worship, and have been joined by several visitors who have come into the church to look around on a Sunday afternoon and stayed to join in.

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Parochial Church Council of South Petherton with the Seavingtons and the Lambrooks

Charity Registration No 1128940

Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31st December 2024

Receipts & Payments Account

The Accounts are prepared on a Receipts and Payments basis in accordance with Church Accounting Regulations. They have been independently examined. The Examiner's report and financial statements are attached.

For the current account the total receipts on the unrestricted and designated funds were £132,295, with £13,052 for restricted funds during 2024. The total amounted to £145,347, which was made up of a increase of £11,818 in general funds and designated funds and a decrease of £16,295 in restricted funds during 2024.

On the current account the total expenditure amounted to £124,313 from unrestricted and designated funds and a balance of £36,294 from restricted funds during 2024. The positive figure for the restricted fund is due to the boiler being paid for in 2023 and The Friends of South Petherton Church kindly paying for this work in 2024. The total amounted to £88,019, which was made up of a increase in spending of £5,189 from general funds during 2024.

For the current account and investment account our total reserves for year end were £157,982, a increase of £58,836 on 2023. Planned giving increased by £763 on 2023.

The contribution towards the Diocesan Common Fund was £74,543, an increase of £9,723 on 2023. Our Parish Share was paid on time and in full this year.

Free Reserves

The free reserves of the PCC are those funds that are freely available to be spent in pursuing the charitable objectives. The Free Reserves of the PCC, at the financial year end were: -

	2024	**2023**
Total Reserves at 31 December	£157,982	£99,146
Less restricted funds	£39,405	(£33,173*)
Free Reserves	**£118,577**	**£65,973**

*The general fund lent the boiler restricted fund monies pending repayment from the Friends of St Peter and St Paul's and VAT reclaim.

Balances of Accounts in the bank, and in hand, as at 31 December 2024 were:

Nat West Bank	£120,939	Actual	£120,939
CCLA Deposit Account (General Fund)	£727		£727
CCLA Deposit Account (Restricted Fund)	£0.28		£0.28
CCLA Deposit Account (Memorial Fund)	£36,316		£36,316
TOTAL	**£157,982**	**Actual**	**£157,982**

Restricted Funds

Restricted funds can only be used for the purpose for which they were given:

Restricted Fund	Balance B/fwd £	Income £	Expenditure £	Balance C/fwd £
Zambian Priests	0	502	-502	0
Hymn Book Fund	21	0	0	21
Organ Fund	0	50	0	50
East Lambrook Schoolroom	4,501	5,616	-262	9,855
Yurt Fund	5,410	122	-207	5,325
Legacy Bellringers Education	23,262	0	-1,200	22,062
Children's Youth Worker	85	0	-39	46
Friends of SP Church	0	28.71	-28.71	0
Boiler Fund	(44,832)	45,282	-450	0

Reserve Policy

Under Charity Commission rules, we are required to have a policy regarding the amount of funds we hold in our accounts at any one time. It is suggested that this should be sufficient to cover 3-6 months of operation. The PCC reserves policy states that our bank account should always contain at least 4 months' worth of expenditure.

Regular Giving

The Gift Aid has been claimed quarterly this year. A special thanks to Julia Lear for undertaking this onerous work.

We have received from HMRC a total of £14,657 this year, compared with £12,708 in 2023.

If you give on a regular basis and pay enough tax to cover the gift and have not already signed a Gift Aid Form please do so or put the money in a Yellow Gift Aid envelope and complete the outside. More and more people are unable to Gift Aid their donations, as they do not pay enough tax to cover them. If you no longer pay tax and have signed a Gift Aid Form please let Julia Lear our Gift Aid Secretary know.

Fund Raising

The total raised for unrestricted and designated funds this year amounted to a splendid £18,014 (2023 £17,827). Well done the fundraising team and everybody that supported it. Thanks are due especially to Phil Andrews for raising £5,462 from scrap metal sales.

Seavingtons.

In late autumn 2023 the west gable of St Michael's was re-pointed and the bell tower louvres were replaced. This work by local craftsman will help preserve the beautiful church for future generations. We thank St Michael's Trust for offering to repay this considerable cost to the PCC and payments have started to arrive in 2025.

East Lambrook Schoolrooms

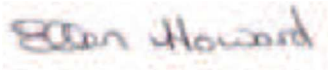
A considerable amount of work took place on the Schoolrooms in 2023 which involved a large amount of fundraising and applying successfully for grants. The fundraising and applying for grants continued in 2024 resulting in an income of £5,616 and an expenditure of £262. With thanks to everybody involved.

St Peter and St Paul's

During 2023 the church was cold at times due to boiler problems. A lot of hard work went into planning and obtaining a faculty for the new boiler which was installed towards the end of the year and this year the church has been warm again. The ceiling lights in St Peter and St Paul's started to fail at the start of the year. Having obtained a recommendation from the Diocese it was decided to remove the existing flood lights from the church interior and replace with 30 x LED RGB Wi-Fi controlled flood lights in colour black. We thank the Friends of St Peter and St Paul's for funding these projects.

Conclusion

I would like to thank Crispin Raikes for his help as Assistant Treasurer and Julia Lear for her diligent work as Gift Aid Secretary. Also I thank Nic Laycock for his help throughout the year and for agreeing to be our Independent Examiner and his ongoing advice on implementing much needed protocols and procedures.



Ellen Howard

Hon Treasurer

	Notes	General Fund	Designated Fund	Restricted Fund	**2024**	2023
Receipts		£	£	£	**£**	£
Donations and Legacies						
Planned Giving		52,763	-	-	52,763	*51,980*
Collections, Donations & Other Giving		17,502	-	8,625	26,127	*43,643*
Income Tax Recovered		14,657	-	-	14.657	*12,708*
Legacies		-	12,055	-	12,055	-
Other Trading Activities						
Magazine/Bookstall sales/Hall Lettings etc		7,399	-	-	7,399	*7,464*
Income from other Properties		-	-	-	-	-
Annual Fete/Events		12,402	5,612	4,427	22,441	*21,127*
Receipts from Investments						
Interest & Dividends		2,352	1,830-	-	4,182	*2,505*
Receipts from Charitable Activities						
Parochial Fees		5,451	-	-	5,451	*5,092*
Other Receipts						
Insurance Claims		-	-	-	-	-
Sale proceeds from fixed assets		-	-	-	-	-
Loans received		-	-	-	-	-
Other		272	-	-	272	*4,649*
Total Receipts		**112,798**	**19,497**	**13,052**	**145,347**	***150,168***
Payments						
Charitable Activities						
Donations and Grants to Charities		-	-	-	-	*(2,898)*
Mission & Evangelism		(61)	-	-	(61)	*(3,598)*
Parish Share		(74,543)	-	-	(74,543)	*(64,820)*
Clergy Expenses		(44)	-	-	(44)	*(240)*
Church Running Expenses		(23,473)	-	(286)	(23,759)	*(13,916)*
Church Maintenance		(4,974)	-	-	(4,974)	*(3,037)*
Cost of raising funds		(3,916)	-	(98)	(4,014)	*(3,976)*
Support Costs		(2,717)	-	633	(2,084)	*(2,442)*
Administration costs (inc. staff costs)		(9,687)	-	-	(9,687)	*(10,048)*
Governance Costs		-	-	-	-	-
Other		(8,758)	-	(1,204)	(9,962)	*(6,361)*
Major Expenditure						
Repairs to church buildings		3,860	-	37,169	41,029	*(53,848)*
Repairs to other property		-	-	80	80	*(38,596)*
Capital purchases/additions		-	-	-	-	-
Loan Repayments		-	-	-	-	-
Total Payments		**(124,313)**	**-**	**36,294**	**(88,019)**	***(203,780)***
Surplus/(Deficit) of Receipts over Payments		**(11,515)**	**19,497**	**49,346**	**57,328**	***(53,612)***
Transfers between funds		-	-	-	-	-
		(11,515)	19,497	49,346	57,328	*(53,612)*
Cash at bank and in hand at 1 Jan (Actual Balance)		74,020	-	(10,049)	63,971	*117,583*
Cash at bank and in hand at 31 Dec (Actual Balance)		62.505	19,497	32,297	121,299	*63,971*

Parochial Fees Note

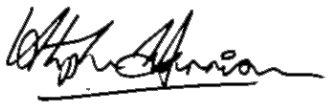
The PCC received parochial fees as detailed below during the year. Part is made up of statutory fees due to the PCC or the DBF, as prepared by the Archbishops' Council under the Ecclesiastical Fees Measure 1986. The balance relates to charges as fixed by the PCC, for extras such as bells, flowers and special heating, or paid to visiting ministers, Readers or Non-Stipendiary Ministers as set out in the DBF's Parochial Fees policy.

Of these fees only the amount due to the PCC (statutory & non-statutory) is shown above as legally the amount due to the DBF and other ministers (as set out in the DBF policy) should not be treated as PCC income.

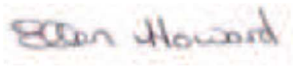
During the year, the PCC received parochial fees totalling	£9,255.00	
Statutory Fees due to the PCC totalled	£3,702.00	
Statutory Fees due to the DBF totalled	£2,534.00	
Statutory Fees received on behalf of a third party	£1,562.00	
Non-Statutory Extras due to the PCC totalled	£1,749.00	
Non-Statutory Extras due to a third party totalled	£0.00	
The PCC also received Deposits for the following year totalling	£0.00	
In total the PCC repaid the following Fees during the year		Balance owed at year-end (inc. in Creditors)
Payment to DBF of Statutory Fees	£2,077.00	*£457.00*
Payment to visiting ministers/Readers/NSMs	£471.00	
Payment to visiting ministers/Readers/NSMs	£0.00	
Payment to visiting ministers/Readers/NSMs (This excludes fees for Sunday Services)	£0.00	*£1,091.00*

Approved by the PCC on the 23rd September 2025

Signed on their behalf by



Steve Harrison (PCC Vice Chairman)



Ellen Howard (PCC Treasurer)

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Section A Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/ members of South Petherton with the Seavingtons + Lambrooks PCC

On accounts for the year ended 31 December 2024 **Charity no (if any)** 1128940

Set out on pages 1-2 (Separate informal letter to PCC) (please refer to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Charities Act") and that an independent examination is needed. [The charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 and I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of [named body]]. *Delete* [ ] *if not applicable.*

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act,
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act, and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention

Basis of independent examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with 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 trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

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

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

Signed:	JNC Laycock	**Date:**	22/9/25
Name:	NIC LAYCOCK		
Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any):	N/A		
Address:	7 BISHOPSTON MONTACUTE TA15 6UU		

Section B Disclosure

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

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Section A Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/ members of	South Petherton with the Seavingtons + Lambrooks PCC		
On accounts for the year ended	31 December 2024	**Charity no (if any)**	1128940
Set out on pages	1-2 (Separate informal letter to PCC)		

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

Signed:	JNC Laycock	**Date:**	22/9/25
Name:	NIC LAYCOCK		
Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any):	N/A		
Address:	7 BISHOPSTON MONTACUTE TA15 6UU		

Section B Disclosure

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

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SOUTH PETHERTON WITH

England & Wales - Charity number 1128940

Accounts

The United Benefice of South Petherton with the Seavingtons and the Lambrooks

Charity Registration No 1128940

Annual Report of the Parochial Church Council

For the year ended 31st December 2023

The Benefice of South Petherton with the Seavingtons
and the Lambrooks

Key Information

Rector

Reverend Tracey Hallett
The Rectory,
Hele Lane,
South Petherton,
Somerset. TA13 5DY

Acting PCC Treasurer for year ending 2023

Mrs Ellen Howard
Westholme
North Street
Martock TA12 6DH

Independent Examiner of Accounts:

Mr Nic Laycock
7, Bishopton
Montacute TA15 6UU

Correspondence Address:

The Rectory,
Hele Lane,
South Petherton,
Somerset. TA13 5DY

Bankers:

National Westminster Bank Plc

The Parochial Church Council

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) of the United Benefice of South Petherton with the Seavingtons and the Lambrooks in the Diocese of Bath and Wells has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent in promoting throughout the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.

The PCC is a charity registered with the Charity Commission (no.1128940).

It also has maintenance responsibilities for the church of St Peter and St Paul's in South Petherton; the church and churchyard of St Michael's in Seavington St Michael; the church and churchyard of St James's in East Lambrook and the schoolroom; and the churchyard at Seavington St Mary's (the church was declared redundant in 1984 and vested with the Churches Conservation Trust).

The annual accounts of the PCC are subject to independent examination by a suitably qualified person. They are published separately to this report.

Administration

The Benefice office serves all three Churches and is located at The Rectory Hele Lane South Petherton TA13 5DY. Telephone 01460 240377 Email: Office@southpethertonbenefice.org

Members of the PCC

Members are either ex-officio or elected Deanery Synod representatives with a term of three years, or lay representatives with a term of three years elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM), in accordance with the Church Representation rules and after due notice. The PCC works in collaboration with several committees and informal groups within the Benefice.

The following served as members of the PCC during 2023:

Rector: Reverend Tracey Hallett (Ex-officio)

Churchwardens: Mark Stainer (St James's), Manda Jaggers and Anne Shaw (St Michael's), Daphne Woodhouse and Steve Harrison (St Peter and St Paul's)

Assistant Churchwarden: Sandra Robinson (St Peter and St Paul's)

Deanery Synod Representatives: Phil Andrews (2026)

Elected Members: Chris Sharp (2025), Jane Ward (2025), Carol Talbot (2025), Alastair Fyfe (2024), Caroline Ireland-Jones (2024), Janet Strugnell (2024).
(APCM at which members complete their term of office and may see re-election)

Co-opted Members: Shan Weston (Headteacher of the South Petherton C of E.VA Infants and Preschool)

Safeguarding Officer: Amanda Jaggers

Other Key Information

Gift Aid Secretary: Julia Lear, Toad Hall, 14 St Michael's Gardens, South Petherton TA13 5BD

Benefice Administrator: Anne Perez, Benefice Office (office@southpethertonbenefice.org).

Ministry Team:

The Benefice is well supported by the Churchwardens and Assistant Church Warden plus a dedicated group of Retired Priests who have permission to officiate (PTO's). With thanks to the PTO's: Rev Simon Baker, Rev Annie Gurner, Rev Mark Jackson, Rev D Fyfe, Rev Laurence Meering, and Rev Ian Gibson during 2023 this Benefice offered a full and diverse pattern of worship. The Ministry group meet to plan service rotas, to review our ministry as a team and to provide mutual support.

Standing Committee:

The Standing Committee has power to transact the business of the PCC between its meetings, subject to directions given by the Council. (This is the only committee required by law). It normally consists of the Rector, the churchwardens, the Treasurer, the Secretary and the vice-chair of the PCC.

Church Membership:

It was declared on the 2023 Parish update form that there were 112 regular worshippers in the Benefice. This figure includes 13 new regular worshippers and It is the figure of 112 that the Diocese use to calculate the fees charged for our4 Parish Share

Electoral Roll:

The Electoral Roll stands at 124.

If you would like to become an elected member of the PCC, you are required to be on the Church Electoral Roll for a minimum of six months before nomination. Please note that by being on the Electoral Roll it does not impact the Parish Share calculations.

Charitable Giving Committee:

Alastair Fyfe continues to chair this group and the policy for making grants and donations, as a proportion of our regular income, is reviewed annually in September. Members of the congregations are encouraged to suggest to the Charitable Giving Committee suitable charitable organisations that we might support. The Benefice also give on a regular basis to various charities which are supported through the Missional work of Open House and other specific fundraising events such as Lent Lunches and Christian Aid week and specifically dedicated to the support of Christian Aid.

Reserves policy:

The PCC reserves policy states that our bank account should always contain at least 4 months' worth of expenditure.

Fundraising:

Daphne Woodhouse has continued to coordinate most fundraising activities that take place at St Peter and St Paul's. Currently there is no formal fundraising committee, but Daphne seeks support from many other willing volunteers to ensure fundraising stays high on the agenda. These events make a huge difference to our balance sheet and therefore to the extent to which we can invest in the activities of which we reach out into our communities. Fundraising opportunities are essential to

support the Benefice in paying the Common Fund / Parish Share and other endless bills, as well as, to resource the work of God's mission. We are seeking recruit some new members to join the fundraising group and we welcome all of you to join in and share a fresh approach and any ideas for new activities.

Church Wardens and our Many Volunteers:

During 2023, it has been increasingly evident that our Churchwardens are very committed to God's call placed upon them and they each fulfil their duties with willingness and commitment. We are aware that there are heavy demands being placed on our Church Wardens and their support in the day to day running and the strategic vision of the Benefice is integral to how we function as the whole body of Christ. We are very grateful to each of our volunteers, there are many of you who play such a significant role in the work of the church. For all that you do in playing your part whether it be clock winding, flag hanging, cleaning, flower arranging, chalice bearing, intercessions, reading, lay leadership, singing, there are too many roles to list but we pray that God will continue to bless you all and thank you all for who you are in Christ and all that you do for the Church and this Benefice!

At the APCM in 2022, we acknowledged that we had a need to continue with developing pastoral care within the Benefice and as such one of the greatest achievements of 2023 has been the appointment of an Anna Chaplain – Judy Bristow. Judy embraced the invitation to discern a call to chaplaincy for the elderly and expediently completed all of her training and in June 2023 was commissioned by Reverend Mike Haslam as Anna Chaplain for the Benefice. Judy visits and support the elderly residents at Burnworthy House and ministers alongside Daphne Woodhouse in the Benefice to meet the spiritual and pastoral needs of those who are unable to get to Church. It is wonderful to see how the Holy Spirit has been at work, Judy has been well equipped for this ministry and our Elderly community are being well cared for under this new and exciting mission.

Community Volunteer and Lay Pioneer Ministry. In 2022 we welcomed Sam Lloyd to the team as a volunteer community worker and through Sam's gift of embracing the people who do not normally attend Church, especially the school parents who join us for Thursday morning School assembly. Through Sam's ministry, we have seen an increase in new families engaging with Church both in the building and with community activities (Church Without Walls), welly wonderers, story time and all sorts of seasonal and missional activities that take please in the Nur-Chur Yurt, in our Church buildings and at our community green spaces too. As a team we were invited to celebrate our contribution to Pioneer ministry as Sam expressed her lay pioneer ministry through poetry and shared our collaborative experiences as an inspiration to others at the Diocese Celebration of Lay Ministry held at St James's Church in Taunton. Equally, we are now able to evidence the need for a paid Children and Families worker that would further enable the Benefice to reach out into its community and support the children and young people in their journeys of discipleship.

Safeguarding:

Our benefice is committed to and will champion the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults. Everyone who meets us, comes to us, or works with us should feel safe and cared for irrespective of their social background, culture, their abilities, religious belief or any other factor. It is the responsibility of all of us, individually as well as collectively, to make these aspirations real, to look out for one another and to pass on any concerns.

As required by the Church of England, we have a designated safeguarding officer (Manda Jaggers) and an approved policy to guide our actions. Manda's role is to support, advise and deal with specific issues for which she has been trained.

The PCC is responsible for ensuring the Benefice has a safeguarding policy which is agreed, understood and enacted. We have approved our own Safeguarding Policy and will keep it under review both to keep it in line with current expectations and also to customise it to meet our own needs. The PCC routinely receives reports to enable us to track the safe recruitment of volunteers where their roles bring them into contact with children and/or vulnerable adults in their 'official'

capacity. ‘Safe recruiting’ involves a DBS check, the uptake of references, a clear role description, an induction interview and an assessment of training needs.

We are very grateful to Manda for her dedication and commitment to safeguarding.

For more information on Safeguarding please email Manda: safeguarding@southpethertonbenefice.org.

South Petherton Church of England Voluntary Aided Infants School and Pre-School:

The majority of governors of the school (ie the foundation governors) are nominated for appointment through the PCC. Our Foundation governors in 2023 were Kirsten Carp, Sue Harrison, Richard Killen, Rev Tracey Hallett (ex-officio and Fiona Gane. We encourage anyone interested in becoming Foundation Governor to contact Shan Weston (Head Teacher): sweston@southpethertoncofeinfants.co.uk for further information.

Parish Magazine

Articles for inclusion should be sent to office@southpethertonbenfice.org by around the 17th of each month (earlier in February). We do our best to ensure that articles are printed as they are written but reserve the right to edit copy which should be sent to office@southpethertonbenfice.org by around the 12th of each month (earlier in February). We do our best to ensure that articles are printed as they are written but reserve the right to edit copy where necessary. Julia Lear manages the advertising in the magazine. We are grateful to our advertisers whose support enables us to keep our costs to readers down – we do ask our readers to support our advertisers in return.

South Petherton Mothers Union Branch

An active branch of the Mothers’ Union meets monthly and is coordinated by Judith Riley please see attached report and for more information about Mothers’ Union please contact Judith on: judithriley939@btinternet.com.

APCM REPORTS FOR 2023/24

We have invited all who are involved in the life of our Benefice to contribute to the APCM and we do hope that you will take the time to enjoy their attached reports.

The Rector's annual report for APCM reflecting 2023

Our benefice aspires to be:
A growing, learning, Christian family committed to serving God and the community.

As I reflect on all that has been achieved this year, it is hard to know where to begin, there have been many highlights, achievements, and significant moments, as we also work towards overcoming challenges. It's clear to see God at work in this Benefice.

We have continued to bring a fresh perspective to our worship by providing a diverse pattern of services which include us being intentionally intergenerational. There are two permeant Café Churches happening with the Benefice and two-family services a month. We have found that by taking an intentionally intergenerational approach to café Church and family services, it has bought a fresh perspective to our worship and enabled us to reach out into the community with inclusivity and welcome. We have also introduced monthly Celtic worship as a reflective and contemplative service. The service review held across the Benefice during Lent revealed that the new pattern of services had been generally well received and suggestions made have been acted upon; with the idea of re-introducing seasonal Evensong at St Peter and St Paul's and St Michael's for the Patronal Festival.

This year St Peter and St Paul's entered South Petherton Carnival with the most amazing Noah's Ark entry. It was wonderful to partner with South Petherton Infants School as we illustrated our vision of being Church without Walls, carrying Noah's Ark on a very warm summer's evening was a real testament and witness to our faith. We are doing very well at encouraging the community to recognise how the Church shows God's love in action.

We are continuing to help each other grow spiritually through sharing Bible Study and fellowship with each other. Two new Bible studies developed in late 2022 / early 2023. The Tuesday evening Bible study group is now being lay led and Tuesday daytime study is led by Reverend Annie Gurner. During Lent we offered the Church of England Living in Love and Faith course again to encourage the Benefice in a greater theological understanding of diversity and in April the PCC voted in agreement for Reverend Tracey to be able to officiate a blessing for same sex couples in the Prayers of Blessings for those who are Living in Love and Faith. The Benefice now hosts a Foodshare / Food Pantry in partnership with Liz Baker and South Petherton Parish Council to support her in providing food to those in need. The Foodshare is available in St Peter and St Paul's during Church opening hours and has a very steady foot fall of people using it. This is an excellent example of Church being at the heart of the village, pro-actively reaching out to our communities. We also store second-hand school uniforms and so parents and carers can access uniform for their children as and when needed.

I have been delighted to see the relationship between The Church and South Petherton Junior school flourish this year. It has been such a joy to be invited to teach the Children about the Christian faith and important sacraments such as Baptism and Holy Communion. The wonderful relationships built with the children and their families whilst they are at south Petherton Infant School really does help them with the transition into the Juniors, it is so valuable to be a constant connection between the two schools. The children recognise me and remember with fond memories all the learning from Infant School Assemblies. Relationships are positive and strong with those who are of faith and those of none, they can approach the Church and the vicar without any reservations – they see the Church as an integral part of its community and vice versa. One of the most significant achievements of 2023 is with thanks to the Friends of St Peter and St Paul's in

there very generous gift of finance to enable St Peter and St Paul's to replace the heating system. Roy Duffy kindly agreed to project manage and oversee the installation of the heating, the faculty process was rather daunting and our Church wardens also supported and assisted Roy in all that was needed. Thankyou Roy, you have enabled us all to have a warm glow! Much appreciated. We are hopeful that the list B application for the installation of Gigaclear internet will be approved before too long!

It really is exciting to see how our Benefice is growing, baptisms are frequent, during 2023 we baptised 7 children and married 6 couples, sadly we also conducted 33 funerals. I always feel very privileged to lead occasional offices and it is a wonderful pastoral calling to be able to journey with all who come to their local Churches in moments of great joy as well as the moments of sadness, loss and grief. Each of the three Churches in our Benefice provide a safe and sacred place of comfort to many who find themselves seeking solace.

When I consider the challenges we face, there is a shared concern over the difficult and demanding financial times which was provoked further by recent research conducted by the Diocese regarding changes in the common fund. I am grateful to Steve Harrison for helping us explore our position and respond with a well thought out response to the Diocese research. In our estimations we are expecting to receive a common fund bill that equates to an expectation that each person on the electoral roll will be able to contribute financial gifts of over £700 per year to the Diocese. Thus, it's evident to see we need to take great care over Benefice finance as we are experiencing the significant impact of the financial crisis.

However, I want to encourage us all to keep our eyes fixed on Jesus and remember that we are called to follow God in his mission. Let us not be disillusioned but keep hope and in the perfector of our Faith and together let us "Shine as a light in the world to the glory of God the Father". Thank you for your wonderful support and valuable contributions – I am grateful for all of you and will continue to keep us all covered in prayer.

Rev Tracey

Safeguarding Report

I took over as Parish Safeguarding Officer in Autumn 2023. I am very grateful to Sue Harrison for all the work she did whilst she was in the role.

On 19th November, the Benefice held a service for Safeguarding Sunday, which was well supported. It was gratifying to see so many people engaging in conversations about aspects of safeguarding. The Diocese is now supported by a Christian organisation Thirty-one Eight, who manage DBS checks. They are very supportive and proactive, making the process straightforward and efficient. Several people have asked where the name Thirty-one Eight comes from, it is from Proverbs 31, verse 8 "Speak out for all those who cannot speak, for the rights of all the destitute."

Rev Tracey and I have updated the Parish Dashboard and this will be done monthly. A Safeguarding Report is shared as part of every PCC meeting, safeguarding is everybody's business.

I have now been trained to deliver Basic and Foundation Level Safeguarding Training face to face, pleased contact me if you are required to complete this and prefer not to train online.

Thank you all for your support, I believe passionately that Safeguarding is not just a tick-box exercise, it is part of my current professional role and very relevant in our community, we often do not know what people are going through or what happens behind closed doors.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns about safeguarding, or to discuss your training or DBS requirements.

Amanda Jaggers

Report on the Proceedings of The PCC During 2023

2023 was a busy year for the PCC, with 9 full meetings in total. Much time was spent on managing the day-to-day work of the three churches in the Benefice, maintaining the buildings, ensuring safeguarding procedures are observed and that we comply with all regulations. There were several big issues:

PCC Sub-groups: In order to share out the workload, and enable more efficient use of PCC time, sub-groups, comprising PCC members and interested members of the congregation, have been set up to look after particular issues, reporting back to the PCC. The sub-groups include Greener Futures (looking into ways the Benefice can progress towards Net Zero), Buildings (issues with all building concerns), Charitable Giving (advising on distribution of the annual charitable grants made by the PCC), Bell Ringers, Mission Action Group (organizing Café Church and helping outreach). The Fundraising Group folded during the year and new members and new ideas are needed to bolster our fundraising efforts. When time permits, it is hoped to get a Pastoral Care group going too. The Open the Book team started working in the Infant School.

New Worship Pattern: The new pattern of services was approved and put in place. A regular Celtic Worship service (5pm on 4th Sunday of the month at St Peter & St Paul's church) was introduced during the year, with the help of Rev. Jayne Hinds.

Finance: a perennial problem as Parish Share goes up and cost of living impacts income. Much discussion took place about paying our parish share. Fundraising is vital, and much time and effort goes into organizing events. A decision was made to adopt the Parish Giving Scheme, which uses a Diocesan scheme to reduce some of the administrative work for the Treasurer and Gift Aid Secretary arising out of regular giving by the congregations.

Replacement Boiler Project: Roy Duffy took on the role of Project Manager for this project following the complete failure of the boilers at St Peter & St Paul's. A faculty application was submitted and approved, a contractor found and appointed, and the new boilers were in operation in December. Grateful thanks to the Friends of South Petherton Church for their generous assistance with funding. This was a huge project and we were extremely grateful to get heat back into the church!

East Lambrook Schoolroom: Major works were required to repair the fabric of the building and update the interior to provide a building to meet the needs and comply with current access legislation. The East Lambrook Schoolroom Committee mounted a vigorous fundraising campaign, and aided by Daphne Woodhouse, obtained various grants which have enabled Phase 1 of the work to be completed.

Independent Examiner of Accounts: Nic Laycock has been appointed the new Independent Examiner and has been working with the new Treasurer, Ellen Howard, to ensure that all procedures are correctly followed. Many thanks to Ellen who has had a very busy first year in the role.

At the end of 2023 the following were members of the PCC:

Chair: Rev. Tracey Hallett

Churchwardens: Steve Harrison, Daphne Woodhouse, Amanda Jaggers, Anne Shaw, Mark Stainer

Deanery Reps: Phillip Andrews, Mandy Maggs

Elected members: Diana Baker, David Chapman, Roy Duffy, Alastair Fyfe, Caroline Ireland-Jones Susan Ogilvy, Crispin Raikes, Sandra Robinson, Chris Sharp, Janet Strugnell, Carol Talbot

Co-Opted (Ex-officio): Shan Weston (Headteacher, South Petherton Infant School)

Charitable Giving

The PCC acknowledges its Christian duty and obligation to provide financial support for the poor and needy. Every year, it allocates grants to charities and welfare organisations. For many years, the amount to be distributed was calculated as 10% of the regular in-come received in the previous financial year. This year, however, due to the serious financial situation in which the PCC found itself, the decision was taken to reduce the amount to be distributed to 5% of the regular income received. The figure will be reviewed on an annual basis.

The Charitable Giving Review Group is responsible to the PCC for proposing which charities and charitable organisations might be de-serving of financial support. Prior to its meeting, the Review Group had sought the views of members of the Parish, a few of whom responded with suggestions. The Review Group then presented its recommendations to the PCC.

As always, beneficiaries were selected across a broad spectrum, including the Church and Christian Societies, Hospitals and Medical units, the Third World, the Environment, Agriculture, local schools and the elderly.

At the PCC meeting in September 2023, the Review Group's recommendations were approved. A sum, totalling £2200 was allocated to 27 charities, societies and organisations. The full list of beneficiaries is attached.

The PCC is also committed to donate the sum of £1500 every year to the Luapula Diocese in Zambia, earmarked for the parishes of Katuta, Chibaya/Mulala and Museba. It also collected the sum of £554.71, which was collected by donations from our parishioners for coffee/biscuits during the year, after the Sunday Morning Services. This money is earmarked for 'the training of priests', and also goes to the Luapula Diocese in Zambia.

In 2023, the Charitable Giving Review Group consisted of the following:

Alastair Fyfe (Chairman), Judy Deegan (St Peter and St Paul's), Caroline Ireland-Jones (St James'), Philip Andrews (St Peter and St Paul's) and Christopher Lawrence (St Michael's).

Alastair Fyfe

CHARITABLE GIVING - 2023

Societies, The Church, Christian and the Diocese		
Bath and Wells Diocesan Association of Change Ringers	£30	
Church Mission Society	£100	
Friends of Wells Cathedral	£70	
Churches Conservation Trust	£50	
Church Homeless Trust	£100	
		£350
Farming and Agriculture		
Farming Community Network	£100	
		£100
International		
Barnabas Aid	£100	
Akamba Aid Fund	£50	
Tearfund	£100	
		£250
Climate		
Tree Aid	£100	
Water Aid	£50	
		£150

Welfare		
Somerset Supports Ukraine	£100	
Somerset Community Foundation (Cost of Living Crisis Appeal)	£200	
Alabare (Christian Care and Support)	£50	
Safe Families	£100	
Mothers' Union (Away from it all)	£50	
		£500
Armed Forces		
SSAFA – The Armed Forces Charity	£100	
		£100
Senior Citizens		
Burnworthy House Amenities Fund	£100	
South Petherton Community Shed	£50	
		£150
Youth, Children and Infants		
Children's Hospice (South West)	£100	
South Petherton Scouts Hardship Fund	£50	
South Petherton Pre and Infants School	£100	
		£250
Hospitals, Hospices and Medical Organisations		
St Margaret's Somerset Hospice	£100	
League of Friends, South Petherton Hospital	£50	
Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance	£50	
Yeovil, Sherborne and District Samaritans	£100	
International Justice Mission	£50	
		£350
GRAND TOTAL		**£2200**

Are We a Pioneering Benefice?

We all know now that our Rector Tracey is a Pioneering Priest and are delighted that her new perspective on 'Being Church' is enlivening both our worship and our work in our communities. So the question that follows for me is, does that make us a Pioneering Benefice?

What do I mean by Pioneering Benefice? At parish quiet days some members of the congregations, inspired by the emergence of new possibilities, have been discussing and praying about this, and some of us, me included, have been on study courses about pioneering. I have concluded that pioneering involves taking what we have – our faith in the knowledge that God loves us all, His love embraces us all and makes us a family – and finding ways of making that real for everyone. It does not mean casting aside everything we know and love, but new and sometimes challenging things can be added to what we do.

Church Without Walls is one description we have been applying to our new approach. We love our church buildings deeply, God has been worshipped faithfully in them across the centuries, and through our services and our church life together we find the spiritual strength and guidance for our Christian living. But we do not want to be walled in to our own safe community or for the walls to shut out those who are not part of it. We need to find ways to go out and be the body of Christ in our communities, demonstrating by our actions the love of God for everyone and this may draw in

people who we welcome to be part of our family. This may be in organised activities, of just by being beside someone in need.

Many of us have long participated in ventures in the community which are loving and giving, but perhaps we are not quick enough to give the credit to God for what we do. I include myself in this, I find it hard at times to do things 'in the name of Jesus'. I think though we would be surprised to find out just how much we all do if there were an audit of activity! So perhaps the seeds of pioneering were already there, just not acknowledged?

New ideas, activities and ways of worshipping have developed in the time Tracey has been with us, and we are seeing more families attending more services, and a generation of children who seem to feel at home in the church, which is a joy. With 3 lovely churches in the benefice we are able to offer a wide variety of worship services, from the traditional to the modern. We have added Café Church in Seavington and South Petherton to our regular pattern as well as a monthly Family Communion at St Peter & St Paul's. We have the Open the Book team who are assisting Tracey in her work of teaching the Bible to the schools. We have the monthly Open House coffee morning which offers cake and conversation to all comers, raises money for charity and now provides a venue for the local carer's group to meet. The Food Share larder is now in St Peter & St Paul's church. Bible studies, prayer groups and ways for families to come together to worship without formal liturgy are in place. Welly Wonderers summer holiday activities for families take place in the Rectory garden, and the Yurt offers a safe space for all. We are re-wilding parts of the churchyard in South Petherton and attempting to raise our eco status and awareness. We now have an Anna Chaplain. Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could appoint a Children and Families worker to assist our efforts with those in all sorts of need?

So, to answer my question, I would say yes, we are a pioneering Benefice, or at least taking steps along the pioneering path. But there is much more that can be done and it is open to all of us. Anyone who would like to know more, or who has any ideas (however small or simple) that bring the church closer to the community, please share.

Janet Strugnell

South Petherton Mothers' Union Branch

We began the year with 14 members and ended with 17, Jane Bedford having rejoined and two new members, Judy Bristow and Barbara Summers, being enrolled by the Revd Tracey Hallett at the December meeting.

Meetings began with the AGM in January and in February we learned about 'The Clewer Initiative and Hidden Voices' from the Revd Georgina Vye. The Quiet Day in March had to be cancelled due to the ill health of the Revd Wendy Mitchell. The Revd Annie Gurner spoke in April on 'Shepherding People and Animals' and in May Daphne Furey talked about her life – 'Daphne in her own words'. 'Men's Shed' was the subject in June and two of those involved enlightened us and brought examples of the work produced. We went to the Rectory Yurt for the July meeting when Lydia Munday told us about the 'Ilminster Food Bank'. We celebrated the Branch's 100th Anniversary on August 9th, Mary Sumner Day, with a service led by the Revd Tracey Hallett. Banners from the Deanery Branches were carried, Madeline Hellier, Diocesan President, gave the Address and cut the cake at the strawberry cream tea which was enjoyed by the many present. Chris Mahony, Diocesan Literature Representative, brought a wide selection of MU cards, gifts and literature. Liz Randall conducted a 'History Tour of St Peter & St Paul Church' in September and in October Judith Riley's subject was 'Praying with Russian Christians'. In November she asked us to 'Come to Kenya', and showed us items and photos of her time there. Sue Harrison kindly hosted our Christmas party in December. She also provides music for our hymns.

Fundraising included 'Make a Mother's Day', the work of Clewer in the Diocese, the Cake Stall on Mothering Sunday which raised £148, 'Summer of Hope', £50, 'AFIA', £50, and MU Worldwide

collection. We were pleased to support a family with a hamper and spending money on receipt of an Away From it All holiday.

The Diocesan Annual Meeting in April, held at Bagley, was attended by Daphne Furey and Hazel Ricketts when Bishop Michael Beasley gave the Address and the exhibition 'Souls of our Shoes' was on display. Hazel went to the Marketing Panel Meeting in February and the Coffee Morning in Wells in December. The purchase of MU cards, etc, has raised £269.50 which includes £16.65 on Mothering Sunday and Christmas cards, diaries, etc, £138.85.

Two Branch Committee Meetings were held. Unfortunately, the Revd Wendy Mitchell's poor health has prevented her from participation this year. Judith Riley continues as the Branch Secretary, Anne Brunton as Treasurer and Hazel as the Literature Rep. Ann Lovick sends Baptism Anniversary cards and knitted teddy bears are presented to those being baptised. Brenda Joynes has organised the Archives which are now kept in the Choir Vestry. Jane Bedford has worked the MU contribution to the Stitching project in South Petherton. Gill Beveridge collects postage stamps in the area which raise funds for the MU. Individual members continue to support the work of the Church. We are grateful to receive support from the Rector, the benefice clergy and congregation.

APCM Bell Ringing Report

I joined the PCC at the last APCM because I felt that our Bell Ringers should be represented on that forum. I had previously been Tower captain for 15 years and a member of the PCC at Hinton St George with Dinnington for 22 years. The move from the tower at Hinton with its six bells to here with but twelve bells was daunting, however everyone was very friendly in welcoming me to my new tower. Having settled in, I now find myself as Vice-Captain and one of the two ART qualified Ringing Tutors, with Rosemary Heard being our Tower Captain and the other Ringing Tutor.

Having 12 bells indicates that we need a lot of people to ring them. This time last year we had about 8 regular ringers but with holidays it meant that even ringing six on Sundays was a problem. We had to find new ringers and set about organizing for a Charnborough Ring at our Church for anyone who wanted to have a go at ringing, on a system rigged up in the church grounds. This happened in July last year but it rained, so we had to put the apparatus up in the church. The Charnborough Ring is to show those who want to have a go at ringing, how to do it. We also encouraged those who came and had rung before to ring in our tower, with the necessary teachers to support those who were a bit rusty. It was a successful event, and we gained several enquiries from local people interested in being taught to ring in our tower.

Since then, Rosemary and I have been teaching five absolute beginners and one person who had rung bells 30 years before. Unfortunately, one of the beginners, partner of the chap who had rung before moved away, leaving us with four beginners. Of those four, two are ringing regularly on Sunday mornings.

We now have enough ringers to regularly ring 8 bells on Sundays and look forward to ringing 10 and all 12 bells.

We have a lot of visiting ringers who come to ring peals on our bells because they are so good to ring, having been rehung in 1998, and because we have twelve bells, enabling more of their people to ring together. On average 2 or 3 visiting ringing bands come here to ring every month.

On 6th May 2023 five of us and one other rang a 1⁄4 Peal in celebration of the Coronation. For two of our ringers, it was their 2nd Coronation Peal.

We have a lot of visiting ringers who come to ring peals on our bells because they are so good to ring, having been rehung in 1998, and because we have twelve bells, enabling more of their people to ring together. On average 2 or 3 visiting ringing bands come here to ring every month.

On 6th May 2023 five of us and one other rang a ¼ Peal in celebration of the Coronation. For two of our ringers, it was their 2nd Coronation Peal.

We still need more people to join us and welcome people to this interesting form of exercise, very good for people who have spinal and back problems, a lot cheaper than going to the gym!

Please get in touch with Rosemary or me, if you or any of your friends are interested.

David W. Chapman
27th April 2024
Tel No: 01460 55426
Email: dwc271074@gmail.com

Contact details for Rosemary Heard (Tower Captain) are to be found in the Benefice Magazine and the TA13 Booklet.

South Petherton Foodshare - Sharing Hope

In October 2023 we received £2623 raised from the Co-op local community fund, and earlier this year Rev Tracey passed on £1000 from South Petherton Relief in Need for the Foodshare! Small charity guidance dictates we mustn't take in more than £5000 in cash donations in any one year, so I would welcome any suggestions of who to approach for funding later in the year. If anyone would like to make a personal donation please get in touch: for the bank details: foodsharesouthpeth@gmail.com

In December 2023 the Foodshare moved location to Saint Peter and Saint Paul's church! As you know, there is a lovely cupboard and some shelves where we're stocking long-life and ambient food. Donations are still being taken in the basket in Co-op. Getting food from Co-op to the church is a little more challenging than just carrying it across the road and I am very grateful for the help from Tracey and Annie and volunteers currently coming alongside to join the effort. The main challenge facing us is to keep up with the demand. I now get a decent order of food delivered on a weekly basis directly to the church. This is working well, although I would love to hear from anyone who could help take these deliveries on the weeks I cannot. We have also floated some ideas about hosting drop-in cafe sessions in the church to share fresh food waste, and to get back some of that contact with people who appreciated friendship, support and prayer.

We are grateful for the opportunities God has given us since I started the Foodshare 3 years ago, and excited about our strong finances, our growing team and the hope and vision we share! Our prayer is that our focus will continue to be on the people we meet, and that the love of Jesus will keep compelling us to stop for each one in need and share not just food, but also encouragement, wisdom, help and hugs.

If you would like to join the Foodshare team, please speak to Tracey or Liz, or email Liz: foodsharesouthpeth@gmail.com

Liz Baker & the Foodshare Team

SP Infant School and Pre-School

The School and Pre-school links with the Church remain firmly part of its bedrock. Weekly Services with children, staff, governors and parents/friends of the School are held at St Peter & St Paul's on a Thursday morning. It's a joy to see the children's ease with being in Church and their engagement with the Service; in addition, the Service (and coffee and time together afterwards) has become a significant part of our outreach to parents. Do remember that the Service is not exclusive to the School's children and parents – you can come too.

There is always something special about the School's Nativity Performances; this year the School performed 'Whoops a Daisy Angel' on a stage kindly provided by the South Petherton Combined Arts Choir and with the addition of an acoustic system to enhance the performance, the children could be both seen and heard in all their glory.

You may have heard about the School's special link with Frogmary Green Farm! The initiative and outdoor learning opportunities have really developed. Our children have been exploring everything 'The Shed' has to offer from 'real life bear hunts', minibeast hunts, singing songs around the campfire and learning the basic rules of safe Forest School provision. We have been so lucky to benefit from access to The SHED facility. This provides our children with an additional element to school life and a sense of connection with local nature.

Despite a very short Spring Term we have managed to relish so many learning opportunities. To mention just a few; Safer Internet Day, World Book Day and we finished the Spring Term with our traditional Easter Bonnet Parade enjoyed by the school community.

World Book Day took place on Thursday 7th March and we were able to enjoy the amazing costumes of the children's favourite story characters.

Our Easter Bonnet Parade was yet another massive success. The Church was full to bursting at the Family Easter Service where each Class performed a range of Easter songs for all to enjoy. Due to the heavy downpour, we were unable to get outside, however, we were delighted to parade around the Church for the community to enjoy the colourful display of Spring Time flowers and interestingly designed bonnets.

We continue to strengthen the school's link with Akamba in Africa with a more recent visit to the school from Dr Buckle who presented a special assembly to our Year 1 and Year 2 children. This provided all with a wider perspective on the world and a chance to reflect on how lucky we are with the life we have here in Somerset.

We would like to extend our gratitude to the Church, being able to use it for events such as the Christmas Fayre, Easter Bingo and Ascension Day; all further cements the close links between the school community and the Church.

We continue to be blessed by the commitment of our Foundation Governors and Friends of the School, whose hard work and commitment to the School and Pre-School help aid and secure the strategic direction in changing educational times. If you are interested in joining our dedicated team of Governors or becoming a Friend of the School and Pre-School please don't hesitate to contact the School directly on 01460 240750.

APCM Report from St. James's Church

The first months of the year are usually the quiet period at St. James's, though with an improvement in weather there had been a steady increase in attendance for services.

The Coffee morning in the Schoolroom was moved from Wednesday to the first Tuesday in the month and this seemed to be a popular move with many more villagers turning up for coffee, tea and a good selection of homemade cake.

As we moved into Lent the church was stripped of flowers and decoration. Each Wednesday evening during Lent we had our Compline service, this was preceded by a half hour of quiet prayer and reflection. On Palm Sunday we had a special service of Holy Communion and on Good Friday the Good Friday Liturgy at St. James's and a Messy Easter event in the Schoolroom.

The Good Friday liturgy with Canon Ian Gibson was very well attended and all agreed it was a particularly thoughtful and moving service. In the Schoolroom we had our first Messy Easter. Here the Rev. Tracey had a line up of activities for children, concluding with an egg hunt followed by soup for all. About 12 families turned up, which was a very good start to what was a new event.

Finally Easter Day we had a special Holy Communion service which again was very well attended.

‘Thank you for being open. I needed time, tranquillity and sanctuary. You gave me just what I needed and I will be back' The comment above had been written in the visitors book at St. James’s. I often call into the church and find someone quietly sitting in the pews, and a walker with her dog told me she walks all the way from Coat, as she finds the church so calm and peaceful and uses that time to ‘recharge her batteries’. This highlights the need for churches to be open and accessible so it can be used by the whole community when they need it.

On 23rd July we celebrated our Patronal Festival, which included an interesting sermon on St. James by the Rev Tracey Hallett. Several members of the congregation brought a selection of food and drink for sharing after the service. We used to celebrate in the Schoolroom, then during Covid we had a non-sharing picnic in the cemetery. Since then we have gathered around the font by the main door of the church, which makes a very pleasant space with the door open and the area outside bathed in sunshine.

We had a well filled church for The Harvest Festival on 15th October. We were joined by members of the United Reform Church, Mid Lambrook after we joined them for their Harvest Festival a couple of weeks before. Following the service we sat down together in the Schoolroom for a supper of Cheese, bread and cider, benefiting greatly from the newly installed double glazing and new heaters which everyone agreed were very effective and this being an opportunity how best to operate them.

There was a good selection of harvest produce for the festival which was divided between St. Peter & St. Paul’s for The Lord’s Larder and the fresh produce to Burnworthy care home, who were delighted with the offering.

With the approach of the autumn leaf fall it had been important to keep the leaves from settling too long and killing the grass underneath as this caused problems the previous year with the slope up to the cemetery gates. Also, with the seemingly endless rain it had been doubly important to keep all the drainage gullies clear around the church, and this included the guttering.

The highlight this Christmas was the Candlelit Carol Service on Christmas Eve. The Rev Tracey introduced a new line up of readings which freshened up this popular service though its familiar format was maintained. We had a congregation of 116 and all were entranced with St. James’s bathed in candlelight and with the old familiar carols, everyone agreed it made the perfect start to Christmas.

As well as the regular services we had a funeral with burial and several thanksgiving services and a wedding.

In order to have and maintain all these services at St. James’s, we are fortunate to have such a hard-working and enthusiastic rector combined with the tireless efforts of our wonderful, retired clergy. Finally a big thank you to all those involved with the everyday working of the church from the beautiful flower displays ,the cleaning and bell ringing and the many readers, all playing their valuable part in the life of the church

Mark Stainer
Churchwarden

St Michael's Report for the Annual Meeting 2024

2023 started with Cafe Church on New Year's Day, led by the churchwardens. Nine adults, ably supported by two children celebrated the changing seasons.

On Palm Sunday we had our now traditional walk from Seavington Café to St Michael's carrying palms and stopping to share the gospel, before decorating the church with our palms, finishing with communion.

On Easter Sunday, five of us greeted the sunrise with a special service in St Michael's churchyard, followed by a shared breakfast.

We are very grateful to Diana Baker and Matt Currie for all their work tidying the flower bed in the garden area. This is very much a work in progress, but it is a very pretty backdrop for wedding photos.

In August, Rev Fyfe led a service at St Mary's to celebrate the patronal festival, as usual it was well supported, many villagers love to attend services there, its closure was felt very strongly.

After the service, with the agreement of the Church Conservation Trust, the church was left unlocked and many visitors enjoy this pretty building.

The organ at St Michael's developed a fault early in the year; after this was examined by experts, as recommended by the Benefice Director of Music, it was confirmed that it was not reparable and was removed by volunteers. Rev Tracey and Dean found a lovely keyboard to replace the organ and we are grateful for all their effort getting it into the church.

At our October Café Church service, we welcomed two members of staff from Safe Families, who talked about their work and ways in which the charity can be supported

Harvest Festival was held at St Mary's, fittingly in the main farming part of the village. Rev Tracey and Sam led a dramatic reading, before we all shared communion, when we gathered in the Nave and broke the traditional harvest loaf.

In November, work started on the re-pointing of the west gable of St Michael's, using traditional materials, to eradicate the issue we have with damp inside the church. While the scaffolding was in place, we took the opportunity to replace the damaged bell tower louvres. A local carpenter built beautiful oak replacements, which will last for many generations. We are grateful to the PCC for agreeing to fund these.

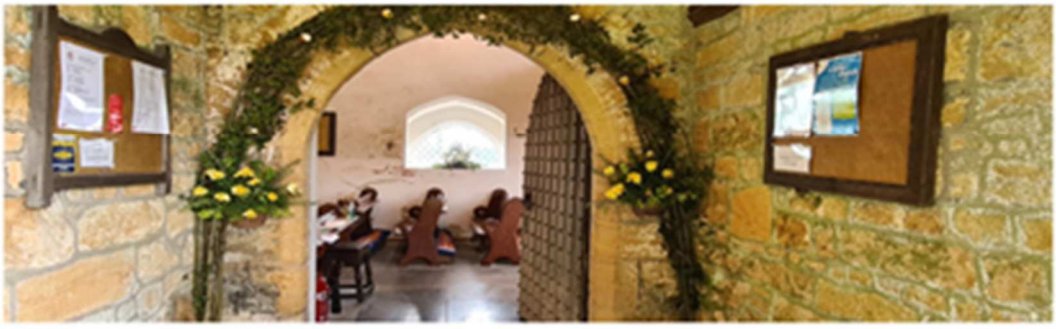
On Remembrance Sunday, Rev Simon led more than fifty villagers in our Act of Remembrance at the village war memorial on the playing fields.

This has now become a tradition to remember the young Seavington men who died in the wars, it is well supported each year, as an accessible venue and service. Chris Lawrence has researched the history of those who died and also kindly cleaned the memorial plaque in St Michael's.

A traditional Carol Service was led by Rev Simon on Christmas Eve and it was lovely to welcome lots of people visiting family in the village. He also led Holy Communion on Christmas morning. We are very thankful for him and the other retired clergy for their support in facilitating a weekly service in Seavington

Our Christingle service at St Michael's was well attended, thank you to the volunteers who created the traditional Christingles, hosted by Liz Harper and Rev Tracey for explaining the significance of each part. As usual, the collection was donated to Save the Children. This was the first time since covid that they were brought to church ready assembled.

The year ended as it began, with a Café style service, this time for the whole Benefice, held in the Millennium Hall on New Year's Eve. We would like to use this opportunity to thank the Lay Worship Leaders who facilitate Café Church, particularly Liz Harper. These informal services require a lot of preparation and are often considered by the congregations as the most Spirit filled of all worship, they are well attended and again accessible for everyone. Thank you to all volunteers who help in so many ways, the "Flower Ladies" for their beautiful arrangements in both churches, those who clean the church, launder the linen and make the congregation and visitors feel so welcome.



St Peter and St Paul's APCM Report

As I re-read my PCC reports from the last 12 months it is interesting to see how things have moved forward in different areas and how prayerful hard work, led by the Holy Spirit is bearing fruit. As churchwardens and PCC members we are involved, led by Tracey, in developments at an early stage and participate in the unseen work that is needed before it arrives before others. This is both a privilege and a responsibility that some of you have had in the past and maybe others of you will have in the future.

Each person in a church has gifts to use for the common good, scripture tells us. Sometimes we don't see what we are capable of until we're bold enough to offer something. We are not expert in listening to the prompting of the Holy Spirit but when we do hear and obey, we are rewarded by seeing the fruit of our labours, enabled by God. That's how I feel about being churchwarden and hope this encourages others to consider new ways they might be able to join in with things that God is doing.

The pastoral care of our congregation and sometimes others in the wider community, is happening throughout our church and all that individuals do for one another and their neighbours is honoured by the Lord but largely unseen by the rest of us. When a request comes in from hospital or Village Agent, or a family member of a local person, things are a little different. Tracey, as priest, is often the most appropriate person to go but there are other times when others of us can help and visit or help out in other way, praying with a person and, on occasions, ministering with Home Communion by extension. That is, sharing with a short liturgy, the bread and wine that has been blessed earlier by a priest. This is when a lay ministry member has been licensed by the Bishop. Judy Bristow, as Anna Chaplain is offering this to a number of folk in Burnworthy House and others in the parish. It has been a great encouragement to me that Judy is ministering so faithfully and as a team we encourage each other and pray together. This is part of how God is fulfilling the vision he has given us to be Church without Walls.

There is an opportunity to participate in this ministry through prayer and practical help for Judy for anyone who is inspired to enquire. There isn't a high expectation of people in supporting roles so no need to be fearful or anxious and it is as part of a team which is so enriching.

Another aspect of our inclusive approach to our wider community, is our potential engagement with the gay couples in our area. The Bishop's letter came, commending prayers that have been written for people in same-sex relationships. This has exercised the PCC for some months, culminating in a vote regarding whether our Benefice would, if asked, say prayers for them in a regular worship service. The Living in Love and Faith courses, run here in Spring, were intended to offer a forum to learn more about this area of pastoral concern. Few people came which was disappointing given the huge range of views that are held in our society and the wider church. The PCC concluded that we should publicly offer these prayers so that, should a gay couple want a blessing, they know that they would be welcomed here. This is not to say that we all share the same theological understanding, but that we would enable them to access the same grace of God that we enjoy. Earlier in the year, some of us did some training online with Church Mission Society about pioneering churches. I learnt that there are ways we can re-imagine church life as the Holy Spirit leads us, that helps to live and tell the story of Jesus in our community. It involves being open to change in our attitudes and actions which can make us uncomfortable at times but, again, brings the reward of seeing God at work, beyond what we thought was possible. Life is an adventure! These courses are ongoing and if you're interested, speak to Tracey or me.

Open House is an illustration of how incremental developments can meet the needs of different people. This last 18 months we have hosted the South Petherton Carers Group run by the Community Council of Somerset. The Burnworthy residents now regularly join us with the care staff as one of their weekly outings. If you think you could help at Open House by talking with newcomers, extending the hand of friendship over coffee, introducing people to one another, or baking a cake of batch of buns or biscuits occasionally, you would see what a buzz it gives people and share that buzz! It may be possible for a further development soon, to join forces with Lunch

Club, while they are homeless. This is at an early stage of discussion but we are hopeful to welcome both the clients and volunteers to join us possibly twice a month to provide the space and time, with some sustenance, for people to socialise over food.

Since Tracey arrived and post-Covid, things have become a lot busier for us as churchwardens. In the last year, Sandra has joined us as Assistant Churchwarden and really made the role her own by providing much of the support Tracey needs with the midweek services and school assemblies, as well as the baptisms, weddings and funerals. This sharing of the load has helped enormously and working as a team helps us all.

In this year we have been supported in a number of ways by different individuals and groups. You will remember how cold it was without the boilers functioning properly. How could we forget! So we have so much to thank the Friends of South Petherton Church for who put in so much for that. Responding to the church's needs, a suggestion came from members of the wider community to Beat the Bounds and raise money for the boilers. This prayerful walk culminated in a BBQ in the church garden and shows that even adversity can bring people of wide interests together for God's glory.

We experienced further support in collaboration with members of the wider community at the Autumn Fair in October. This was the first year without our faithful team of Clock winders and others who, for many years, raised a huge amount, often around £1000, by restoring unwanted tools of all descriptions, and selling them in the Autumn Fair. So, with much talking, prayer and head scratching Tracey accepted a kind offer from a family who regularly raises money for children at the Social Club in Market Square. Together they filled the space and put on lots of amusements for children at low prices, giving that essential warm welcome to families that we want to get to know better. They also sourced the amazing array of Raffle prizes from businesses. Others came up with creative ideas for new stalls, some of which may be recurrent and some were one-offs. All together we raised as much as usual, even a little more. This is not to say we didn't miss the Tool Stall! So, any ideas you have for this year's Fair, come and tell us, anytime.

Fundraising is key to resourcing the mission and ministry of our Benefice. It spreads the financial needs wider than our congregations alone, so this, I hope, will motivate all of us to think what part each can play. We try to make it enjoyable and fun but there is a lot of hard work that is needed and the more volunteers we have, the more fun it will be. We raised £9000 between May 2023 and April 2024, and a further £3600 for various charities through Open House and shared fundraising events.

Some other, less fun things have been going on too. The PCC has formed groups to tackle some of the outstanding governance requirements that all churches and charities have to have in place. This pulls back some of the skills and knowledge that most of us left at work when we retired! It is challenging but has to be done and is getting there. Financial matters are crucial and with Ellen Howard, who was new to us this time last year, our Assistant Treasurer role, first filled by Matthew Rowswell and now by Crispin Raikes, working as a team with Tracey and churchwardens, these are moving forward steadily.

The PCC has also been busy, on behalf of all church members, engaging with the Diocesan proposal to change the way our Parish Share is calculated to make the Common Fund into which our share goes more transparent, more mutually supportive, using independent data with an awareness of local context. Digging into this to really understand how it will impact our churches has been challenging and Steve Harrison has dug deep and led our corporate response to the consultation, giving the Common Fund Committee some critical things to think about in the ongoing deliberations.

A long report, touching on so many aspects of church life and I haven't even mentioned the review of worship patterns which I'm sure will feature elsewhere. Thank you to those who made it to the last line!

Seavington St Mary Church Update

The church is now open all the time, and visitors are delighted to find it open. We are gradually adding items of interest. Our latest find is a roof slate inscribed by the roofer years ago: James Clark, Shepton Beauchamp, June 18th 1856. God save the Queen!

Some interesting engravings have been discovered on the front of the porch. They are quite indistinct, but if you look carefully you can see lines like the rays of the sun, maybe a sundial? There are also some strange circles. Perhaps these are mason's marks, though it is unusual for them to be in such a prominent position.

The book sales are going well. Do call in and choose a book, and bring any that you have finished with, to keep a good turnover.

There are fresh flowers in the church all the time now, to welcome visitors. A small team of ladies are providing and arranging them, which helps the church to look alive and cared for.

The water butt behind the porch has been cleaned out and it has a new tap so that water is available for people putting flowers on the graves.

There is a big problem with damp in the church. The recent Maintenance Check noted that there is an area of render on the outside of the north wall, and this is beginning to fail. We wonder why a mainly Ham Stone church would have a small area of render? Perhaps when this is repaired the reason will become clear. There are also places where the pointing is failing and there is a gutter that may be contributing to the problem. It is hoped that the money can be found to sort out these problems – a stitch in time!

The double doors at the front of the porch are looking very sorry for themselves. They would love a new coat or two of paint. Would anyone like to do that? There is enough money in the Bellringers' Fund to pay for the paint if someone is prepared to give their time for free.

The church bells are still in regular use, and some of the ringers recently took out the clappers and fitted new "bushes", which has made them much easier to strike accurately. The ringers also maintain the bells, oiling them, caring for ropes, and checking for wear.

A group of them have been challenging themselves to ring some really complicated stuff. They have been ringing Quarter Peals of Spliced Surprise. A Quarter Peal takes about 40 minutes, and if the ringing goes wrong it can't be counted and can't be published in The Ringing World or the Bath and Wells Association Annual Report. The Band are working towards ringing 41 different methods in one Quarter Peal! Surprise methods are the most difficult of all the thousands of methods and are only attempted by experienced ringers. They have already succeeded in ringing "The Cambridge Six", "The Beverley Six", "The London Six", and "The Norwich Twelve". Just The "Carlisle Eleven" to learn now, whilst not forgetting the first thirty!

Quarter Peals can be attempted to celebrate all sorts of different things. If you would like to have a Quarter rung as a tribute to someone or for a special event, the ringers are glad to arrange one in return for a donation to the Churches Conservation Trust. Enquiries to Helen Beaufoy 01460 240943.

If you haven't been into St Mary's recently, do pop in. We think you will be pleasantly surprised.

Seavington St Mary's Church is cared for by the Churches Conservation Trust. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer or supporter we are actively looking for help. Please contacts Marie Leverett, Local Community Officer on mleverett@thecct.org.uk or 07831 873489.

Church Without Walls and Lay Pioneering Experience 2023

It has been an absolute joy and pleasure to volunteer for the benefice in 2023. So much has been achieved and so much has been learned by myself and the community. Starting the year, I have been part of benefice services and regular café church which has been completely fulfilling for me. I really do have a passion for being part of the leadership team and creating services, especially after undertaking a Lay Worship Leader training course on how to put together services. It has also helped grow the community's faith and knowledge of God and has brought church to all types of people and many new families throughout the whole Benefice as well as nourishing the families who already attend church on a Thursday morning for school assemblies.

I then got to physically help to build the community yurt which is now in the Rectory Garden, and come alongside children and families in that yurt (Nur-Chur Yurt) leading and supporting Welly Wonderers and then story time with Sarah Milrose. Then after the summer during the Autumn we celebrated Light instead of Halloween in October with a party in the yurt, offering Jesus is the light as the foundational story of the evening and sharing light themed craft activities and offering pumpkins and toasted marshmallows. This has helped grow a community around the families and has inspired me to want to develop that community and show them God's love in the way that the Benefice and God has shown me their love.

I have also had the great opportunity to get super creative in 2023 by making the church's first ever carnival entry with the assistance of my dad's company and also supporting the infant school for extra curricular days with events like Kapla club, where we built amazing sculptures out of what looked like small Jenga bricks. I have also worked closely with Rev Tracey to create and deliver the Easter Experience, Messy Easter in East Lambrook and the Christmas Experience to children within the benefice.

Working with the children and families and showing God's love in action by being Church without walls, fills my heart and helps me show the world what this benefice showed me when I first arrived inside the church walls. I have been able to finally get my guitar out in the church and perform at Folk Fest and the Kings Coronation event and I am looking forward to 2024 Folk Fest where I will once again be running PA and playing the guitar (sorry) but I have also had the opportunity to perform as part of the Open the Book team in December after training with a small team from the Benefice. This has been amazing. Being able to deliver Bible stories in an alternative creative way is just amazing. It engages the children and parents and will help to develop Biblical knowledge and show God's love, in yet another way and I love that it can continue into 2024 and develop into something beautiful.

Finally in 2023 we had some amazing events over Christmas which I engaged in and loved being a big part of the team in sharing my creativity and encouraging others - we have had an amazing year. The Church community, the leadership and God during 2023 has helped develop me, grow me and helped me see where God wants me to be and what he is calling me to become in him.

Report by Samantha Lloyd,
Community Volunteer

The PCC of the Ecclesiastical Parish of South Petherton with the Seavingtons and the Lambrooks

Annual accounts for the Year 1st January 2023 to 31st December 2023

As presented at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting

22nd May 2024

Independent Examiner's Certificate
for the PCC Accounts

Report to the trustees of: South Petherton with the Seavingtons + Lambrook **Parochial Church Council**

On accounts for the year ended: 31 DECEMBER 2023 Charity Number (if applicable): 1128940

Set out on pages 1 (Separate informal letter to PCC re work needed)

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an Independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act,
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act, and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with 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 trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention (other than that disclosed below *) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in, any material respect,

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

I 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: JNCLaycock **Date:** 9/5/24

Name: NIC LAYCOCK

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

Address: 7 BISHOPSTON
MONTACUTE
TA15 6UU

South Petherton with Seavingtons and the Lambrooks's Receipts & Payments Account

for the year ended 31 December 2023

	Note	General fund £	Designated fund £	Restricted fund £	2023 £	2022 £
Receipts						
Donations and Legacies:						
Planned giving		51,691	-	289	51,980	52,309
Collections, donations & other giving		19,235	-	24,408	43,643	40,184
Income tax recovered		12,708	-	-	12,708	20,666
Legacies		-	-	-	-	24,123
Other Trading activities						
Magazine/Bookstall sales/Hall Lettings etc		7,464	-	-	7,464	6,494
Income from other Properties		-	-	-	-	-
Annual Fete/events		17,827	-	4,300	22,127	8,796
Receipts from Investments:						
Interest & dividends		1,435	1,071	-	2,506	563
Receipts from Charitable activities:						
Parochial fees		5,818	-	-	5,818	9,152
Other Receipts						
Insurance claims		-	-	-	-	350
Sale proceeds from fixed assets		-	-	-	-	-
Loans received		-	-	-	-	-
Other		4,299	-	350	4,649	9,058
Total Receipts		**120,477**	**1,071**	**29,347**	**150,895**	*171,695*
Payments						
Charitable activities:						
Donations/Grants to charities		(2,898)	-	-	(2,898)	(6,696)
Mission & Evangelism		(3,243)	-	(355)	(3,598)	(3,000)
Parish Share		(64,820)	-	-	(64,820)	(63,549)
Clergy expenses		(240)	-	-	(240)	(11,697)
Church running expenses		(13,826)	-	(89)	(13,915)	(18,962)
Churchyard maintenance		(3,037)	-	-	(3,037)	(1,975)
Cost of raising funds		(3,876)	-	(100)	(3,976)	(3,239)
Support costs		(2,126)	-	(316)	(2,442)	(682)
Administration costs (inc. staff costs)		(10,048)	-	-	(10,048)	(9,397)
Governance Costs		-	-	-	-	-
Other		(6,305)	-	(56)	(6,361)	(9,532)
Major expenditure						
Repairs to church buildings		(8,705)	-	(45,143)	(53,848)	-
Repairs to other property		-	-	(38,596)	(38,596)	(1,440)
Capital purchases/additions		-	-	-	-	-
Loan repayments		-	-	-	-	-
Total payments		**(119,124)**	**-**	**(84,655)**	**(203,779)**	*(130,169)*
Surplus/(Deficit) of Receipts over payments		**1,353**	**1,071**	**(55,308)**	**(52,884)**	*41,526*
Transfers between funds		-	-	-	-	-
		1,353	1,071	(55,308)	(52,884)	*41,526*
Cash at bank and in hand at 1 Jan (Actual Balance)		72,965	-	44,618	117,583	*76,057*
Cash at bank and in hand at 31 Dec (Actual Balance)		74,318	1,071	(10,690)	64,699	*117,583*

*produced using the Diocesan Cashbook v5

JNCheacock 9/5/24

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The Accounts are prepared on a Receipts and Payments basis in accordance with Church Accounting Regulations. They have been independently examined. The Examiner's report and financial statements are attached.

For the current account the total receipts on the unrestricted funds were £120,477, with £29,347 for restricted funds and reinvested interest of £1,071 during 2023. The total amounted to £150,895, which was made up of a decrease of £27,275 in general funds and an increase of £1,753 in restricted funds during 2023.

On the current account the total expenditure amounted to £119,124 from unrestricted funds and £84,655 from restricted funds during 2023. The total amounted to £203,779, which was made up of a decrease in spending of £10,980 from general funds and an increase in spending of £81,059 from restricted funds during 2023.

For the current account and investment account our total reserves for year end were £99,146, a decrease of £42,755 on 2022. Planned giving decreased by £309 on 2022.

The contribution towards the Diocesan Common Fund was £64,820, an increase of £1,271 on 2022. Our Parish Share was paid on time and in full this year.

Free Reserves

The free reserves of the PCC are those funds that are freely available to be spent in pursuing the charitable objectives. The Free Reserves of the PCC, at the financial year end were: -

	2023	**2022**
Total Reserves at 31 December	£99,146	£141,901
Less restricted funds	(£33,173*)	(£24,266)
Free Reserves	£65,973	£117,635

*The general fund lent the boiler restricted fund monies pending repayment from the Friends of St Peter and St Paul's and VAT reclaim.

Balances of Accounts in the bank, and in hand, as at 31 December 2023 were:

Nat West Bank	£63,971	Actual	£65,048
CCLA Deposit Account (General Fund)	£690		£690
CCLA Deposit Account (Restricted Fund)	£0.27		£0.27
CCLA Deposit Account (Memorial Fund)	£34,485		£34,485
TOTAL	£99,146	Actual	£100,223

Restricted Funds

Restricted funds can only be used for the purpose for which they were given:

Restricted Fund	Balance B/fwd	Income	Expenditure	Balance C/fwd
	£	£	£	£
Zambian Priests	0	555	-555	0
Reach re Hampers	3,000		-3,000	0
DEC Appeal	0	642.50	-642.50	0
East Lambrook Schoolrooms	8,465	26,563	-30,527	4,501
Yurt Fund	12,155	1,960	-8,705	5,410
Legacy Bell Ringers Education	23,998	0	-736	23,262
Childrens Youth Worker	0	288	-203	85
Friends of St Peter and St Paul's	0	101	-101	0
Boiler Fund	0	311	-45,143	-44,832

Reserve Policy

Under Charity Commission rules, we are required to have a policy regarding the amount of funds we hold in our accounts at any one time. It is suggested that this should be sufficient to cover 3-6 months of operation. The PCC reserves policy states that our bank account should always contain at least 4 months' worth of expenditure.

REGULAR GIVING

The Gift Aid has been claimed quarterly this year. A special thanks to Julia Lear for undertaking this onerous work.

We have received a total of £12,708 this year, compared with £20,666 in 2022. 2022 figures include the YURT appeal.

If you give on a regular basis and pay enough tax to cover the gift and have not already signed a Gift Aid Form please do so or put the money in a Yellow Gift Aid envelope and complete the outside. More and more people are unable to Gift Aid their donations, as they do not pay enough tax to cover them. If you no longer pay tax and have signed a Gift Aid Form please let Julia Lear our Gift Aid Secretary know.

FUND RAISING

The total raised for unrestricted funds this year amounted to a splendid £17827 (2022 £8,796). Well done the fundraising team and everybody that supported it. Thanks are due especially to Phil Andrews for raising £4016.97 from scrap metal sales.

Charitable Giving Committee:

Alastair Fyfe continues to chair this group and the policy for making grants and donations, as a proportion of our regular income, is reviewed annually in September. Members of the congregations are encouraged to suggest to the Charitable Giving Committee suitable charitable organisations that we might support. We supported 23 charitable causes this year with £1950 in donations. We also supported the DEC appeal for the Earthquake in Syria with £642.50 being raised by a special collection. The Zambian Priests are still supported via monies raised at services and during the year £554.71 was raised and donated. Monthly donations are also made via the Open House meetings and Christian Aid was also supported.

Seavingtons.

A special thanks to Seavington Parish Council for giving a grant to help with the upkeep of the Churchyards. Somerset County Council were maintaining the Churchyards in 2023 and a different operator has been awarded the contract for 2024.

I late autumn 2023 the west gable of St Michael's was re-pointed and the bell tower louvres were replaced. This work by local craftsman will help preserve the beautiful church for future generations. We thank St Michael's Trust for offering to repay this considerable cost to the PCC in 2024.

East Lambrook Schoolrooms

A considerable amount of work has been completed during the year on the Schoolrooms which has involved a large amount of fundraising and applying successfully for grants. With thanks to everybody involved.

St Peter and St Paul's

During 2023 the church was cold at times due to boiler problems. A lot of hard work went into planning and obtaining a faculty for the new boiler which was installed towards the end of the year. We thank the Friends of St Peter and St Paul's for funding this project.

Yurt

The Yurt project which started in 2022 with fundraising was completed successfully in 2023.

Conclusion

I would like to thank Steve Harrison for his help when I commenced this role and during the year, Mathew Rowsell for his help as Assistant Treasurer and Nic Laycock for his help in setting up the Diocese Cashbook and for agreeing to be our Independent Examiner.

Ellen Howard

Ellen Howard

Hon Treasurer

South Petherton with Seavingtons and the Lambrooks's

Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31st December 2023

Receipts & Payments Account

Receipts	Notes	General fund £	Designated fund £	Restricted fund £	2023 £	2022 £
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Planned giving		51,691	-	289	51,980	52,309
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Magazine/Bookstall sales/Hall Lettings etc		7,464	-	-	7,464	6,494
Income from other Properties		-	-	-	-	-
Annual Fete/events		17,827	-	4,300	22,127	8,796
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Other Receipts						
Insurance claims		-	-	-	-	350
Sale proceeds from fixed assets		-	-	-	-	-
Loans received		-	-	-	-	-
Other		4,299	-	350	4,649	9,058
Total Receipts		**120,477**	**1,071**	**29,347**	**150,895**	*171,695*

Statement of Assets and Liabilities

	Unrestricted Funds	Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2023
	£	£	£	£
CREDITORS: DUE IN LESS THAN ONE YEAR				
Charitable Giving	347			347
Other invoices	729			729
	1076	0	0	1076

Approved by the PCC on the 13 2024

Signed on their behalf by

Rev Tracey Hallet (PCC Chairman)

Ellen Howard

Ellen Howard (PCC Treasurer)

Payments

Charitable activities:					
Donations/Grants to charities	(2,898)	-	-	**(2,898)**	(6,696)
Mission & Evangelism	(3,243)	-	(355)	**(3,598)**	(3,000)
Parish Share	(64,820)	-	-	**(64,820)**	(63,549)
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Governance Costs	-	-	-	-	-
Other	(6,305)	-	(56)	**(6,361)**	(9,532)
Major expenditure					
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Repairs to other property	-	-	(38,596)	**(38,596)**	(1,440)
Capital purchases/additions	-	-	-	-	-
Loan repayments	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	**(119,124)**	**-**	**(84,655)**	**(203,779)**	(130,169)
Surplus/(Deficit) of Receipts over payments	**1,353**	**1,071**	**(55,308)**	**(52,884)**	41,526
Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
	1,353	1,071	(55,308)	**(52,884)**	41,526
Cash at bank and in hand at 1 Jan (Actual Balance)	72,965	-	44,618	**117,583**	76,057
Cash at bank and in hand at 31 Dec (Actual Balance)	74,318	1,071	(10,690)	**64,699**	117,583

*produced using the Diocesan Cashbook v5

JNChaycoun 9/5/24

Parochial Fees Note

The PCC received parochial fees as detailed below during the year. Part is made up of statutory fees due to the PCC or the DBF, as prepared by the Archbishops' Council under the Ecclesiastical Fees Measure 1986. The balance relates to charges as fixed by the PCC, for extras such as bells, flowers and special heating, or paid to visiting ministers, Readers or Non-Stipendiary Ministers as set out in the DBF's Parochial Fees policy

During the year, the PCC received parochial fees totalling	**£11,410.00**	
Statutory Fees due to the PCC totalled	**£3,981.00**	
Statutory Fees due to the DBF totalled	**£4,403.00**	
Statutory Fees received on behalf of a third party	**£1,389.00**	
Non-Statutory Extras due to the PCC totalled	**£1,912.00**	
Non-Statutory Extras due to a third party totalled	**£0.00**	
The PCC also received Deposits for the following year totalling	**£0.00**	
		Balance owed at year-end (inc. in Creditors)
In total the PCC repaid the following Fees during the year		
Payment to DBF of Statutory Fees	**£4,727.00**	**-£324.00**
Payment to visiting ministers/Readers/NSMs	**£1,141.00**	
Payment to visiting ministers/Readers/NSMs	**£0.00**	
Payment to visiting ministers/Readers/NSMs	**£0.00**	**£248.00**
(This excludes fees for Sunday Services)		

Independent Examiner's Certificate
for the PCC Accounts

Report to the trustees of: South Petherton with the Seavingtons + Lambrook **Parochial Church Council**

On accounts for the year ended: 31 DECEMBER 2023 Charity Number (if applicable): 1128940

Set out on pages 1 (Separate informal letter to PCC re work needed)

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an Independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act,
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act, and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with 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 trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention (other than that disclosed below *) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in, any material respect,

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

I 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: JNClaycock **Date:** 9/5/24

Name: NIC LAYCOCK

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

Address: 7 BISHOPSTON
MONTACUTE
TA15 6UU

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SOUTH PETHERTON WITH

England & Wales - Charity number 1128940

Accounts

The United Benefice of South Petherton with the Seavingtons and the Lambrooks

Charity Registration No 1128940

Annual Reports of the Parochial Church Council
For the year ended 31st December 2022

The Benefice of South Petherton with the Seavingtons and the Lambrooks

Rector – Reverend Tracey Hallett

Acting PCC Treasurer for year ending 2022

Mr Steve Harrison
9 Lampreys Lane
South Petherton
TA13 5DU

Independent Examiner of Accounts:

Mr Tim Farley
Goffey Limited
63 Conway Crescent
Burnham on Sea
Somerset
TA8 2UW

Correspondence Address:

The Rectory, Hele Lane, South Petherton, Somerset.

TA13 5DY

Bankers:

National Westminster Bank Plc.

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) of the United Benefice of South Petherton with the Seavingtons and the Lambrooks in the diocese of Bath and Wells has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent in promoting throughout the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.

The PCC is a charity registered with the Charity Commission (no.1128940). It also has maintenance responsibilities for the church of St Peter and St Paul's in South Petherton; the church and churchyard of St Michael's in Seavington St Michael; the church and churchyard of St James's in East Lambrook and the schoolroom; and the churchyard at Seavington St Mary's (the church was declared redundant in 1984 and vested with the Churches Conservation Trust).

Administration

The Benefice office serves all three Churches and is located at The Rectory Hele Lane South Petherton TA13 5DY. Telephone 01460 240377
Email: Office@southpethertonbenefice.org

MEMBERS OF THE PCC

Members are either ex-officio or elected Deanery Synod representatives with a term of three years, or lay representatives with a term of three years elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM), in accordance with the Church Representation rules and after due notice. The PCC works in collaboration with several committees and informal groups within the Benefice.

The following served as members of the PCC during 2022:

Rector: Reverend Tracey Hallett (Ex-officio)

Reader: Geoffrey Abery (retired in the latter part of 2022)

Churchwardens:

Mark Stainer (St James's)

Manda Jaggers and Anne Shaw (St Michael's)

Daphne Woodhouse and Steve Harrison (St Peter and St Paul's)

Deanery Synod Representatives: Mandy Maggs and Phil Andrews (2023)

Elected Members: Chris Sharp 2025, Jane Ward (2025), Carol Talbot (2025), Alastair Fyfe (2024), Richard Brooks (2023), Caroline Ireland-Jones (2024), Janet Strugnell (2024). (APCM at which members complete their term of office and may see re-election)

Co-opted Members: Shan Weston (Headteacher of the C of E .V.A.Infants and Preschool)

Safeguarding Officer: Sue Harrison, 9 Lampreys Lane, South Petherton, TA13 5DU

Gift Aid Secretary: Julia Lear, Toad Hall, 14 St Michael's Gardens, South Petherton TA13 5BD

Benefice Administrator: Anne Perez, Benefice Office (Office@southpethertonbenefice.org).

Ministry Team:

The Benefice is well supported by the Churchwardens and a dedicated group of retired priests who have permission to officiate (PTO's). With thanks to the PTO's: Rev Simon Baker, Rev Annie Gurner, Rev Andrew Callon, Rev Mark Jackson, Rev D Fyfe, Rev Laurence Meering, Rev Wendy Mitchel and Rev Ian Gibson during 2022 this Benefice offered a full and diverse pattern of worship. The Ministry group meet regularly to plan service rotas, to review our ministry as a team and to provide mutual support.

Standing Committee:

The Standing Committee has power to transact the business of the PCC between its meetings, subject to directions given by the Council. (This is the only committee required by law). It normally consists of the Rector, the churchwardens, the Treasurer, the Secretary and the vice-chair of the PCC.

Membership:

In July 2022, after a robust calculation of our attendance figures, it was declared on the 2022 Parish update form that there were 108 regular worshippers in the Benefice. It is this figure that the Diocese use to calculate the fees charged for our Parish Share.

Electoral Roll:

The Electoral Roll stands at 157.

If you would like to an elected member of the PCC, you are required to be on the Church Electoral Roll for a minimum of six months before

nomination. Please note that by being on the Electoral Roll it does not impact the Parish Share calculations.

Charitable Giving Committee:

Alastair Fyfe continues to chair this group and the policy for making grants and donations, as a proportion of our regular income, is reviewed annually in September. Members of the congregations are encouraged to suggest to the Charitable Giving Committee suitable charitable organisations that we might support. We supported 25 charitable causes this year.

Financial Review

As at close of play on 31st December 2022:

Bank Balance as at Year Start (01/01/2022)	£59,454.46
Current 2022 Income	£168,938.81
Current 2022 Expenditure	£123,451.71
Current Balance	£104,941.56

On a simple receipts and payments basis this gives a surplus for the year of £45,487.10

Unfortunately, our underlying financial position is not as happy as that: there is income in 2022 which is earmarked for specific projects and for which most of the expenditure will happen in 2023 – there are some bills incurred in 2022 but which will be paid in 2023. For example:

The Yurt project (net £12,155);
East Lambrook Schoolroom Refurbishment Project (£8,462);
Legacy for Bell-Ringer Education (£23,998);
Reach Youth Grants (£3,000). These total around £47,000
Fees owed to PTOs for funerals, etc; fees owed to the Diocese; boiler and lighting repairs; Zambia Priest collections: these total approximately £3,218

Amounts for earmarked projects and unpaid bills therefore means that we were able to ensure that our cash reserves were always above the minimum stipulated in our Reserves Policy. In 2022, we also benefitted from a substantial refund of tax from HMRC, thanks to the continued efforts of Julia Lear, our Gift Aid administrator. Gift Aided regular giving (or even irregular or one-off giving) provides an extra 25% which is refunded from the tax man.
If any givers have not completed a Gift Aid form (and they pay tax) please speak to Julia Lear, who looks after Gift Aid payments, so that we can

increase our income even further. We need every penny and 25% makes a huge difference even on the smallest of donations.

In preparation for the APCM a detailed scrutiny of our accounts is being undertaken, at the time of writing the attached accounts are in the hands of the independent examiner and we await his final report. The reality of our financial situation remains to present the PCC with a significant challenge, if we continue as we are, the underlying position on a simple income and expenditure basis is a deficit of around £6,000 - £7,000 rather than a surplus.

Looking forward, there are other difficulties for our finances: The Parish Share requested by the Diocese for 2022 was £63,740 we were fortunately able to pay the Parish Share but have also been notified of a further 2%increase for 2023 taking the requested amount to £65,015. And not least the effects of inflation on our expenditure. In particular, we benefited greatly in 2022 from a fixed rate deal on our energy costs. This deal has ended and so we face much higher energy costs in 2023. That said, all our running costs this year are higher than 2022 and ideally, we should be looking to invest in our intentions for outreach, growth and community. If this year we are to realise these intentions without running down our reserves even more, we really do need to maximise all our income streams. We plan to hold our Benefice giving day earlier than normal and have proposed to do so in June 2023 rather than October. There are plans also for Reverend Tracey to lead us in stewardship campaign in the latter part of 2023. Please note the full & accurate accounts will be reported separately upon return from the independent examiner (Refer to appendix B for accounts as submitted to Tim Farley for examination).

Reserves policy:

The PCC reserves policy states that our bank account should always contain at least 4 months' worth of expenditure. That is the equivalent to around £41,000. Based on the end of year accounts for 2022, our reserves will be down to the minimum level in 3-4 years.

Fundraising Group:

This group meets to plan and co-ordinate a range of fundraising events. These events make a huge difference to our balance sheet and therefore to the extent to which we can invest in the activities through which we can reach out to our community. We are grateful to Daphne Woodhouse who has spent time this year developing paperwork to reflect new protocols and guidance which will in time enable fundraising events to be well managed. It is hoped that we will recruit some new members to join the fundraising group and we welcome all of you to join in and share a fresh approach and any ideas for new activities.

Volunteers:

Volunteers – where would we be without you? We are very fortunate to have such a willing group of volunteers in our Benefice and we are very grateful to each of you as you play such a significant role in the work of the church. Volunteers are the unsung heroes of the Church and so often live out their Christian faith by being the hands and feet of Jesus. From welcoming, to holy dusting, clock winding, bell ringing, gardening, moving furniture to prepare for events and services, sacristan duties, rotas and planning events, serving and chalice bearing, pastoral care and visiting, flower arranging, lay leaders planning and leading services. And there is so much more that there is far too many to list by name but bless you all and thank you all for who you are in Christ and all that you do for the Church and this Benefice!

In the 2021 APCM we acknowledged that without volunteers we cannot do anything. And it was stated that *'The more volunteers we have, the sooner we can address the issues that will take us forward'.* It is a delight to see this prayer answered as in 2022 we have seen an increase in new people coming forward to volunteer, particularly to support the mission of God within our Benefice as we engage in fresh expressions of Church. In fact, during this year, we have completed the safer recruitment of our very own Community Volunteer Sam Lloyd, who creativity leads us to reach out to local members of our communities who would not normally go to Church.

Safeguarding:

Our benefice is committed to and will champion the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults. Everyone who meets us, comes to us, or works with us should feel safe and cared for irrespective of their social background, culture, their abilities, religious belief or any other factor. It is the responsibility of all of us, individually as well as collectively, to make these aspirations real, to look out for one another and to pass on any concerns.

As required by the Church of England, we have a designated safeguarding officer (Sue Harrison) and an approved policy to guide our actions. Sue's role is to support, advise and deal with certain specific issues for which she has been trained – but she does not 'do safeguarding' for us; we are all responsible for doing the right thing and for acting if things fall short.

The PCC is responsible for ensuring the benefice has a safeguarding policy which is agreed, understood and enacted. We have approved our own Safeguarding Policy and will keep it under review both to keep it in line with current expectations and also to customise it to meet our own needs. The PCC routinely receives reports in particular to enable us to track the safe recruitment of volunteers where their roles bring them into contact with children and/or vulnerable adults in their 'official' capacity. 'Safe

recruiting' involves a DBS check, the uptake of references, a clear role description, an induction interview and an assessment of training needs.

We are very grateful to Sue for her dedication and commitment to safeguarding over many years, it is planned that at the APCM Sue will pass this role to Manda Jaggers.

For more information on Safeguarding please email Sue on: safeguarding@southpethertonbenefice.org and please read Sue's safeguarding report as attached in the reports section of this document.

South Petherton Church of England Voluntary Aided Infants School and Pre-School:

The majority of governors of the school (ie the foundation governors) are nominated for appointment through the PCC. Our Foundation governors in 2022 were Kirsten Carp, Sue Harrison, Richard Killen, Rev Tracey Hallett (ex-officio). There are vacancies for Foundation Governors and we encourage anyone interested in the role to contact Shan Weston (Head Teacher): sweston@southpethertoncofeinfants.co.uk for further information.

Parish Magazine

This year a consultation was undertaken within the local community to review the cost and frequency of the Parish Magazine. We discovered that to produce the monthly magazine it requires approximately ten hours of administration time. This role has been the responsibility of the Benefice Administrator. In effect it takes one whole week of paid administration time to produce the magazine and so in our efforts to review PCC finances and expenditure, it was decided the way forward would be to recruit a volunteer editorial team. As such, a volunteer recruitment advert was placed, several times, in the Magazine. To date we have not managed to recruit such a team. Therefore, the Parish Magazine is not as profitable as we might hope. And although we are immensely grateful to Julia Lear who manages the advertising in the magazine and our advertisers whose support enables us to continue with production. The rise in production costs has forced an increase in the price of the magazine to £2. We have also implemented payment by bank transfer. The Parish Magazine is a valued community resources and we welcome articles for inclusion which should be sent to office@southpethertonbenfice.org by around the 12th of each month (earlier in February). We do our best to ensure that articles are printed as they are written but reserve the right to edit copy where necessary.

South Petherton Mothers Union Branch

An active branch of the Mothers' Union meets monthly and is coordinated by Judith Riley please see attached report and for more information about Mothers' Union please contact Judith on: judithriley939@btinternet.com.

Reports:

This year we have invited all who are involved in the life of our Benefice to contribute to the APCM and we do hope that you will take the time to enjoy their attached reports.

APCM REPORTS FOR 2022/23

The Rector's annual report for APCM reflecting 2022

Our benefice aspires to be:
A growing, learning, Christian family committed
to serving God and the community.

I am still giving thanks to God for bringing me to you! The first year in post has flown and I am immensely grateful that you as Benefice and all in the wider community have received my husband Dean and I so well – The Rectory is home, we now feel settled.

On my arrival in January 2022, The Covid-19 pandemic was still very much in evidence but thankfully its impact reducing by the end of the year. Having been through vacancy and the pandemic it seemed to me that the Benefice were more than ready to move forward. Our Benefice worship gradually moved to dropping most of our Covid-related changes as mask-wearing relaxed. During the summer we reinstated sharing the peace and began to offer the "Common Cup" again but have remained with the decision to continue using pre-intincted wafers to enable those who prefer not to take the cup to still receive communion in both kinds. It has been positive to see a steady increase in numbers of people willing to share the Common cup again. However, for now we continue offering pre-intincted wafers and the common cup. We aim to return to 'normal' towards the Autumn of 2023. At St Peter and St Paul's we have seen a good increase of people attending worship and there are plenty of new faces across the Benefice engaging in the many expressions of Church that we are now offering. As we move into 2023, there is a need at (St Peter and St Paul's) Holy Communion services to begin using two chalices and so we are extending our team of servers, this is exciting to see.

I have truly valued the work of The Parish Profile, it is an excellent guide to me, and has provided 'a job description' aiding us to discern our direction

of travel carefully and prayerfully, as well as work towards some of the priorities listed before my arrival.

The profile states that in five years' time, we want our benefice to look like this:

'*For our churches to be at the heart of our villages, pro-actively reaching out to our communities'.*

Therefore, the vitally important starting place was to build positive relationships and to be visibly present in all three of the parishes and their communities. I have been publicly present and made a conscious effort to get to know people and for them to get to know me, and their Churches through our interactions. One of the most proactive ways of getting to know everyone was to encourage South Petherton Infants School (SPIS) PGFA to hold their summer fete in the Rectory Garden. This caused a great stir of excitement and gave many people time to reminisce on their childhood memories involving past events in the rectory garden. The door to relationships opened and as the sun shone it helped the fete to be a great source of fundraising for SPIS.

Sadly, there is an evident level of pastoral need particularly related to bereavement as reflected in the many funerals we have taken in the Benefice. During 2022, there were 22 funerals, and on a more positive note 11 baptisms and 3 weddings across the Benefice. There is a need to create a system for pastoral follow up and support after significant life events, this is an area for development in our Benefice.

Regarding the pastoral concerns of our Benefice, we are working towards a three-tiered approach to meet needs and there are plans in place to recruit and develop a voluntary pastoral care team. Currently, much pastoral care takes place on an informal basis and with people befriending one another and offering mutual support and care. There is a '*love our neighbour approach',* which is evident within all three of our Churches and their parishes.

We were all impacted by the sad news of the war in Ukraine that hit us in February. We called the Benefice to prayer and organised prayer vigils. Susan Ogilvy from St James's encouraged us to join forces across the Benefice and take practical action. We made welcome toiletry bags and filled them with

essential items. Over 200 bags were then distributed to families who were welcoming refugees into their homes. Sadly, the war continues into 2023 – and we continue to pray and to work for peace.

Lent and Easter: On Shrove Tuesday with the help of a small team we were able to provide a Pancake picnic party in St Peter and St Paul's for the local families from both the Junior and Infants School. We also introduced South Petherton infant school to the Easter experience. This is a creative, artistic and interactive way of travelling through the events of holy week and helps the children to better grasp the timeline of Easter and gain a detailed understanding of the story too.

Two Lent study courses were offered, with the opportunity to focus on the themes of inclusivity and diversity as we engaged with: 1. The Living in Love and Faith (LLF) Course which was well attended at St Peter and St Paul's. The LLF course helped us to understand difference and how we as a Church community could offer welcome to ALL people, regardless of their background and life choices. We were encouraged to consider how we as a group of people can live well together even when there might be a difference of theological opinion and understanding. The second course held at the Rectory, was based on the Film the Greatest Showman and drew our attention to God's redeeming love; this helped us all to consider our theological understanding of diversity. Both courses enabled acceptance, good, open and honest conversations and learning from each other.

With Covid restrictions lifting and the willingness of volunteers we were able to reinstate the wonderful tradition of Maundy Thursday Supper with foot washing too. This was one of the most moving and enriching spiritual moments of the year for me personally. It was a great privilege to humbly wash the feet of others.

Holy week and Easter services across the Benefice were very well attended and I am grateful to our retired priests for helping, we are so fortunate that their help enables each of the Churches within the Benefice to continue embracing their individual traditions and practices.

As partnership and relationships continued to develop and flourish, I was able to visit the Junior School and deliver assemblies, help in classes, and support the transition for children moving from the infants to the juniors. My presence at the year 3 'welcome' day meant that children from the

infants had a familiar and trusting face waiting to greet them as they arrived at the juniors for their induction day in their new school environment.

Team around the parish (TATP) came to birth in June as I realised that there was not a collaborative approach within our community to meet the needs of children and their families. I invited a gathering to take place around the rectory table with other professionals to discuss a way forward: 1. To support each other in our roles and 2. To enable us to better understand and meet the rising level of need.

TATP consists of South Petherton infant school, Junior School and Reach Youth (children and families worker). This partnership is valuable to our community and has aided us to offer varied levels of support to the most vulnerable. The Church has and is playing a significant role in TATP, as we continue to offer activities for families (mostly involving use of the rectory garden) such a welly wonderers, and holiday activities, we have also helped by providing Christmas hampers for families who have limited financial resources.

Becoming aware of the needs in our community and by building positive relationships with the most vulnerable families, I was moved to share a vision for a community *Nurture Yurt* (Nur-Chur) with the Church. I sought prayerful support and financial resource from our congregations and was utterly amazed at the response! We raised the funds almost immediately to purchase a yurt and by sharing the vision with local members of the community, people with the appropriate skills stepped up to enable the yurt to be placed safely in the rectory garden. We are so thankful to all involved in resourcing this most amazing community project. With so much help we have been able to provide a safe and nurturing environment that aims ***'To bring our community together through nurture, nature, spirituality – a sense of awe and wonder and inclusive hospitality.'*** (Please read Appendix C for further detail).

The Queen's Platinum Jubilee: It was fabulous to be able to offer such a range of varied events including a community BBQ, family friendly movie and popcorn evening and a whole host of activities and celebrations over the Jubilee weekend. The culmination, with thanks to Sarah Armstrong, Steve Harrison and the Choir, was a wonderful afternoon of musical celebration as we watched clips of the Queen's Coronation on the large screen, sang her favourite hymns and held a toast with sherry. The joy being shared with our friends from Burnworthy made it perfect! The Benefice service was equally full of sentiment, joy and laughter and even featured Paddington bear sharing his marmalade sandwiches with our Ma'am.

Sadly, the joy turned to mourning as we heard the news that HRH Queen Elizabeth II had died on 8th September. We took an important role in our communities in providing space for remembering. Books of condolence were left in each of our church buildings along with materials to support prayer. Special services were arranged at short notice. Again, we saw the community joining us in this time of mourning.

Throughout 2022, we held 'taster' services within our Churches to bring a fresh perspective to our worship, the aim being to reach out into the community and to offer inclusivity and welcome. Café church was already in existence at Seavington St Michael before Covid. On my arrival and as Covid restrictions reduced, we reinstated this popular informal service. Café church at Seavington in the community café offers a wonderfully accessible building to host these services. The popularity of Café church installed confidence to introduce a Café Church to the whole benefice.

And so, we decided to offer taster café Church services in 5th Sunday Benefice services at St Peter and St Paul's. We were shocked to see the crowds gather and queue to get into the Church for the first one we held. As the year progressed it seemed we had found a way in which we could connect Church and the wider community and continued with Café services that were very well supported. We also delivered some informal Holy Communion services, naming them family holy communion and using the sermon slot as a space to offer various methods of communicating the good news of the Gospel. Thus, in November we as a PCC agreed to change the pattern of services within the Benefice with effect from January 2023. (Please see Appendix D).

In October, the PCC and all involved in creating the Benefice profile were invited to attend a quiet day. Sixteen of us went to Deanery Mission Priest Deborah Perreau's home in Combe St Nicholas and took the day to reflect together and review the profile as we considered the following questions: _

- Where were we then (when it was created to recruit the Rector)
- Where are we now (6months+later)
- Where are we going (seeking God's guidance for our vision)

(Please refer to Appendix E for a full reflection of the day and outcomes).

On our return from the quiet day, we implemented PCC sub groups, please see separate reports written on behalf of these sub groups. There is plenty of space for everyone from our three Churches to become involved in subgroups and you do not have to be a PCC member to join in. I note for instance that we have an urgent need for help with marketing and communication and to date, we do not have a small group leader or a team of volunteers to support this area. An example of our need relates to the Benefice website, which was taken offline in May 2022, as I felt it did not accurately represent the Benefice theologically. The website is an

ongoing project and remains a very high priority for 2023. We are grateful to Chris Sharp for his technological support which has enabled a better system of administration within the Benefice through the implementation of Google shared drive and Benefice email addresses.
The outcomes from the first quiet day have helped to guide the PCC with a direction of travel for the Benefice, as such we will regularly review progress as we seek God together. It was hoped that three quiet days a year would offer a good amount of time to discern well together and explore how things are going. Sadly, we have not yet held a second quiet day and perhaps we were a little ambitious in aiming to hold 3 a year. I remember saying at my interview for the post of Rector that we will only travel as fast as the slowest member of the team. This has not been the case and change has happened quickly during this first year, and as such, it is envisaged that we will soon need another quiet day to provide the PCC with more space to reflect and pray together – it is my intention to lead this in the summer of 2023.

St James School Room in East Lambrook: With the enthusiasm of a small management committee there has been a big fundraising appeal for the renovation of the school room at East Lambrook. The goal of the 'Big Fundraise' was to raise £12,500 by September 2022, the aim being to secure match funding from an application to South Somerset District Council (SSDC). The estimated renovation costs for phase one of the project was £23,680 and after a lot of hard work in the funding applications, SSDC awarded £11,638 towards the overall costs, £1000 was gifted from Kingsbury Episcopi Parish Council and a further £5000 charitable funding was awarded by Bernard Sunley Foundation. The community spirit in East Lambrook has been plentiful with fundraising events being a big success and raising over £7000 by the end of the financial year. Daphne Woodhouse is my delegated authority within the committee and we have employed a project manager to oversee the building renovation. With my sincere thanks and appreciation to Daphne for her leadership and for all the committee are doing to achieve a fabulous, upgraded school room to the benefit of the whole community.

November, Advent and Christmas: All souls and all saints were reflected beautifully with special reflective services of remembrance being held at both St Peter and St Paul's and St Michael's. Children and families from the local community also enjoyed celebrating this season as we provided a light party at St Peter and St Paul's to remind them of Jesus being the light of the world.

Rev Simon Baker and his wife Diana led an Advent course at their home in Seavington St Michael which was attended by a small group of people who said it helped them to gain confidence in Bible study. Rev Laurence Meering also led an Advent course in St Peter and St Paul's. Sadly, we had a very cold Advent and winter period in St Peter and St Paul's with the breakdown of the boiler - beyond repair. My first significant problem as Rector, they do not teach about these practical issues at theological college! Thus, there was an urgent need to recruit another willing volunteer to manage the 'Boiler Project'. Thankfully, God pointed me in the direction of Roy Duffy and fortunately he agreed to be the project manager. Roy has worked with the PCC to begin the faculty process and is investigating the most effective replacement of heating for St Peter and St Pauls. The faculty application is underway, and we hope to be warm again by winter 2023. Despite the cold winter, we all worked hard to plan and deliver several special services, in Advent and Christmas and it was excellent to see a good response in terms of number and enthusiasm of attendees. Carols, Christingle, crib and all of our Christmas services including our first walking nativity, were very well attended and even better than the pre-covid levels which really lifted our spirits at the end of the year. Thank you to everyone for your continued prayer and support during this year and for the years that are yet to come! Rev Tracey

The United Benefice of South Petherton with the Seavingtons and the Lambrooks

Charity Registration No 1128940

FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS
for the year ended 31 December 2022

T-24000CH
9/15/23

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st DECEMBER 2022

	Note	2022		2021
		£	£	£
CURRENT ASSETS				
Debtors and Pre-Payments	1	22,318		16,603
Short Term Deposits		34,083		33,641
Cash at Bank		104,942		59,454
			161,343	109,698
CURRENT LIABILITIES				
Amounts falling due within one year	2	19,442		9,443
			19,442	9,443
NET CURRENT ASSETS			141,901	100,255
NET ASSETS			141,901	100,255
FUNDS	3			
Unrestricted				
General Fund			104,256	99,322
Memorial Fund			1,224	665
Restricted			268	268
Bellringing Education Fund			23,998	
Yurt Appeal			12,155	
			141,901	100,255

The notes to the accounts start on page 3

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES for the year ended 31st DECEMBER 2022

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2022 £	Funds 2021 £
INCOMING RESOURCES					
From Donors	4a	109,159		109,159	105,299
Other Voluntary Income	4b	9,920	27,594	37,514	37,636
Charitable and ancilliary trading	4c	27,760	0	27,760	25,314
Other ordinary income	4d	350	0	350	2,227
From investments	4e	563	0	563	32
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES		147,752	27,594	175,346	170,508
RESOURCES USED					
Grants / Donations	5a	6,100	3,596	9,696	8,672
Activities directly related to the work of the church	5b	121,814	0	121,814	133,298
Churches management and administration	5c	2,190	0	2,190	125
Contra	5d	0	0		0
TOTAL RESOURCES USED		130,104	3,596	133,700	142,095
NET INCOMING / OUTGOING RESOURCES		17,648	23,998	41,646	28,412
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		17,648	23,998	41,646	28,412
BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD at 1st JANUARY 2022		99,987	268	100,255	71,843
BALANCES CARRIED FORWARD at 31st December 2022		117,635	24,266	141,901	100,255

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS for the year ended 31st DECEMBER 2022

ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2016 together with applicable accounting standards and the Charities SORP. This involves the production of a balance sheet, and the adjustment to the cash figures of both opening and closing accruals, now shown on the statement of financial activities for the year. The financial statements this year have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

The accounts include 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.

Funds

General (unrestricted) funds represent the funds of the PCC that are not subject to any restriction regarding their use and are available for application on the general purposes of the PCC. Funds which are subject to restrictions as to their use are shown separately.

The **Memorial Fund** was established by the PCC in November 2003 to hold monies given to the PCC under bequests or legacies, or in memory or thanksgiving for God's grace. The PCC is, generally, free to use these funds as it deems appropriate. Major works items (not covered by Grants) have been charged to the Memorial Fund.

During the year, a bequest was received which specified that the funds should be used for a **Bellringers Education Fund**. This is, therefore, recorded separately for this purpose.

During 2022, a **Yurt Appeal** led to the provision of funds for the purchase and installation of a Yurt in the Rectory Garden. Income and expenditure for this have been recorded separately and the remaining fund, allocated to this appeal, is shown in the balance sheet.

Restricted Funds relate to charities and other funds which are considered independent of the PCC fund and are, therefore, accounted for separately.

Incoming Resources

Collections are recognised when received by or on behalf of the PCC. Planned giving receivable under Gift Aid is recognised only when received.

Income tax recoverable on gift aid donations is recognised when the income is recognised.

Grants and legacies to the PCC are accounted for as soon as the PCC is notified of its legal entitlement and for the amount due.

Income from investments is accounted for when receivable. Realised gains or losses on investments are recognised when investments are sold. Unrealised gains or losses on investments are accounted for on revaluation of investments at 31st December.

Resources Used

Grants and donations are accounted for when paid over.

The Diocesan quota (Parish Share) is a voluntary contribution to the costs of the Diocese but not a legal liability and is accounted for when payable.

Fixed Assets

Consecrated and beneficed land and buildings are excluded from the accounts by virtue of Section 10(2)(c) of the Charities Act 2011.

No value is placed on movable church furnishings held by the churchwardens on special trust for the PCC and which require a faculty for disposal since the PCC considers this to be inalienable property. All expenditure incurred during the year on consecrated or benefice buildings and movable church furnishings, whether maintenance or improvement, is written off as expenditure in the Statement of Financial Activities (on page 2).

DEBTORS and PRE-PAYMENTS

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £
Income Tax Recoverable	20,666	
Prepayments	94	
Hire fees	200	
Fees due for funerals, etc.	1,358	
	22,318	0

LIABILITIES

Magazine Adverts pre-paid for 2022	1,865	
Other payments due	2,207	
Due to Charities	7,500	3,596
Mag Printing	542	
Running Costs	1,229	
Fees overpaid	378	
Due to Clergy	1,896	
Misc	229	
	15,846	3,596

ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BY FUND

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total £
Current Assets	22,318	-	22,318
Current Liabilities	15,846	3,596	19,442
Fund Balance	6,472	- 3,596	2,876

INCOMING RESOURCES

			Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2022 £	Funds 2021 £
4a	Incoming resources from donors:					
		Gift Aid	42,812		42,812	38,649
		Income tax recoverable	20,666		20,666	24,184
		Non Gift Aid	9,497		9,497	3,144
		Collections at services	10,011		10,011	10,146
		Gift Day	8,882		8,882	12,013
		Sundry donations			0	8,025
		Roof Appeal			0	9,137
		Yurt Appeal	16,905		16,905	
		Refund	386		386	
			109,159	0	109,159	105,299
4b	Other vouluntary incoming resources:					
		Grants	1,000	3,000	4,000	23,669
		Legacies	125	23,998	24,123	0
		Fundraising	8,796		8,796	6,054
		Zambia Priest Training		596	596	267
		Bath & Wells			0	7,646
			9,920	27,594	37,514	37,636
4c	Income from charitable and ancillary trading:					
		Magazine sales	3,621		3,621	3,423
		Magazine advertising revenue	2,833		2,833	193
		E Lambrook School Room	8,462		8,462	920
		Book / Gift stall	40		40	14
		Fees	12,804		12,804	6,581
		VAT and tax recovered	0		0	14,184
			27,760	0	27,760	25,314
4d	Other ordinary incoming resources:					
		insurance Claim / Rent	350		350	2,227
		Contra			0	0
			350	0	350	2,227
4e	Income from investments:					
		Dividends & Interest	563		563	32
			563	0	563	32
	TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES		147,751.60	27,593.73	175,346.33	170,507

RESOURCES USED

		Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2022 £	Funds 2021 £
Grants / Donations:					
Missionary & charitable giving:					
	Zambia Link	1,500		1,500	1,500
	Home Missions and Societies	4,600		4,600	6,457
	Zambia Priest Training	0	596	596	500
	Reach Youth	0	3,000	3,000	215
		6,100	3,596	9,696	8,672
Activities directly related to the work of the church:					
Ministry:					
	Diocesan quota, etc.	63,549		63,549	31,774
	Clergy expenses	11,697		11,697	557
	Church running expenses	16,295		16,295	12,140
	Church maintenance	5,154		5,154	71,727
Expenditure on:					
	Parish magazine	3,161		3,161	3,333
	Upkeep of churchyards	1,975		1,975	3,672
	E Lambrook Schoolroom	1,440		1,440	2,740
	Yurt Project	4,750		4,750	
	Misc	682		682	
Remuneration:					
	D of Music and Organists	2,295		2,295	1,795
	Secretarial services	7,207		7,207	2,422
	Fund raising	40		40	232
	Books / Gifts	38		38	0
	Fees	3,531		3,531	2,907
		121,814	0	121,814	133,298
Church management & administration:					
	Printer, stationery, etc.	2,190		2,190	125
		2,190	0	2,190	125
Contra (collections for charities, etc.)				0	0
		0	0	0	0
TOTAL RESOURCES USED		130,104	3,596	133,700	142,096

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Independent Examiner's Report to the members/trustees of South Petherton with the Seavingtons and Lambrooks Parochial Church Council

I report on the accounts for the year ended 31 December 2022 which are set out on pages 1 to 6.

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 of the Charities Act 2011 (The Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act
- follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act; and
- 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 members and trustees concerning such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in a full audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below. 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:

- which give me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
  - to keep accounting records in accordance with S130 of the Charities Act; and
  - to prepare accounts which accord with these accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act.

  have not been met.

I 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.

Tim Farley FCCA

10 May 2023

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SOUTH PETHERTON WITH

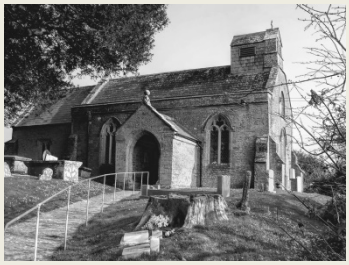
England & Wales - Charity number 1128940

Accounts

Annual Report of the

Parochial Church Council

for the year ended 31st December 2021



United Benefice of

South Petherton with the Seavingtons and the Lambrooks

1. Objectives and Activities

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) of the United Benefice of South Petherton with the Seavingtons and the Lambrooks in the Diocese of Bath and Wells has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent in promoting throughout the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.

The PCC is a charity registered with the Charity Commission (no. 1128940).
It also has maintenance responsibilities for

- the church of St Peter and St Paul's in South Petherton;
- the church and churchyard of St Michael's in Seavington St Michael;
- the church and churchyard of St James's in East Lambrook and the schoolroom; and
- the churchyard at Seavington St Mary's (the church was declared redundant in 1984 and vested with the Churches Conservation Trust).

2. Focus in 2021

The PCC sought

- in accordance with Church of England guidance and Government regulation to manage the continuation of worship, private prayer and activities throughout the Covid-19 pandemic;
- to manage the continuation of worship, private prayer and activities throughout the long-term absence of the Rector due to ill-health and the subsequent vacancy;
- to support the retired clergy, reader, lay worship assistants and churchwardens in maintaining the work and presence of the Church in our communities through difficult times.

3. Activities during 2021

2021 was another difficult year, wasn't it?

The continuing Covid-19 pandemic and the need of many for caution saw us still having to limit access to our churches, and yes, at times, close them altogether. However hard we might try, it's not an appealing thing to put up with masks, hand gels and social-distancing, an absence of congregational singing ('hums' don't quite cut it) and the loss of the warmth of simply being together. We waved vaguely to each other instead of passing the Peace; we spent much of the year unable or unsure of something as simple and communal as staying on for coffee and conversation; we struggled to hear each other through masks and couldn't see the smiles.

Yet somehow not all was lost. We were able to come and worship together most of the year. Once again we learnt just how important it is to each of us simply to be able to be in church and to keep in touch.

We owe a tremendous debt to the love and commitment of our retired clergy: Andrew Callon, D Fyfe, Ian Gibson, John Tyler and Wendy Mitchell; to Geoff Wade our erstwhile Area Dean and near neighbour –a true friend beyond measure in our time of need; and to our churchwardens. Whatever the challenges from covid concerns and the ever-changing guidance, they rose to it all with a will to keep the light of God's love visible in our benefice. What an answer to prayer John Tyler's arrival was. Just at that moment a deterioration in Andrew's health left him unable to continue to officiate, John moved to Ilminster and brilliantly came to our rescue at St Peter and St Paul's. We really have been blessed by our wonderful retired clergy in hard times.

Harvest Supper at St Peter & St Paul's

Once again our usual activities were somewhat curtailed, though thankfully as the year went on – as the vaccine roll-out progressed, as the potency of changing virus variants waned, and as confidence in managing things safely grew – something like a previous normal began to re-emerge.

What is remarkable is the positivity and ingenuity that went into making it so. Services in church continued albeit being adapted where necessary. 'Sunday Worship at Home' augmented with newsy updates. continued to be distributed by e-mail or printed and dropped through letter boxes. Harvest suppers happened ('parties' being allowed again by October). The Parish Magazine continued. 'Open House' at St Peter and St Paul's relaunched and was well supported. The plant sale went 'virtual' again rather than not going ahead at all and was a very successful fundraiser, as indeed was Gift Day.

We even had our Autumn Fair at St Peter & St Paul's; St James's held their Christmas Fayre; South Petherton went ahead with its Christmas Lights Switch-On event, resulting in a glorious 'Peel of Bells' to decorate St Peter & St Paul's. John Tyler held a 6-week course of talks on '*Understanding the Bible Better*'. What is also remarkable was how the response to all these things showed a real thirst for the glue that holds us all together.

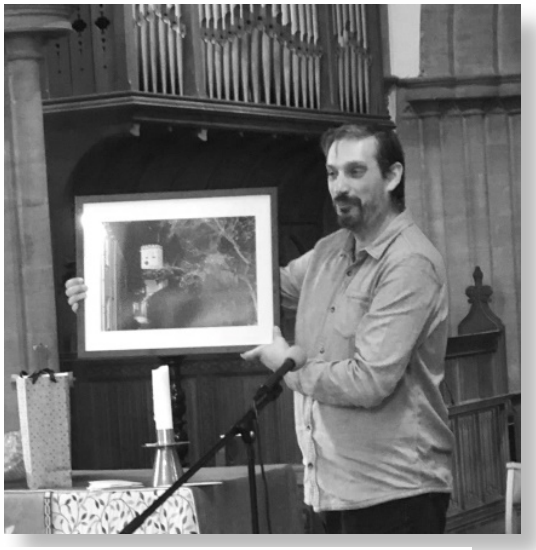
Autumn Fair: finding treasures in the bric-à-brac

Speaking of positive energy, what about the amazing staff of our Infants' School! It and they, inspiringly and tirelessly led by Shan Weston, just kept going and going through every challenge. Term time and holidays, whatever the needs of the children Shan and the staff rose to meet them with energy and selfless care. The endless disruptions to teaching and learning were demanding for parents, children and teachers alike; to work well for our children it placed huge demands all round. As the extent of the impact all this has had on the lives, learning and well-being of our young people became increasingly clear, so too did the professionalism, care and love of an outstanding team.

Shan Weston leading collective worship in the School Hall

4. Significant Events

As if an on-going pandemic – closures, cancellations, isolation and heartaches – was not significant enough in itself, 2021 was a year of many significant events. So where to start?



Farewell to Tom Handy

Much of the year was a shaped by the long-term absence of our Rector through ill-health. We'll not dwell on a Diocesan machinery that did not seem to us to grasp the issue at all well; there was little by way of urgency or strategy leaving both Tom and the benefice with too little support for far too long, or at least that is what it felt like. We continue to pray for Tom Handy and his family and we wish him well following his resignation in 2021. Thankfully in August we were able to give him and the girls a bit of a farewell with a tea for 50+ people and gifts for Tom and the girls.

We are immensely thankful that a resolution to Tom's predicament did finally emerge such that we could formally move on and begin to think of the future. Central to that was the process of finding a successor, and we must give credit to the Diocesan machinery that at this point they did not hold out for the usual length of a vacancy but recognised the need of the benefice not just to make the right appointment but to be able to get on with making it in a timely way. There was a lot to do. Words alone cannot express the PCC's gratitude to Jane Ward for coming forward at this point, getting her head around an intricate process and, crucially, masterminding the task of creating the Parish Profile. We really do feel the Profile represented the whole benefice and did so extraordinarily well – what it is, what it has been through, and what our aspirations are. The way Jane went about it was exemplary, ensuring that all areas and all interests were consulted and included. The final document was warm and inviting, very informative and above all an open and honest portrayal. It certainly earned many plaudits from the Diocesan representatives who read it and commented on it. We must remember that the Profile is not now, post appointment of our new Rector, a done thing consigned to a dusty shelf. It is a blueprint for the benefice and for the new Rector in the years to come and something we will frequently refer to as a yardstick for how well we are achieving our ambitions.

Words alone are not enough, but flowers may help

The whole appointment process reached its conclusion at the start of October with interviews for our Rector. The rest, as they say, is now history. Suffice it to say that the decision was made easy by an outstanding candidate that we were delighted to offer the post to, and even more delighted when Rev Tracey Hallett accepted it.

And so onwards to the not inconsiderable tasks of working with the Diocese's Property Services Department (and with Tracey and Dean) to turn a very run-down rectory into a warm a and welcoming home, and planning for a licensing service in January.

Our three churches largely managed the challenges of the year in their individual ways to suit the availability of clergy and their own preferences for worship. However, all the members of our combined PCC worked together to get through the difficulties and look forward to the future. A great determination to come out of the challenge strong, invigorated and united in the one desire of furthering God's purpose across the benefice was revealed in the process. The early challenge for 2022 for our new Rector is to build on that determination so that our benefice achieves the goals set out in the profile while maintaining the unique character of each of our three churches

There were three other important personnel changes in 2021. Our Parish Administrator of many, many years, Shelley Langdon left us in October for new challenges working full-time in the NHS. Cue more flowers and warm words in recognition of the dedicated service that Shelley gave us. The administrator role is a vitally enabling one, and the PCC was keen to ensure that our new rector was fully supported from the start. Fortunately we were able to appoint an excellent replacement, Renira Rutherford, who hit the ground running at the start of December and is now proving just how crucial to making things work this role is. Another post thankfully filled is that of PCC Secretary. Janet Strugnell has kindly taken this on. Previously it has been a persistently vacant position that we have muddled along without for several years; it is really good to have someone to give it the focus and attention it needs. The third change is problematic. In October, Hamish Arnold resigned as PCC Treasurer having tried manfully for 18 months to fit in all that needs doing alongside his day job. It became too much, but we thank Hamish for stepping into the role at short notice and for doing all that he was able to do for us. Some eight months on we are still - despite our best efforts and one very near miss- still without a Treasurer. This is simply not sustainable. The <u>one</u> thing we cannot get by without is someone with a proper handle on the accounts. We are muddling along by dividing up the role into chunks that various volunteers can manage, but the present is **<u>not</u>** an acceptable or long-term solution. There is too much risk to our reputation and to our viability.

On a much more positive note, it is a relief as well as a please to report the completion of the restoration of the south aisle roof at St Peter & St Paul's. The work began in February 2021 and completed in June. Our contractors, Ellis & Co, were excellent to work with and their workmanship – to judge by the lack of leaks on that side of the church since – is exactly what we had hoped it would be. Seen from above the new roof is bright and shiny, but it will weather to look just like lead and until it does it is only the local crows and the occasional passing hot air balloon or microlite that will see that it is not lead.

A bright and shiny new south aisle roof

No mention of the new roof can be made without thanking: everyone for the enormous fund-raising efforts that took place and the generosity of the many who contributed; the Friends of South Petherton Church whose very generous grant made up nearly half of the funds we needed; the Diocesan Board of Finance who accepted our 6-month suspension of Parish Share payments without question. We now have a roof alarm in place which improves our insurance cover in the event of another lead theft in the future; we thank the All Churches Trust for contributing 50% of the costs of its installation.

Thanks to all of that, the impact of the roof replacement on our finances has not been as devastating as we had first feared it could be. Nevertheless, the headache of our finances remains a constant. 2021 was such an untypical year that comparison of the accounts this year with previous years gives little insight. The profile of our income remains noticeably reliant on a few <u>very</u> generous regular donors. Our expenditure is dominated by our Parish Share equivalent to a cost of around £500 per church member. In among all the

numbers on the balance sheet that leaves less than we might like to drive the initiatives that will support our new rector in her drive to realise the ambitions in our Parish Profile.

Sadly, we lost or otherwise said 'goodbye' in 2021 to several much loved people in our congregations:-

- The congregation at St James is small so it was with great sadness we lost Harold Faulkner in January, followed by his wife Pat moving nearer to her son, followed by Morar Lucas who moved into a home near to her children.
- At St Peter & St Paul's we lost Ivor Male, Heather Pearne and James Abery; there were covid-delayed thanksgivings for Daphne Blake, Joan Raikes and Charlotte Carlisle. Mary Sidwell moved to residential care. Daphne and Brian Holden moved back towards the south-east England to be nearer to family.

We have been greatly blessed through the love and faithfulness of these lovely people.

The view from St James's Church **Susan Ogilvy**

We at St James's surfaced from the trials and tribulations of 2020 with an air of relief that the worst was over, and so it has proved to be. Even the usually dreary period of an interregnum was much cheered by the need to get on with jobs that had had to be postponed by the pandemic; the preparation of the Parish Profile, so ably masterminded by Jane Ward; and by the belief that we were heading out of the doldrums. There was an air of rolling up our sleeves and getting on with things.

The faithful congregation of St James's Church emerged into this period of renewal gladly, but cautiously. We continued to have all our usual services, but curtailed by Covid rules and liberally seasoned with hand sanitiser, and for these we are truly grateful to all the retired clergy who have looked after us so kindly and generously for so long. We have been blessed to have them. We have also been blessed to have all the other people who help to keep our much loved little church ticking along – all those who clean, arrange flowers, play the organ, make rotas etc, – all unseen and unsung heroes playing their parts in the life of the church.

In September came the wonderful news that we now had a new Rector, Reverend Tracey Hallett, and we knew that our long wait only had three more months to run. Even those three months were supported by Tracey, as she kept in touch with us while completing her notice period with her previous parish.

For myself, I have been enormously grateful to so many people for their help in looking after St James's Church, but in particular to Mark Stainer. Mark has quietly taken on more and more of the running of the church and has been a Godsend to me. It has been a huge privilege to be St James's churchwarden for so long, but I know it is time to go. I am quite sure that Mark will pick up ably where I leave off and will be a wonderful churchwarden for us all.

The view from St Michael's Church **Manda Jaggers**

St Michael's was fortunate to remain open throughout most of the pandemic, a decision taken by the churchwardens which reflected the needs of the people in Seavington. We are indebted to the retired clergy, in particular Canon Ian Gibson, who took on the role of Honorary Rector during the vacancy, at the request of the Archdeacon of Taunton, and Rev Sue Hounsell, who for the past 12 years has led worship on most of our major feast days as well as many weekly services.

In 2021, we resumed weekly services in St Michael's, including Easter Communion in the garden. At this service, two beautiful candlesticks, formed from one of the damaged millennium oaks by Peter Thomas, a local craftsman and kindly donated by the Parish Council, were blessed, as was our new green season lectern cover, made by Carol Talbot, one of our congregation and a member of the PCC. We also had a

village Remembrance Sunday service at the village war memorial on the Playing Field, which was attended by more than 30 villagers.

Services were also held in St Mary's Church, including Christingle and Rogation.

In the autumn, two beautiful weddings were held at St Michael's, both blessed with a lack of covid restrictions and wonderful sunshine.

We are grateful that the "Flower Ladies" were able to continue their stunning floral arrangements during this difficult period.

Vic, our wonderful bellringer, calls us to worship every Sunday, we are so grateful to him making the journey from Westport to do this.

We are very excited to look forward to our church continuing to grow within our community in the care of Rev Hallett, we wish her a warm welcome and every happiness. St Michael's will continue to provide a wide range of worship forms, including less formal and fresh expression and Café Church will resume in March 2022.

Easter Day service at St Michael's

Flowers at a Seavington Wedding

Harvest Supper at the Seavington Millennium Hall

5. Looking Forward — Rev Tracey Hallett

This year the APCM will mark a fresh start in the life of our Benefice, it offers us an opportunity to recommit ourselves to work together to seek new ways in which we will journey to bring God's kingdom here in the communities that we serve. And so, as we look forward and begin to think strategically about where God might be leading our Benefice, essentially our starting place is to pray and to discern wisely! Therefore, I am looking forward to our PCC praying together regularly to seek God's vision for moving us forward.

Here are some questions I'd like us to consider as we aim to move forward:

- Do we see a bigger picture beyond our everyday routine?
- Does our Church look beyond maintaining Sunday worship and finances?
- How can we work with God to build the kingdom in our lives and community?

Interestingly I was asked again only this morning 'what is your vision and where will we be in five years'? We need to find an answer to this together! Yes, I do have a sense of vision which has been undergirded in regular prayer and reflects the calling God placed on me being appointed as your Rector. However, this is a vision that is gradually developing and needs in us discerning God's direction. It would be wrong of me to impose my view and vision on the PCC and to determine a direction of travel without corporate prayer. To look forward without us working together in mutuality and partnership, in relationship with each other and God, would be unfair and not at all honouring to God's mission. It is evident within the Parish Profile that a great deal of prayer and discernment has already taken place and so as we pray together.

- we will review the Parish Profile
- we look at our hopes and dreams
- we will determine where we are now, where we would like to be and how we will get there
- we will go forward together and I look forward to building good strong and positive relationships in the Church and it's community

I look forward to things looking very different as God reveals the next step of our journey for this Benefice and let's LOOK FORWARD TOGETHER.

6. Membership

In April, 2021, there were 158 members registered on the Church Electoral Roll and 130 in our 'worshipping community' as declared on our Parish Share Survey. Essentially, the latter is the same as 2020 which, given the difficulties in the context of Covid closures and restrictions, is the only practical means of estimation.

In truth, these numbers represent only our best guess. Going forward, given the financial consequences of over-estimating our church membership, we need to take a much more robust look at calculating this number in time for the 2022 Parish Share Return.

7. Charitable Giving

The policy for making grants and donations (as a proportion of our regular income) is reviewed annually. Members of the congregations are encouraged to suggest to the Charitable Giving Committee (chaired by Alastair Fyfe) suitable charitable organisations that we might support. The list of charitable causes we supported this year is attached to the annual accounts of the PCC.

8. Volunteers

Volunteers play a significant role in the work of the church — indeed they are the church and a logical response to our Lord, the Servant King. In all, it is estimated that in the normal course of events over 100 people would be involved in one way or another. That's too many to list by name but thank you all for what you do; without volunteers we cannot do anything. The more volunteers we have, the sooner we can address the issues that will take us forward.

Our many church volunteers are also involved with organisations in the local secular community: there has been a particular need this year for volunteers to join in community efforts to support people self-isolating and those living on their own. Apart from the incumbent, one part-time employed Parish Administrator and the part-time Director of Music, all those involved in the work of the parish are unpaid.

9. Safeguarding

Our benefice is committed to and will champion the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults. Everyone who meets us, comes to us, or works with us should feel safe and cared for irrespective of their social background, culture, their abilities, religious belief or any other factor. It is the responsibility of all of us, individually as well as collectively, to make these aspirations real, to look out for one another and to pass on any concerns.

As required by the Church of England, we have a designated safeguarding officer (Sue Harrison) and an approved policy to guide our actions. Sue's role is to support, advise and deal with certain specific issues for which she has been trained – but she does not 'do safeguarding' for us; we are all responsible for doing the right thing and for acting if things fall short.

The PCC is responsible for ensuring the benefice has a safeguarding policy which is agreed, understood and enacted. We have approved our own Safeguarding Policy and will keep it under review both to keep it in line with current expectations and also to customise it to meet our own needs. The PCC routinely receives reports in particular to enable us to track the safe recruitment of volunteers where their roles bring them into contact with children and/or vulnerable adults in their 'official' capacity. ('Safe recruiting' involves a DBS check, the uptake of references, a clear role description, an induction interview and an assessment of training needs.)

Further information about safeguarding including contact details for reporting (in confidence) any concern is available from the church website: *https://southpethertonbenefice.org/safeguarding/*

10. Financial Review

At the end of 2020, the PCC held funds of £100,255. The full accounts are reported separately.

11. Reserves Policy

The PCC's policy is to accumulate unrestricted funds from legacies and one-off donations in a 'Memorial Fund' for use primarily on capital projects. The PCC's policy is to hold reserves across all its unrestricted funds which are equivalent to four months' general expenditure. The PCC last reviewed this policy in July 2010. The policy of investing fund balances in the Central Board of Finance Church of England Deposit Fund has been standard for at least the past ten years.

12. Administrative Information

The correspondence address is The Rectory, Hele Lane, South Petherton, Somerset, TA13 5DY.

During the year, the following served as members of the Parochial Church Council:

Incumbent:	*In vacancy*
Readers:	Geoffrey Abery
Wardens:	Steve Harrison (PCC Vice-Chairman), Amanda Jaggers, Susan Ogilvy, Anne Shaw, Mark Stainer, and Daphne Woodhouse (Churchwardens are elected annually)
Deanery Synod Reps:	Phil Andrews, Amanda Maggs, Mike Armstrong (Term of office: 2020-23)
Elected Lay Members:	Penny Armstrong (2023), Hamish Arnold (resigned 10/2021), Richard Brooks (2023), Alastair Fyfe (2024), Caroline Ireland-Jones (2024), Debbie Jones (resigned 05/2021), Janet Strugnell (2024), Carol Talbot (2022), (APCM at which members complete their term of office and may next seek re-election)
Co-opted members:	Jane Ward (Profile Co-ordinator), and Shan Weston (Headteacher of the C of E. V.A. Infants School and Pre-School),

Other Key Contacts:	Independent Examiner of Accounts: Tim Farley, Manor Farm Cottage, Lopen, South Petherton, TA13 5JP Bankers: NatWest Bank plc.
Safeguarding Officer:	Sue Harrison, 9 Lampreys Lane, South Petherton, TA13 5DU
Gift Aid Secretary:	Julia Lear, Toad Hall, 14 St. Michael's Gardens, South Petherton, TA13 5BD
Parish Administrator:	Shelley Langdon (resigned 10/2021), Renira Rutherford (from 12/2021), Parish Office (office@southpethertonbenefice.org)
Website Manager:	Stephen Carp

Structure, governance and management

Members of the PCC are either ex-officio or elected Deanery Synod representatives with a term of three years or elected lay representatives with a term of three years elected by thirds at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting in accordance with the Church Representation Rules and after due notice. The PCC works through and in co-operation with a number of committees/informal groups (see below).

Leadership Team

The Leadership Team met occasionally this year to support the churchwardens, to ensure the continuation of worship and to guide the benefice through the particular challenges we faced in 2021. It has consisted of Rev'd Geoff Wade (chair), Canon Ian Gibson, and the churchwardens.

Standing Committee

The Standing Committee has power to transact the business of the PCC between its meetings, subject to directions given by the Council. (This is the only committee required by law). It normally consists of: the Rector, the churchwardens, the Hon Treasurer, the Hon Secretary, the vice-chair of the PCC.

Finance Committee

A Finance Committee was formed to advise the PCC on budgetary matters and the overall financial management of its affairs. Both the Friends of South Petherton Church and the St Michael's Church Seavington Trust were represented on the committee. The Committee did not meet during 2021. Delegations are in place in respect of the Rector and Churchwardens for authorising small routine expenditures.

Church Committees

These are ad hoc groups at each church which may meet under the chairmanship of a churchwarden to discuss matters pertinent to that church locally rather than the whole benefice. They may, for example, discuss matters of house-keeping or maintenance and they have powers of expenditure limited to that available to the churchwardens without PCC authorisation.

Charitable Giving Review Group

The PCC made donations to some 25 charities, organisations and societies in 2021, amounting to one-tenth of the annual regular income received by the Parish in the previous financial year. The Charitable Giving Review Group (chaired by Alastair Fyfe) was responsible for recommending which charities and charitable organisations might be deserving of financial support. Prior to the meeting, the Review Group had sought the views of members of the Parish, many of whom responded with suggestions. The Review Group then presented its recommendations to the PCC. This year, the total amount dispensed was £4,800. The PCC also made a donation to the Zambia Parishes (Chibaya Mulala, Katuta and Museba) of £1,500.

As before, beneficiaries were selected by the Charitable Giving Review Group across a broad spectrum of society, including the Church and Christian Societies, Hospitals and Medical units, the Third World, Agriculture, local schools and charities supporting the elderly and young people.

There have been regular collections of food donated to 'The Lord's Larder' foodbank in Yeovil, and also regular collections of unwanted spectacles and used postage stamps which help to provide benefit to those in need. Finally, the Parish fulfilled 50% (i.e. nearly £31,800) of its commitment to the Diocese through its 'Parish Share' (the other 50% being retained to help finance the roof replacement at St Peter & St Paul's and to keep the PCC solvent through the project). In previous years our Parish Share was met in full.

Zambia Link

The Anglican Church in Zambia grew out of the missionary impetus of David Livingstone and others in the second half of the 19th century. Today, Anglicans are around 2% of the population of 13 million in Zambia, ie around 260,000 people.

Our Diocese of Bath and Wells has enjoyed a Companion Link with the Anglican Church in Zambia since 1978. There are five dioceses in Zambia, each covering an area at least the size of England. We have a particular link with the Diocese of Luapula (in the area to the north).

South Petherton Church of England Voluntary Aided Infants School and Pre-School

The majority of governors of the school (ie the foundation governors) are nominated for appointment through the PCC. Our Foundation governors in 2020 were Kirsten Carp, Sue Harrison, and Richard

Killen. Vacancies for Foundation Governors occasionally arise (there are several vacancies at the time of writing): anyone interested in the role should contact Shan Weston (Head Teacher) for further information.

Parish Magazine

Articles for inclusion should be sent to office@southpethertonbenfice.org by around the 17th of each month (earlier in February). We do our best to ensure that articles are printed as they are written but reserve the right to edit copy where necessary. Julia Lear manages the advertising in the magazine. We are grateful to our advertisers whose support enables us to keep our costs to readers down – we do ask our readers to support our advertisers in return.

South Petherton Mothers Union Branch

An active branch of the Mothers' Union (in normal times) meets monthly; contact Judith Riley for more information.

Fund-raising Group

This group meets to plan and co-ordinate a range of fundraising events. These events make a huge difference to our balance sheet and therefore to the extent to which we can invest in the activities through which we can reach out to our community. Volunteers are needed to share the load this group bears. Whether or not you can volunteer, new ideas for events are always welcomed.

For and on behalf of the Parochial Church Council
(May 2022)

Reflections of a new church warden for APCM 2022

For several years I have stood in awe of Steve Harrison and how he performs his duties as churchwarden, with such skill and commitment. I was prompted to consider the role a number of times previously but never felt it was quite right for me. However, last year, when prompted again, I had a sense that God had a role for me as churchwarden and I can say it is a joy and a privilege to complete my first year. There has been a lot to learn but, as you would expect, Steve is an able teacher. He has also encouraged me to focus my efforts on those aspects where my gifts are strongest. Our gifts are often discernible by looking at what we most enjoy or, put slightly differently.... what gives us joy. Some churches give to one of their wardens the title 'People's Warden'. This idea combines well with my role as pastoral care co-ordinator but makes writing a report rather more difficult!

As a result, this is more a reflection than a report on the events since I began as church warden. At the time of last year's APCM our benefice, of necessity during the vacancy, consisted of three separate church entities. God was at work in all three churches, of course, having provided each with wonderful clergy support and faithful praying congregations. Here at Saint Peter and Saint Paul's, we were supported by Reverend Andrew Callon, who for health reasons was followed by Reverend John Tyler. In my view, the ministry of all the retired clergy provided us with stability, encouragement and healing kindness, all of which set us up for the future. We were then ready to begin the shared task of finding a new rector.

This process was magnificently navigated by our more experienced churchwardens and, thanks to the generous and skilful services of Jane Ward, our benefice profile was prepared, following surveys of the congregations, the schools and the communities. All this work was blessed by the Lord and contributed to his call on the next step in the life of Rev Tracey Hallett, who responded eagerly and pursued the path to our benefice.

There were hurdles along the way relating to the rectory but, undeterred by having to commute from Taunton for a month, Tracey began her ministry among us in January. We are grateful to her husband Dean for his part in making this happen. Tracey has brought with her a clear sense of vision which aligns amazingly with our vision expressed in the benefice profile. Only God could match the gifts, talents, experience and personality of a person to the needs of three such different communities and congregations.

The term 'vacancy' is officially applied to the position of rector but, for a period we had vacant posts of treasurer and administrator as well as rector. This was a particularly busy time for Steve and his wife, Sue, who both stepped into numerous aspects of administration, in addition to their respective roles as warden and benefice safeguarding officer. Several people have taken on parts of the treasurer's role to maintain the smooth running of the benefice and their willingness to help is much appreciated. This is ongoing as there are still some difficulties with regard to the appointment of treasurer.

It was a great delight to welcome Renira Rutherford to the team as benefice administrator, just in time to provide the invaluable admin support that enables Tracey to lead us as an outward-facing benefice, as we emerge from the difficulties of the past few years.

Some of the features of our profile were to regain and further develop the unity of our benefice, and to grow in depth of fellowship and in numbers. I see these aspects of unity and growth as indivisible from one another. Reaching out to our communities with God's love depends on solid footings within. We will grow in capacity as we follow Jesus and his commandment to love one another... "by this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." John 13:35. We have congregations with wonderful people who readily join together to serve and now we are increasingly drawing together under Tracey's leadership as we look to grow God's kingdom in our communities. Exciting times! Praise God!

Daphne Woodhouse

PCC of South Petherton with the Seavingtons and the Lambrooks

Charity Registration Number 1128940

FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS for the year ended 31 December 2021

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st DECEMBER 2021

	Note	2021		2020
		£	£	£
CURRENT ASSETS				
Debtors and Pre-Payments	1	16,603		9,113
Short Term Deposits		33,641		33,623
Cash at Bank		59,454		33,250
			109,698	75,986
CURRENT LIABILITIES				
Amounts falling due within one year	2	9,443		4,143
			9,443	4,143
NET CURRENT ASSETS			100,255	71,843
NET ASSETS			100,255	71,843
FUNDS	3			
Unrestricted				
General Fund			99,322	28,616
Memorial Fund			665	43,227
St James Fund			0	0
Restricted			267	0
			100,255	71,843

The notes to the accounts start on page 3

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES for the year ended 31st DECEMBER 2021

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2021 £	Funds 2020 £
INCOMING RESOURCES					
From Donors	4a	105,299	0	105,299	73,024
Other Voluntary Income	4b	37,368	267	37,636	28,810
Charitable and ancilliary trading	4c	25,314	0	25,314	11,889
Other ordinary income	4d	2,227	0	2,227	22,705
From investments	4e	32	0	32	252
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES		170,240	267	170,507	136,680
RESOURCES USED					
Grants / Donations	5a	8,672	0	8,672	2,412
Activities directly related to the work of the church	5b	133,298	0	133,298	125,309
Churches management and administration	5c	125	0	125	0
Contra	5d	0	0	0	0
TOTAL RESOURCES USED		142,096	0	142,096	127,721
NET INCOMING / OUTGOING RESOURCES		28,144	267	28,412	8,958
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		28,144	267	28,412	8,958
BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD at 1st JANUARY 2021		71,843	0	71,843	62,885
BALANCES CARRIED FORWARD at 31st December 2021		99,987	267	100,255	71,843

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS for the year ended 31st DECEMBER 2021

ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2016 together with applicable accounting standards and the Charities SORP. This involves the production of a balance sheet, and the adjustment to the cash figures of both opening and closing accruals, now shown on the statement of financial activities for the year. The financial statements this year have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

The accounts include 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.

Funds

General (unrestricted) funds represent the funds of the PCC that are not subject to any restriction regarding their use and are available for application on the general purposes of the PCC. Funds which are subject to restrictions as to their use are shown separately.

The **Memorial Fund** was established by the PCC in November 2003 to hold monies given to the PCC under bequests or legacies, or in memory or thanksgiving for God's grace. The PCC is free to use these funds as it deems appropriate. Major works items (not covered by Grants) have been charged to the Memorial Fund.

St James Fund holds funds which were provided specifically for the maintenance of St James Church.

Restricted Funds relate to charities and other funds which are considered independent of the PCC funds and are, therefore, accounted for separately.

Incoming Resources

Collections are recognised when received by or on behalf of the PCC. Planned giving receivable under Gift Aid is recognised only when received.

Income tax recoverable on gift aid donations is recognised when the income is recognised.

Grants and legacies to the PCC are accounted for as soon as the PCC is notified of its legal entitlement and for the amount due.

Income from investments is accounted for when receivable. Realised gains or losses on investments are recognised when investments are sold. Unrealised gains or losses on investments are accounted for on revaluation of investments at 31st December.

Resources Used

Grants and donations are accounted for when paid over.

The Diocesan quota (Parish Share) is a voluntary contribution to the costs of the Diocese but not a legal liability and is accounted for when payable.

Fixed Assets

Consecrated and beneficed land and buildings are excluded from the accounts by virtue of Section 10(2)(c) of the Charities Act 2011.

No value is placed on movable church furnishings held by the churchwardens on special trust for the PCC and which require a faculty for disposal since the PCC considers this to be inalienable property. All expenditure incurred during the year on consecrated or benefice buildings and movable church furnishings, whether maintenance or improvement, is written off as expenditure in the Statement of Financial Activities (on page 2).

1 DEBTORS and PRE-PAYMENTS

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £
Income Tax Recoverable	16,513	
Prepayments	90	
	16,603	0

2 LIABILITIES

Magazine Adverts pre-paid for 2022	2,545
HMRC	
Other payments due	698
Due to Charities	6,200
	9,443

3 ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BY FUND

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total £
Current Assets	16,603	-	16,603
Current Liabilities	9,443	-	9,443
Fund Balance	7,160	-	7,160

INCOMING RESOURCES

		Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2021 £	Funds 2020 £
4a	Incoming resources from donors:				
	Gift Aid	38,649		38,649	36,114
	Income tax recoverable	24,184		24,184	10,179
	Non Gift Aid	3,144		3,144	3,917
	Collections at services	10,146		10,146	8,244
	Gift Day	12,013		12,013	11,795
	Sundry donations	8,025		8,025	2,775
	Roof Appeal	9,137		9,137	
	Misc			0	
		105,299	0	105,299	73,024
4b	Other vouluntary incoming resources:				
	Grants	23,669		23,669	5,435
	Legacies	0		0	4,651
	Fundraising	6,054		6,054	18,604
	Zambia Priest Training		267	267	120
	Bath & Wells	7,646		7,646	
		37,368	267	37,636	28,810
4c	Income from charitable and ancillary trading:				
	Magazine sales	3,423		3,423	3,511
	Magazine advertising revenue	193		193	2,240
	E Lambrook School Room	920		920	420
	Book / Gift stall	14		14	
	Fees	6,581		6,581	5,718
	VAT and tax recovered	14,184		14,184	
		25,314	0	25,314	11,889
4d	Other ordinary incoming resources:				
	insurance Claim / Rent	2,227		2,227	22,705
	Contra			0	0
		2,227	0	2,227	22,705
4e	Income from investments:				
	Dividends & Interest	32		32	252
		32	0	32	252
	TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES	170,240	267	170,507	136,680

RESOURCES USED

			Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2021 £	Funds 2020 £
5a	Grants / Donations:					
	Missionary & charitable giving:					
		Zambia Link	1,500		1,500	0
		Home Missions and Societies	6,457		6,457	0
		Zambia Priest Training	500		500	812
		Misc	215		215	1,600
			8,672	0	8,672	2,412
5b	Activities directly related to the work of the church:					
	Ministry:					
		Diocesan quota, etc.	31,774		31,774	67,846
		Clergy expenses	557		557	1,935
		Church running expenses	12,140		12,140	39,581
		Church maintenance	71,727		71,727	1,592
	Expenditure on:					
		Parish magazine	3,333		3,333	2,970
		Upkeep of churchyards	3,672		3,672	3,049
		E Lambrook Schoolroom	2,740		2,740	1,054
	Remuneration:					
		D of Music and Organists	1,795		1,795	1,705
		Secretarial services	2,422		2,422	3,580
		Fund raising	232		232	15
		Books / Gifts	0		0	1,981
		Fees	2,907		2,907	0
			133,298	0	133,298	125,309
5c	Church management & administration:					
		Printer, stationery, etc.	125		125	0
			125	0	125	0
5d	Contra (collections for charities, etc.)		0		0	0
			0	0	0	0
	TOTAL RESOURCES USED		142,096	0	142,096	127,722

Goffey
Chartered Certified Accountants

Manor Farm Cottage, Lopen, South Petherton, Somerset. TA13 5JP
t: 01460 250798 m: 07970 868202 e: hello@goffey.net w: www.goffey.net

Independent Examiner's Report to the members/trustees of South Petherton with the Seavingtons and Lambrooks Parochial Church Council

I report on the accounts for the year ended 31 December 2021 which are set out on pages 1 to 6.

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 of the Charities Act 2011 (The Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act
- follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act; and
- 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 members and trustees concerning such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in a full audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below. 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:

- which give me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
  - to keep accounting records in accordance with S130 of the Charities Act; and
  - to prepare accounts which accord with these accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act.

  have not been met.

I 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.

Tim Farley FCCA

13 May 2022

Goffey
Chartered Certified Accountants

Manor Farm Cottage, Lopen, South Petherton, Somerset. TA13 5JP
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Tim Farley FCCA 13 May 2022

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SOUTH PETHERTON WITH

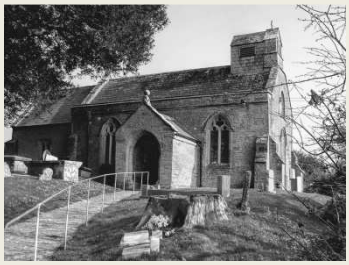
England & Wales - Charity number 1128940

Accounts

Annual Report of the

Parochial Church Council

for the year ended 31st December 2020



United Benefice of

South Petherton with the Seavingtons and the Lambrooks

1. Objectives and Activities

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) of the United Benefice of South Petherton with the Seavingtons and the Lambrooks in the diocese of Bath and Wells has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent in promoting throughout the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.

The PCC is a charity registered with the Charity Commission (no. 1128940).
It also has maintenance responsibilities for

- the church of St Peter and St Paul's in South Petherton;
- the church and churchyard of St Michael's in Seavington St Michael;
- the church and churchyard of St James's in East Lambrook and the schoolroom; and
- the churchyard at Seavington St Mary's (the church was declared redundant in 1984 and vested with the Churches Conservation Trust).

2. Focus in 2020

The PCC sought

- in accordance with Church of England guidance and Government regulation to manage the continuation of worship, private prayer and activities throughout the Covid-19 pandemic;
- to manage the continuation of worship, private prayer and activities throughout the long-term absence of the Rector due to ill-health;
- to support the retired clergy, reader, lay worship assistants and churchwardens in maintaining the work and presence of the Church in our communities through difficult times.

3. Activities during 2020

It has been a difficult year, hasn't it.

The Covid-19 pandemic has seen us having to limit access to our churches, even at times close them altogether, in a way unseen in living memory. We've had to get accustomed to masks, hand gels and social-distancing, an absence of singing (hums instead of hymns doesn't quite cut it) and the loss of the warmth of simply being together. We wave vaguely to each other instead of passing the Peace; we hurry home again without coffee or conversation; we struggle to hear each other through masks and can't see the smiles.

Easter Day: Cross of Flowers at St Peter & St Paul's

Yet somehow not all was lost. We were able to come and worship together much of the year. Perhaps we learnt again just how important it is to each of us simply to be able to be in church.

We owe a tremendous debt to the love and commitment of our retired clergy: Andrew Callon, D Fyfe, Ian Gibson, Sue Hounsell and Wendy Mitchell; to Geoff Wade our Area Dean and near neighbour – a true friend in our time of need beyond measure; to our churchwardens. Whatever the challenges covid concerns and changing guidance could throw up they have risen to with a will to keep the light of God's love visible in this place.

It would be easy to list what of our usual activities we haven't been able to do this year. What is remarkable is the agility and ingenuity that has been marshalled into doing what we could still do rather than lamenting what we can't. Services in church have continued albeit adapted where necessary, some going on-line, some going open-air; 'Sunday Worship at Home' distributed by e-mail or printed and dropped through letter boxes has become a thing; the Parish Magazine has continued; the plant sale went 'virtual' rather than not going ahead at all and was a very successful fundraiser, as indeed was Gift Day; South Petherton may not have had its Christmas Lights Switch-On event, but St Peter & St Paul's was still decorated with a 'forest of trees' laboured over at home by children and families, and residents of Burnworthy House to name but a few.

The term “new normal” became common parlance during the year. This pen-portrait of the year at St James’s says it all:-

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Apart from about a month at the beginning of the lockdown in March 2020, St James's tried to keep a semblance of normality – although without its congregations. Prayers were said, alone, every evening of Holy Week, just after the first lockdown started , and after the first month of strict lockdown, prayers or Matins were read aloud every Sunday morning – but always by one of the churchwardens alone until the church was allowed to re-open for services. Flowers and correct frontal colours were maintained throughout the year and the flag was flown when appropriate.

Once public worship was permitted we instituted a system of marking usable pews with green cards, to maintain social distancing and we opened the church for private prayer for two days a week.

During the year several services were held outside, to comply with the rules. Our Patronal Festival service on July 26th, was followed by a picnic lunch in the churchyard, Remembrance Sunday was marked by a service of Matins, read by the churchwarden, the Roll was read by an ex-serviceman and a congregation of two sat on the path outside the open door. Our usual Carols by Candlelight was replaced by a carol service outside, with Rev Andrew Callon conducting the service from the porch for the congregation gathered in the lane and churchyard.

St James's Patronal Festival picnic lunch 2020

We held two funerals during the year - both of much loved and long serving members of our congregation – and two weddings. All events complied with the rules, but still managed to provide for the occasions they marked – even with a wedding of only four guests, plus the couple, as their friends gathered in the lane to welcome them out of church to showers of rose petals.

When the pandemic hit us all, it rapidly became clear that each church needed to manage the situation in its own way. But now we at St James's hope that the worst of the pandemic is over and that the three churches of the benefice will be able to join forces again.

St James's Remembrance Sunday 2020

St James's Carol Service – Christmas Eve 2020

Similarly, there's been a new normal at St Michael's

In Seavington, we have missed our weekly public worship, as have so many during the last year, but thank God for bringing us safely through the two waves of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Early in Tom's absence, Geoff Wade, Area Dean, asked Ian Gibson, a former Canon of Chichester Cathedral who had "retired" to the village seven years previously, to lead continuing worship in Seavington. We are very grateful that Ian accepted and, when we couldn't worship together, he videoed a weekly service with his wife Terry (our unofficial director of music in the absence of singing and organ playing!) which was shared online. There was also a hard copy of worship for those who preferred it. We are and will always be, incredibly grateful to Ian and Rev Sue Hounsell, for providing weekly worship, as well as pastoral support.

Sadly, we have lost several villagers who have died during the past year, again their lives have been celebrated in slightly different ways, including garden funerals.

On a happy note, we have welcomed two very young gentleman to the church family - Rupert Talbot-White and Woody Baker, through their baptisms. We have also welcomed new villagers to our congregation and hope they will be very happy in Seavington.

This year has been very difficult for charitable organisations, including the Church Conservation Trust, who are responsible for St Mary's Church in the village. To help rectify this, villagers and other interested parties, have formed *The Friends of St Mary's*, whose first official fundraiser will be held in May 2022, but watch out for news of chumping! With the permission of the CCT, we have held more services in St Mary's, including a covid-safe adapted Christingle, led by Rev Tim Gibson, Ian's son, which was very well supported and very popular. We look forward to continuing to hold

up to six regular as well as "special" services during the year, in this beautiful (and easily accessible) church.

Once again, Seavington Parish Council have generously contributed £1000 towards the cost of maintaining the grounds of both churches (both still open churchyards). We are very grateful for their continued support and that of our Flower Ladies, who have decorated the church so beautifully whenever regulations permitted, you will see some of their work in this report and, a little teaser for next year, their very own suggestion for the next incumbent - but that's for the future!

Somerset Day 2021: Flowers at St Michael's

Speaking further of a can-do approach, what about the amazing staff of our Infants' School! It and they just kept going and going through every challenge. Term time and holidays seemed to merge into one, but whatever the needs of the children the Head Teacher and the staff rose to meet them with energy and selfless care. The dreaded home-schooling was not just demanding for parents; to work well for our children it placed huge demands on teachers who at the same time were continuing to teach vulnerable children and children of key workers in school.

Strange how there are some things that you only notice when they aren't there any more – like bells on a Sunday morning and flags on the church tower on high days. There are just some spaces in our churches that make social-distancing impossible for those involved. Likewise clock-winding at St Peter & St Paul's. The tower clock stood for months at precisely 12noon (or was it midnight?). How we missed the chiming of the passing hour – but now, thanks to Neil and Sally in their bubble, the clock is going again.

4. Significant Events

As if a global pandemic – closures, cancellations, isolation and heartaches - was not significant enough for one year. Layer upon that the long-term absence of our Rector through ill-health. We continue to pray for Tom Handy and his family and we wish him well following his resignation in 2021.

It seemed to the PCC that the machinery of the Diocese did not grasp the issue of the Rector's ill health at all well. There was little by way of urgency or strategy leaving both Tom and the benefice with little support for far too long. Very regrettably this systemic inertia led to our Area Dean resigning his position …… leaving a post which is still yet to be filled. Thankfully, Geoff has anything but resigned from his care for us. He has continued to be a rock for us to anchor on, a friend indeed when we have most needed one, keeping us together and faithful to the calling of the our Lord.

Our three churches have largely managed the Covid situation and done so in the context also of the absence of leadership from a Rector for the whole year. However, manage we have in our individual ways. Each of our churches has been wonderfully supported by a single main pillar: Andrew Callon (and latterly John Tyler) at St Peter and St Paul's, Ian Gibson at St Michael's, and Geoff Wade at St James's ….. with D Fyfe, Sue Hounsell and Wendy Mitchell adding their weight wherever and whenever needed. We really have been blessed in hard times. As necessary as it has been in 2020 to seek largely separate ways through, there will be much to do in coming back together as a single benefice in 2021.

It is often said that trouble comes in threes. In that regard, 2:30 am on 5th March 2020 will long stick in the memory. For it is then that thieves went after the lead on the south aisle roof at St Peter & St Paul's. It is small comfort that they were interrupted in the course of their work and fled the scene empty handed. By then the lead had been stripped, rolled up and dropped down into the churchyard.

Lead where it should not be

The insult to the church building is bad enough; the financial hit registers on the Richter Scale and the hours spent in enabling a replacement roof that meets with Planning Permission and the approval of the Diocesan Advisory Committee is somewhere in the stratosphere. And for what? Lead they never got with a scrap value of just over £2,000. We would gladly have paid them that to stay away.

The ripples of the financial hit will be with us for some time (as will the drain on energy the work of putting a roof back has been). Even so it could be a lot worse. A magnificent fund-raising appeal has raised a little shy of £20k, and the Friends of South Petherton Church have come in up to £30k (*thank you*!). So we are on our way and looking forward to seeing the reinstatement of the roof (not in lead!) by the middle of 2021.

The headache of our finances remains a constant. The loss of collections during church closures and the cancellation of fund-raising events have hit our expected income for the year though, praise be, the faithful have continued to find other ways of making up for that so our situation is not as desperate as once feared – it's not great, but we survive.

5. Looking Forward

There are challenges a-plenty as we look ahead:

- the general easing of Covid restrictions what sort of 'normal' we might return to and how we can do that in a way which retains everyone's confidence in the safety of what we do;
- the appointment of a new Rector;
- grasping the opportunities surfaced by lessons from the last year – streaming services and events; improving our church website; maximising the improved communications we've used to keep people who can't come to church in touch; developing our pastoral systems to better look after each other; rebuilding the work with children and young families;
- re-building cohesion between our churches as a united benefice; re-building relationships with our other Christian churches through *Churches Together*.

As ever we will seek to meet these challenges prayerfully, supporting each other as best we can.

6. Membership

In April, 2020, there were 159 members registered on the Church Electoral Roll and 130 in our 'worshipping community' as declared on our Parish Share Survey. Essentially, this is the same as 2019.

In truth, these numbers represent only our best guess. With the frequent closures/suspensions of communal worship and with many of our congregations either needing to self-isolate or cautiously choosing to do so anyway there is no reliable measure that stands scrutiny.

7. Charitable Giving

The policy for making grants and donations (as a proportion of our regular income) is reviewed annually. Members of the congregations are encouraged to suggest to the Charitable Giving Committee (chaired by Alastair Fyfe) suitable charitable organisations that we might support. The list of charitable causes we supported this year is given in the annual accounts of the PCC.

8. Volunteers

Volunteers play a significant role in the work of the church — indeed they are the church. In all, it is estimated that in the normal course of events over 100 people would be involved in one way or another. That's too many to list by name but thank you all for what you do; without volunteers we cannot do anything. The more volunteers we have, the sooner we can address the issues that will take us forward

Our many church volunteers are also involved with organisations in the local secular community: there has been a particular need this year for volunteers to join in community efforts to support people self-isolating and those living on their own. Apart from the incumbent, one part-time employed Parish Administrator and the part-time Director of Music, all those involved in the work of the parish are unpaid.

Lockdown appreciation

9. Safeguarding

Our benefice is committed to and will champion the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults. Everyone who meets us, comes to us, or works with us should feel safe and cared for irrespective of their social background, culture, their abilities, religious belief or any other factor. It is the responsibility of all of us, individually as well as collectively, to make these aspirations real, to look out for one another and to pass on any concerns.

As required by the Diocese, we have a designated safeguarding officer (Sue Harrison) and an approved policy to guide our actions. Sue's role is to support, advise and deal with certain specific issues for which she has been trained – but she does not 'do safeguarding' for us; we are all responsible for doing the right thing.

The PCC is responsible for ensuring the benefice has a safeguarding policy which is agreed, understood and enacted. We have approved our own Safeguarding Policy and will keep it under review both to keep it in line with current expectations and also to customise it to meet our own needs. The PCC routinely receives reports in particular to enable us to track the safe recruitment of volunteers where their roles bring them into contact with children and/or vulnerable adults in their 'official' capacity. ('Safe recruiting' involves a

DBS check, the uptake of references, a clear role description, an induction interview and an assessment of training needs.)

Further information about safeguarding including contact details for reporting (in confidence) any concern is available from the church website: *https://www.southpethertonbenefice.org.uk/policies/safeguarding/*

10. Financial Review

At the end of 2020, the PCC held funds of £71,843. The full accounts are reported separately.

11. Reserves Policy

The PCC's policy is to accumulate unrestricted funds from legacies and one-off donations in a "Memorial fund" for use primarily on capital projects. The PCC's policy is to hold reserves across all its unrestricted funds which are equivalent to four months' general expenditure. The PCC last reviewed this policy in July 2010. The policy of investing fund balances in the Central Board of Finance Church of England Deposit Fund has been standard for at least the past ten years.

New candlesticks at St Michael's: turned from an ancient yew tree in the churchyard that had to be felled

Refurbished WW1 Memorial in St Mary's churchyard

12. Administrative Information

The correspondence address is The Rectory, Hele Lane, South Petherton, Somerset, TA13 5DY.

During the year, the following served as members of the Parochial Church Council:

Incumbent:	The Rev'd. Tom Handy (PCC Chairman) – *absent through ill health*
Readers:	Geoffrey Abery
Wardens:	Steve Harrison (PCC Vice-Chairman), Amanda Jaggers, Susan Ogilvy and Anne Shaw (Churchwardens are elected annually)
Deanery Synod Reps:	Phil Andrews, Amanda Maggs, Daphne Woodhouse (Term of office: 2020-23)
Elected Lay Members:	Mike Armstrong, Penny Armstrong, Hamish Arnold, Jim Beveridge (resigned 02/2020), Richard Brooks (2023), Judy Deegan (resigned 03/2020), Alastair Fyfe (2021),

	Liz Harper (resigned 05/2020), Debbie Jones, Mark Stainer (2021), Carol Talbot (2022), Jane Ward (office ended 09/2020) (APCM at which members complete their term of office and may next seek re-election)
Co-opted members:	Shan Weston (Headteacher of the C of E. V.A. Infants School),

Other Key Contacts:	Independent Examiner of Accounts: Tim Farley, Manor Farm Cottage, Lopen, South Petherton, TA13 5JP Bankers: NatWest Bank plc.
Safeguarding Officer:	Sue Harrison, 9 Lampreys Lane, South Petherton, TA13 5DU
Gift Aid Secretary:	Julia Lear, *Toad Hall*, 14 St. Michael's Gardens, South Petherton, TA13 5BD
Parish Administrator:	Shelley Langdon, Parish Office (office@southpethertonchurch.org.uk)
Website Manager:	Stephen Carp

Structure, governance and management

Members of the PCC are either ex-officio or elected Deanery Synod representatives with a term of three years or elected lay representatives with a term of three years elected by thirds at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting in accordance with the Church Representation Rules and after due notice. The PCC works through and in co-operation with a number of committees/informal groups (see below).

Leadership Team

The Leadership Team has formed this year to support the churchwardens, to ensure the continuation of worship and to guide the benefice through the particular challenges we faced in 2020. It has consisted of Rev'd Geoff Wade (chair), Canon Ian Gibson, and the churchwardens.

Standing Committee

The Standing Committee has power to transact the business of the PCC between its meetings, subject to directions given by the Council. (This is the only committee required by law). It normally consists of: the Rector, the churchwardens, the Hon Treasurer, the Hon Secretary, the vice-chair of the PCC.

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee was formed to advise the PCC on budgetary matters and the overall financial management of its affairs. Both the Friends of South Petherton Church and the St Michael's Church Seavington Trust were represented on the committee. The Committee did not meet during 2020. Delegations are in place in respect of the Rector and Churchwardens for authorising small routine expenditures.

Church Committees

These are ad hoc groups at each church which may meet under the chairmanship of a churchwarden to discuss matters pertinent to that church locally rather than the whole benefice. They may, for example, discuss matters of house-keeping or maintenance and they have powers of expenditure limited to that available to the churchwardens without PCC authorisation.

Charitable Giving Review Group

The PCC made donations to some 23 charities, organisations and societies in 2020, amounting to one-tenth of the annual regular income received by the Parish in the previous financial year. The Charitable Giving Review Group (chaired by Alastair Fyfe) was responsible for deciding which charities and charitable organisations might be deserving of financial support. Prior to the meeting, the Review

Group had sought the views of members of the Parish, many of whom responded with suggestions. The Review Group then presented its recommendations to the PCC. This year, the total amount dispensed was £4,400. The PCC also made a donation to the Zambia Parishes (Chibaya Mulala, Katuta and Museba) of £1,500.

As before, beneficiaries were selected by the Charitable Giving Review Group across a broad spectrum of society, including the Church and Christian Societies, Hospitals and Medical units, the Third World, Agriculture, local schools and charities supporting the elderly and young people.

There have also been regular collections, during the year, of unwanted spectacles and used postage stamps which help to provide benefit to those in need. Finally, the Parish has fulfilled its commitment to the Diocese by meeting its 'Parish Share' in full during the past financial year.

Zambia Link

The Anglican Church in Zambia grew out of the missionary impetus of David Livingstone and others in the second half of the 19th century. Today, Anglicans are around 2% of the population of 13 million in Zambia, ie around 260,000 people.

Our diocese of Bath and Wells has enjoyed a Companion Link with the Anglican Church in Zambia since 1978. There are five dioceses in Zambia, each covering an area at least the size of England. We have a particular link with the Diocese of Luapula (in the area to the north).

South Petherton Church of England Voluntary Aided Infants School and Pre-School

The majority of governors of the school (ie the foundation governors) are nominated for appointment through the PCC. Our Foundation governors in 2020 were Kirsten Carp, Sue Harrison, Richard Killen, and Mandy Maggs. Vacancies for Foundation Governors occasionally arise (there are several vacancies at the time of writing): anyone interested in the role should contact Shan Weston (Head Teacher) for further information.

Parish Magazine

Articles for inclusion should be sent to office@southpethertonchurch.org.uk by around the 17th of each month (earlier in February). We do our best to ensure that articles are printed as they are written but reserve the right to edit copy where necessary. Julia Lear manages the advertising in the magazine. We are grateful to our advertisers whose support enables us to keep our costs to readers down – we do ask our readers to support our advertisers in return.

South Petherton Mothers Union Branch

An active branch of the Mothers' Union (in normal times) meets monthly; contact Judith Riley for more information.

For and on behalf of the Parochial Church Council
(May 2021)

Parochial Church Council
of South Petherton with
the Seavingtons and the Lambrooks

Charity Registration Number: 1128940

Annual Accounts 2020

Treasurer's Report

2020 was a year of challenges, with the unfortunate health issues of our incumbent rector in January; the attempted theft of the lead roofing over the South Aisle at St Peter's & St Paul's in March; and, not least, the ramifications from the coronavirus pandemic and resultant lockdown. This has resulted in a sizeable shortfall in collection and regular fundraising activities, alongside a substantial increase in expenses in preparation for replacing the roof in South Petherton. Thankfully, the tireless effort of a few dedicated individuals to secure grants and arrange specific activities and events has resulted in many acts of unexpected, but very welcome, generosity towards funding the shortfalls. This effort has been kindly supplemented by the generous offer from the Friends of South Petherton Church to cover a significant proportion of the costs, and has meant that we have the resources to continue to fund our historic levels of charitable contributions.

The significant increase in the church's running expenses relates to the a series of projects at St Peter's & St Paul's including: new cupboard (£2700); new aircon unit (£3100); new roof alarm (£4900); porch repairs (£4100); repairs to a memorial (£3900); repairs to the boilers (£1700); and, architectural fees associated to the project to replace the South Aisle roof (£4800). The majority of these costs were covered by a combination of donations from the Friends of South Petherton Church and the South Petherton Bell-ringers alongside the roof appeal and third party grants.

2021 will likely be another challenging year, with the ongoing coronavirus lockdowns impacting regular collections and fundraising alongside a potentially costly solution being required for the heating at both St Peter's & St Paul's as well as St Michael's. The costs of the latter are unknown at this time. Thankfully, the diocese has indicated its understanding of the benefice's challenging financial situation and has agreed to waive 50% of its parish share for 2021 and thus we are confident in the future financial security of our benefice despite the recent tribulations.

Hamish Arnold (Hon Treasurer)

Goffey

Chartered Certified Accountants

Manor Farm Cottage, Lopen, South Petherton, Somerset. TA13 5JP
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Independent Examiner's Report to the members/trustees of South Petherton with the Seavingtons Parochial Church Council

I report on the accounts for the year ended 31 December 2020 which are set out on pages 1 to 6.

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 of the Charities Act 2011 (The Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act
- follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act; and
- 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 members and trustees concerning such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in a full audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below. 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:

- which give me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
  - to keep accounting records in accordance with S130 of the Charities Act; and
  - to prepare accounts which accord with these accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act.

  have not been met.

I 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.

Tim Farley FCCA

19 May 2021

PCC of South Petherton with the Seavingtons and the Lambrooks

Charity Registration Number 1128940

FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS
for the year ended 31 December 2020

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st DECEMBER 2020

	Note	2020		2019
		£	£	£
CURRENT ASSETS				
Debtors and Pre-Payments	1	9,113		14,622
Short Term Deposits		33,623		33,481
Cash at Bank		33,250		19,085
			75,986	67,188
CURRENT LIABILITIES				
Amounts falling due				
within one year	2	4,143		4,303
			4,143	4,303
NET CURRENT ASSETS			71,843	62,885
NET ASSETS			71,843	62,885
FUNDS	3			
Unrestricted				
General Fund			28,616	3,542
Memorial Fund			43,227	59,343
St James Fund			0	
Restricted			0	
			71,843	62,885

The notes to the accounts start on page 3

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES for the year ended 31st DECEMBER 2020

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2020 £	Funds 2019 £
INCOMING RESOURCES					
From Donors	4a	73,024		73,024	80,121
Other Voluntary Income	4b	28,690	120	28,810	12,090
Charitable and ancilliary trading	4c	11,889	0	11,889	15,794
Other ordinary income	4d	22,013	692	22,705	3,562
From investments	4e	252	0	252	425
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES		135,868	812	136,680	111,992
RESOURCES USED					
Grants / Donations	5a	1,600	812	2,412	7,151
Activities directly related to the work of the church	5b	125,309	0	125,309	120,068
Churches management and administration	5c	0		0	622
Contra	5d	0	0	0	127
TOTAL RESOURCES USED		126,909	812	127,722	127,968
NET INCOMING / OUTGOING RESOURCES		8,958	0	8,958	-15,976
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		8,958	0	8,958	-15,976
BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD at 1st JANUARY		62,885	0	62,885	78,861
BALANCES CARRIED FORWARD at 31st December		71,843	0	71,843	62,885

1 DEBTORS and PRE-PAYMENTS

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £
Income Tax Recoverable	9,028	
Prepayments	85	
	9,113	0

2 LIABILITIES

Magazine Adverts pre-paid for 2021		
HMRC		
Other payments due		
Due to Charities	4,143	
	4,143	0

3 ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BY FUND

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total £
Current Assets	75,986		75,986
Current Liabilities	4,143	-	4,143
Fund Balance	71,843	-	71,843

INCOMING RESOURCES

		Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2020 £	Funds 2019 £
4a	Incoming resources from donors:				
	Gift Aid	36,114		36,114	42,016
	Income tax recoverable	10,179		10,179	14,537
	Non Gift Aid	3,917		3,917	2,168
	Collections at services	8,244		8,244	7,629
	Gift Day	11,795		11,795	10,220
	Sundry donations	2,775		2,775	3,551
		73,024	0	73,024	80,121
4b	Other vouluntary incoming resources:				
	Grants	5,435		5,435	3,927
	Legacies	4,651		4,651	0
	Fundraising	18,604		18,604	7,262
	Zambia Priest Training		120	120	801
	KEEL	0		0	100
		28,690	120	28,810	12,090
4c	Income from charitable and ancillary trading:				
	Magazine sales	3,511		3,511	3,743
	Magazine advertising revenue	2,240		2,240	1,955
	E Lambrook School Room	420		420	1,317
	Book / Gift stall	0		0	31
	Fees	5,718		5,718	5,511
	VAT and tax recovered	0		0	3,237
		11,889	0	11,889	15,794
4d	Other ordinary incoming resources:				
	Insurance Claim / Rent	22,705		22,705	3,436
	Contra	-692	692	0	126
		22,013	692	22,705	3,562
4e	Income from investments:				
	Dividends & Interest	252		252	425
		252	0	252	425
	TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES	135,868	812	136,680	111,992

RESOURCES USED

		Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2020 £	Total 2019 £
5a	Grants / Donations:				
	Missionary & charitable giving:				
	Zambia Link	0		0	1,500
	Home Missions and Societies	0		0	4,600
	Misc	1,600		1,600	250
	Zambia Priest Training	0	812	812	801
		1,600	812	2,412	7,151
5b	Activities directly related to the work of the church:				
	Ministry:				
	Diocesan quota, etc.	67,846		67,846	75,568
	Clergy expenses	1,935		1,935	3,127
	Church running expenses	39,581		39,581	12,753
	Church maintenance	1,592		1,592	14,195
	Expenditure on:				
	Parish magazine	2,970		2,970	3,044
	Upkeep of churchyards	3,049		3,049	1,009
	E Lambrook Schoolroom	1,054		1,054	1,523
	Remuneration:				
	D of Music and Organists	1,705		1,705	2,592
	Secretarial services	3,580		3,580	3,226
	Fund raising	15		15	311
	Books / Gifts	1,981		1,981	2,545
	Fees	0		0	175
		125,309	0	125,309	120,068
5c	Church management & administration:				
	Printer, stationery, etc.	0		0	622
		0	0	0	622
5d	Contra (collections for charities, etc.)	0		0	127
		0	0	0	127
	TOTAL RESOURCES USED	126,909	812	127,722	127,968

This page is for information only and does not form part of the statutory accounts

Expansion on Note 5a - Home Missions and Societies

Following a Meeting of the Charitable Giving Review Group,
it was agreed to recommend to the PCC the following grants for the current year:

Societies, The Church, Christian and the Diocese		
Bath and Wells Diocesan Association of Change Ringers	30	
Church Mission Society	100	
Friends of Wells Cathedral	70	
Churches Conservation Trust	250	
Bible Society	100	
Yeovil Christian Support Trust (Lord's Larder)	250	
Alabare (Christian Scare and Support)	250	
		1,050
Farming and Agriculture		
Farming Community Network	400	
		400
International		
Mpongwe's People	200	
Open Doors	100	
Zimbabwe - A National Emergency	100	
Samaritan's Purse (Beirut Emergency Fund)	200	
		600
Armed Forces		
SSAFA - The Armed Forces Charity	300	
Combat Stress	100	
		400
Senior Citizens		
Burnworthy House Amenities Fund	250	
South Petherton Community Shed	150	
		400
Youth, Children and Infants		
Children's Hospice (South West)	400	
South Petherton Scouts Hardship Fund	150	
South Petherton Infants Pre School	100	
South Petherton Infants School	100	
		750
Hospitals, Hospices and Medical Organisations		
St Margaret's Somerset Hospice	500	
League of Friends, South Petherton Hospital	100	
Medical Foundation for the Victims of Torture	200	
		800
GRAND TOTAL		**4,400**

Goffey

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Independent Examiner's Report to the members/trustees of South Petherton with the Seavingtons Parochial Church Council

I report on the accounts for the year ended 31 December 2020 which are set out on pages 1 to 6.

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 of the Charities Act 2011 (The Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act
- follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act; and
- 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 members and trustees concerning such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in a full audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below. 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:

- which give me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
  - to keep accounting records in accordance with S130 of the Charities Act; and
  - to prepare accounts which accord with these accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act.

  have not been met.

I 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.

Tim Farley FCCA

19 May 2021