

***St Gabriel's Church, Bishopwearmouth
Sunderland***



**Reports for the
Annual Parochial Church Meeting
for Year Ending 31st December 2023**

**Meeting to be held in Church following the 10.30 am service on
Sunday 21st April 2024.**



St Gabriel's Church

Registered Charity 1130674

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Annual Report for the year ended 31 December 2023

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

St Gabriel's Church is situated in the City of Sunderland. It is part of the Diocese of Durham, within the Church of England. The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is a corporate body which operates under the Parochial Church Council Powers Measure. The PCC is a registered charity as its gross annual income exceeds £100,000.

PCC Members serving at the end of 2023 are:

Incumbent:	(In vacancy)
Warden: (ex-officio)	John Donald (Lay Chair)
Deanery Synod: (ex-officio)	Revd Lilian Clark (Curate), John Donald (Churchwarden), Janet Fielding, Linda Gowans (PCC Secretary)
Licensed & Authorised: (ex-officio)	Revd Lilian Clark (Curate)
Readers with Permission to Officiate:	Prof. Malcolm Hooper, Christine Rodgers
Other elected members:	Ray Bell, Cuth Earl (Safeguarding), Jenni Little (Safeguarding Deputy), Peter MacLellan, Annette Rafferty, Joanna Rodgers (Treasurer), Peter Wilkinson, John Wolfe

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT

The method of appointment and election of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules 2020 (Church House Publishing). All church attendees are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC.

AIMS & PURPOSES

St Gabriel's PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent in promoting the whole mission of the church in the ecclesiastical parish; pastoral, evangelistic, spiritual, social and ecumenical. It also has maintenance responsibilities for the church building and all the buildings on the church estate, including the hall complex, Stier House and Institute.

OBJECTIVES & ACTIVITIES

The PCC is committed to enabling our whole church community to worship using a wide range of expression. In particular, we have agreed that our priorities are to be a welcoming church through our vision statement: Worship, Encouraging, Learning, Caring for our Community, Open to the Holy Spirit, Moving into Mission and Equipping Disciples.

We seek to offer a range of worship which is accessible to those who live in our local parish and also to those who live outside our geographical parish, whatever their background. Our services and worship aim to help us all put our faith into practice through Word and sacrament, prayer and music.

In our planning and activities, we keep in mind the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the supplementary guidance for the advancement of religion. We try to enable people to live out their faith as part of our community through: worship and prayer, learning about the Gospel and developing their trust in Jesus, provision of pastoral care and missionary and outreach ventures. To facilitate this work it is important that we maintain the fabric of St Gabriel's Church and its buildings.

ACHIEVEMENTS & PERFORMANCE

In 2023 the church remained in vacancy but in August we began advertising for a new priest in charge which was a very welcome development. Our time of vacancy has been challenging but it has enabled many volunteers to explore their gifts both practically and spiritually. We have endeavoured to build a strong foundation which the new priest will build on when appointed in 2024.

We continue to provide a range of worshipping styles in our monthly 8 am Eucharist, main Sunday morning services and fortnightly Wednesday Eucharists. As our congregation has become more culturally diverse, we are attempting to reflect this in some of our services – this year we had a Pentecost Praise service with music from different nationalities and also celebrated Black History Month. We want all to feel welcome and appreciated at St Gabriel's. We must thank also our curate, lay-readers and all the visiting priests who make our worship not only possible but also an enriching experience for our members and visitors.

It is our privilege to enable our community to celebrate and thank God at the milestones of their journey through life. Through baptism we thank God for the gift of life; in marriage, public vows are exchanged with God's blessing; through funeral services friends and family express their grief and give thanks for the life that is now complete in this world, and commend the person into God's keeping. In 2023 we had two weddings, 26 baptisms and 12 funerals and our worshipping community was approximately 150 people.

The trustees put much effort this year into making the Christmas message not only a spoken but also a visual one. The whole church became a witness to the first Christmas with a life-sized Bethlehem Inn, stable and shepherd's field. We purchased a colourful backdrop to provide an appropriate landscape. We were pleased that our attendance at Christmas services increased by 50%.

We use the organ, keyboard and guitar in worship and we have had solo singing performances from some of our congregation members. We make an effort to mark key events and celebrated the King's Coronation with a special liturgy. Our Memorial Service, Safeguarding Sunday and Remembrance Day services are well-attended and have key pastoral elements. It has been important to us to continue to provide access to our worship through Zoom as well as in person.

We continue our efforts to become more eco-aware and animal-friendly both in worship with our annual Eco Service and Animal Blessing Service but also increasingly in more practical ways. Becoming more carbon-neutral is an important focus in the committee's exploration of changing the heating system, as we regard this as part of our responsibility of taking care of God's creation.

Thanks to the hard work of our Youth Ministry team, the Sunday School has continued to grow and we were very pleased to support the introduction of a monthly Messy Church. The trustees hope to encourage more involvement by our youth in our services and we are sure this will be a key focus of our new priest.

Three members of the PCC sit on the Deanery Synod. This provides the PCC with an important link between the parish and the wider structures of the Church.

We remain committed to supporting 8 charities with our tithes. Our relationship with our sponsor child Isaac in Guatemala through Compassion continues to develop and we hope to nurture him in his faith and provide opportunities for him practically until adulthood. In addition to our tithe scheme we have also built links with local community projects, donating our Harvest Appeal food to the Foodbank run by the Hope4All project and our Toy Appeal to the Homeless Household Project at Ashkirk House. We have also fostered our relationship with the Chaplaincy at Sunderland Royal Hospital and were pleased to once again host the Trust's carol service.

Church-led activities for both members and anyone in the community are important to us. Coffee mornings which combine fellowship and fundraising have become more and more popular and our monthly Bible Study which is slowly growing allows people to explore Scripture. Ladies Fellowship and Gifted Gabes Craft group continue to thrive.

We are pleased that a great number of community and charity organisations make use of our halls. This year we also started opening the church building itself for some events and hosted two very popular concerts with the Sunderland Symphony Orchestra. We have fostered our relationship with Deeper Life Bible Church who use our facilities for their services and so all our main buildings continue to be used for worship on a Sunday morning. Our Community Institute continues to provide facilities for billiards, snooker and table tennis.

St Gabriel's continues on a journey towards becoming an outward-looking, open and encouraging place to be. We are looking forward to embracing our future as a centre of mission, evangelism and community outreach.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Total receipts in unrestricted funds were £121,417 which represents a 27% increase over the previous year. Restricted funds of £815 were also received, of which £50 was designated for heating costs and £364 raised for external charities, £401 was interest associated with the Heating Appeal fixed rate account and has been reinvested into the fund.

We continue to hold £500 in a Toddler Group designated fund, hoping that the right person will come along to lead this venture.

A much appreciated £1,000 legacy from Dora Riddell was received and we continue to be blessed by our Coffee Morning team who generate a very helpful stream of regular income from this well-attended monthly community event. This year our investment in two contactless machines has also started to bear fruit and we hope more visitors and parishioners will start to embrace digital ways of giving.

Planned giving has slightly increased but not to the level we would have hoped. The charity continues to be heavily subsidised by rental income from the estate. This is a difficult time economically for many and we are sincerely grateful to all those who regularly and faithfully contribute to the church's work, both monetarily and with their time. Encouraging people to donate more on their faith journey whilst wanting to care for our parishioners, many of whom may struggle themselves financially, is a difficult balance. As we come out of vacancy we hope to engage more with the Giving Team at the Diocese and to learn more about how our Christian faith should impact our financial choices.

We continue to build relationships with community, social and independent organisations and we have seen another rise in our hall lettings. There is increasing demand for the hall to be used for casual events such as birthday parties – and word of mouth is such that we do not have to advertise. Income from hall lettings was a 30% increase compared to 2023 but with such footfall comes its own set of concerns. We have had to pay for increased cleaning and waste disposal services and of course, energy. At this point we want to limit further bookings, especially as, with a new incumbent in 2024, St Gabriel's may want to start its own ventures in these rooms.

Stier House flats are both tenanted. Despite needing more building work the property still brought in over £5,500 in profit and this provides a valuable stream of income for the work of the charity.

St Gabriel's total income, including tax recovered, has increased by 21% compared to 2022. Major expenses this year involved building work to Stier House, a new water heater in the Underchurch kitchen, our Quinquennial inspection, gardening in the grounds, mandatory electrical installation certificates, the purchase of a Nativity backdrop for the church and redecorating of the community hall toilets. Our repair costs were, thankfully, nearly two thirds less than 2022. Year-on-year routine maintenance costs such as insurance, boiler inspections and pest control increase in price and we are aware that we must generate this extra income. We will be exiting 5-year fixed rate energy contracts in 2024 and, with the huge rises in the

fuel market, we realise that next year we will need to budget for much higher costs for gas and electric as well as for the priority building repairs which were highlighted in the Quinquennial inspection.

The 2023 Guided Pledge given to us by the diocese was £48,121. In order to maintain an appropriate reserve and protect the financial wellbeing of the charity our PCC felt we could only pledge a Parish Share of £25,000. We continue to seek to contribute as much Parish Share as possible and the trustees conduct an in-depth review of this every year.

Tithed giving to external charities totalling £3,647 was issued, meaning The Leprosy Mission, CSW, Tearfund, Wearside Youth for Christ, Durham Lesotho Link, Compassion UK, Church Mission Society (our mission partners Andy and Kati Walsh in Brazil) and The Bible Society were all able to benefit. We seek to engage with our tithe charities as much as possible both digitally and in person and to ensure our members know how their kind donations bless these organisations.

Total expenditure shows a 4% increase from 2022. Revenue exceeded expenditure by approximately £22,043 in 2023.

At the year end, the total amount of funds held in the general account was **£99,668.86**

This comprises:

Unrestricted funds **£63,958.98**

Restricted funds **£35,709.88**

RESERVES POLICY

It is PCC policy to maintain a balance (if possible) in unrestricted funds that equates to two months' unrestricted payments. It is held to smooth out fluctuations in cash flow and to meet emergencies. The balance of £63,958.98 held in unrestricted funds at the end of 2023 far exceeded this target.

ST GABRIEL'S, BISHOPWEARMOUTH

MEETING OF PARISHIONERS

To be held in Church following the 10.30 am service on Sunday 21 April 2024

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the meeting held on 16 April 2023
3. Matters arising
4. Election of Churchwardens

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

To be held in Church following the Meeting of Parishioners

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the meeting held on 16 April 2023
3. Matters arising
4. Deanery Synod Representation rules
5. Election of parochial representatives of the laity to the PCC (12)
(NB minimum age for PCC membership is 16)
6. Appointment of independent examiner
7. Report on the Electoral Roll
8. Report on Freewill Giving Envelopes
9. To consider the Churchwarden's Report
10. To consider and, if thought fit, to approve the accounts for 2023
11. To consider the annual report of the proceedings of the PCC
12. To consider the report on the fabric, goods and ornaments of the church
(Churchwarden's Report)
13. To consider the report of the Buildings Committee
14. To consider the report on the proceedings of the Deanery Synod
15. To consider the report of the Parish Safeguarding Officer
16. To consider the report of the Sunday School Leader
17. Questions relating to any published reports
18. Any other business, of which notice has been given to the Chair or Secretary prior to the start of the APCM

ST GABRIEL'S, BISHOPWEARMOUTH
MEETING OF PARISHIONERS AND ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING
HELD ON SUNDAY 16 APRIL 2023

PRESENT: John Donald (JD) – Chair
26 members of the congregation (names available)

Malcolm Hooper welcomed everyone and opened proceedings with prayer.

MEETING OF PARISHIONERS

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Received from Geoff Carr, Jo Carr, Caroline Earl, Cuth Earl and Jenni Little.

2. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 1 MAY 2022**

These were approved as a true and accurate record and were signed by the Chair.

3. **MATTERS ARISING**

There were no issues raised.

4. **ELECTION OF CHURCHWARDEN**

One application had been received, from John Donald, who was duly elected unanimously. A vacancy remains, and he asked if anyone else would like to think about putting their name forward during the year.

The Meeting of Parishioners was then closed and the APCM opened.

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

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These were approved as a true and accurate record and were signed by the Chair.

3. **MATTERS ARISING**

There were no issues raised.

4. **ELECTION OF PAROCHIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE LAITY TO THE DEANERY SYNOD**

St Gabriel's is able to elect three lay representatives. Three applications had been received, from John Donald, Janet Fielding and Linda Gowans: all were elected unanimously.

5. **ELECTION OF PAROCHIAL REPRESENTATIVES OF THE LAITY TO THE PCC**

Churchwardens and Deanery Synod Representatives are ex officio members of the PCC. Twelve places are available for lay representatives under the Church Representation Rules. Applications had been received from the following nine persons, who were all elected unanimously:

Raymond Bell, Cuth Earl, Malcolm Hooper,* Jenni Little, Peter MacLellan, Annette Rafferty, Christine Rodgers,* Joanna Rodgers, John Wolfe.

(*Readers with Permission to Officiate, not automatically on PCC.)

The opportunity was given by JD for new applications at the meeting, but there were none: if anyone wished to reconsider there would be possibilities during the year.

6. **APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT EXAMINER**

JD stressed that we have complete trust in our Treasurer, but there is a legal requirement for an independent examiner. It was unanimously agreed that Judith Lees, Treasurer of Burnmoor Church, who acted as Independent Examiner for the 2020, 2021 and 2022 accounts, should be reappointed.

7. **ELECTORAL ROLL**

The number of persons on the Electoral Roll remained at 130, five members having been lost and five new ones gained. Linda Gowans asked to be kept up to date with changes of address, email or telephone number: it could be that contact with someone on the list was urgently needed. JD thanked her for her work, and pointed out the additional responsibility of complying with Data Protection.

8. **FREEWILL GIVING ENVELOPES**

Peter MacLellan explained the scheme, and the importance of maintaining a weekly contribution even if church attendance cannot be weekly. It is a freewill offering: he

will speak to anyone who would like more information. JD thanked him for the work involved.

9. **CHURCHWARDEN'S REPORT**

JD explained that this was normally produced by an incumbent, but had been written by him as Churchwarden during the vacancy.

10. **ACCOUNTS FOR 2022**

Joanna Rodgers thanked everyone who gives in big or small ways. The donations make a vital difference to both the church and the charities we support. She felt she could see the Holy Spirit in the accounts and that God was moving the church forwards. JD pointed out that the pages we see in the Annual Report represent many hours of work: our Treasurer does outstanding work 'behind the scenes'. The accounts were approved unanimously.

11. **REPORT OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE PCC**

Three questions were asked:

Ann Lalas raised the question of printed information for those without computer access: perhaps a monthly digest about what is happening. There used to be a weekly printed leaflet. (This was already a PCC matter.)

Sally Bruce asked about the PCC minutes no longer being on the noticeboard after approval. Linda Gowans explained that since Covid it had been felt necessary to avoid multiple handling of documents, but people could request an email copy from her. Sally will be added to the list in future.

Robert Young asked if Cornerstone might be reinstated, but JD explained that there were no plans to do so, due to time commitments.

12. **REPORT ON THE FABRIC, GOODS AND ORNAMENTS OF THE CHURCH (CHURCHWARDEN'S REPORT)**

JD as Churchwarden is responsible for keeping these records up to date.

13. **REPORT OF THE BUILDINGS COMMITTEE**

JD thanked all members of the Buildings Committee for everything they do.

14. **REPORT ON THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE DEANERY SYNOD**

Only one meeting had been held during the year, in connection with the Diocesan booklet produced in 2021 and cited on page 28 of the current Annual Report.

15. **REPORT OF THE PARISH SAFEGUARDING OFFICER**

Safeguarding involves important work that has to be done correctly: our Parish Safeguarding Officer Cuth Earl makes sure that we get it right. JD thanked him and his deputy Jenni Little in their absence for all the unseen work they do.

16. **REPORT OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL LEADER**

The entry for the Annual Report had been written by Jenni Little, one of a group of leaders: JD thanked her and all others connected with the running of the Sunday School. They have plans – things are ‘on the up’.

17. **QUESTIONS RELATING TO ANY PUBLISHED REPORTS**

It was noted that all queries raised had been included under item 11, Report of the proceedings of the PCC. JD thanked Linda Gowans for her work as PCC Secretary.

18. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

JD reported that the PCC have been working on a report on the prioritisation proceedings: finance, buildings and above all spiritual. We have a Facilitator, Duncan Podbury, who has this week said that we have got through the prioritisation stage and we can now take steps to get a new incumbent. He is going to have a meeting with Archdeacon Bob Cooper. Prior to advertising, the PCC has to produce a Parish Profile to send to applicants.

JD thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting with the Grace.

ADDENDUM TO MINUTES OF MEETING ON 1 MAY 2022

Under item 5, Election of Parochial Representatives of the Laity to the PCC, the name of Ray Bell should have been included. The PCC Secretary apologises for the omission and confirms that he had been duly proposed and seconded along with the others listed in the minutes.

Electoral Roll

The total number on the Electoral Roll is 134, made up of:

Resident Men	20
Resident Women	37
Non-Resident Men	23
Non-Resident Women	<u>54</u>
	134

The number has increased by four over the previous year. Since the last APCM we have lost four members: three deceased and one who moved away. However, we have recently been pleased to welcome eight new people.

Linda Gowans
Electoral Roll Officer

Freewill Giving Envelopes

As a church we greatly appreciate the way in which our members give and share their funds each as they are able. It never ceases to amaze me that whenever we have a Disasters Emergency Committee appeal our congregation are so generous in donating their last coppers that they can give, to help others.

As a church community we continue to pledge to give 10% of our income from Freewill Giving by way of Open Plate, Envelopes, Parish Giving Scheme and Standing Orders to assist other charities such as CMS, Tearfund, Wearside Youth for Christ etc. During the year we give to 8 such organisations. THANK YOU !! on their behalf.

Freewill Envelopes

The current usage now stands at:

Gift aided – 22 people

Non gift aided – 7 people

As we know the key to this method is to use EVERY ENVELOPE and bring them as often as you can when you attend church but, in any event, fill them weekly.

Some members use the Parish Giving Scheme and some have a standing order set up to the church account and some give by way of occasional donations in the Yellow Gift Aid envelopes.

If you are a taxpayer and prepared to Gift Aid your contributions, the Government will give 25% to us when the Gift Aid return is completed enabling us to share even more with those in need whom we support. Whichever method you use, Joanna and I are so grateful for your contributions.

As a church we are blessed that our community use of the church buildings brings in vital funds to enable the main church building to function and be maintained in good condition.

In these difficult financial times, it is not possible or right that we ask for greater and greater contributions from the few and I would urge that you please pray that the Lord will show us the way ahead so that we can continue our witness.

If anyone wants further information about starting as a regular giver, please do not hesitate to contact me by e mail at: peter.mac@totalise.co.uk .

Peter MacLellan
Freewill Envelope Scheme Secretary

Churchwarden's Report to the APCM – 21 April 2024

I was born at an early age just a few houses down from the church in St Gabriel's Avenue. I was baptised by the Revd B. R. Blackburn. Strangely, I don't remember a thing about it!

Fast forward to when I was about ten years old. The St Gabriel's organist and Choir Master, Frank Fleuret, who lived over the road in the Avenue, knew I could hold a tune so suggested to my mother that I should join the church choir.

I did.

I worked my way up to the exalted rank of Box Boy (leading chorister) which meant I could demand a fee of half a crown for weddings. In those days there could be three weddings on a Saturday. Riches indeed!

When my voice broke, instead of being made redundant, as was usual, the choirmen asked me if I would like to join them in the back row and learn how to harmonise.

I did.

I began to realise that I had joined, not just a weekly 'gathering' of people, but the 'family' of God in St Gabriel's.

Fast forward (many years!) to the present time. In the past three or four years that we have had a vacancy I have marvelled at how God has provided us with the resources and, more importantly, the people to not just keep us 'ticking over' but amazingly to build up the 'family' of God in St Gabriel's where everyone is welcomed. Did I thank God every day?

I did.

I thank each and every one of you from the bottom of my heart who has contributed in any way to the family of St Gabriel's in things that you have done or, indeed, just by your presence among us. You are very welcome. You have helped us in building our house for the future. It has been and, God willing, will continue to be, a huge team effort.

We recently began to sing a wonderful hymn and one verse sums up what I hope we will all aspire to at St Gabriel's:

*Let us build a house where all are named,
their songs and visions heard
and loved and treasured, taught and claimed
as words within the Word.
Built of tears and cries and laughter,
prayers of faith and songs of grace,
let this house proclaim from floor to rafter:
All are welcome, all are welcome,
all are welcome in this place.*

As we welcome our new Vicar Emma and her family I ask the question, 'Do I feel excited about God's plan for the future of the family of St Gabriel's?'

And the answer is:

I do!

John Donald
Churchwarden



St Gabriel's Church

Registered Charity 1130674



Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31 December 2023

Church and Estate Income

2022	Voluntary Giving	2023	We appreciate everyone who gives as part of their faith. VOLUNTARY GIVING – this has increased (approx. 15%) compared to last year. Standing Orders have increased by 20% and the Parish Giving Scheme by 3%. Some of this is eligible for gift aid.
£8869.00	Standing Orders	£10,647.00	
£5482.06	Parish Giving Scheme	£5,668.29	
£16,416.95	Envelope Giving	£16,962.00	
£5,652.46	Open Plate Giving	£7,925.06	ENVELOPE GIVING includes the Freewill Envelope scheme and additional gift aid envelopes. This giving has increased by 3% after dipping in 2023. We have also invested in contactless machines in the church and these are starting to generate revenue.
£0	Digital Giving	£642.78	
£36,420.47	TOTAL	£41,845.13	
£8,856.87	Gift Aid Recovered	£8,444.14	
	Other Giving		DONATIONS – £8,158 for general funds, £50 for designated funds (heating)
£6,270.14	Donations	£8,208.23	
£2.76	Legacies	£1,000.00	LEGACIES – we were blessed with £1,000 legacy from Dora Riddell
£6,272.90		£9,208.23	
	Activities		COFFEE MORNINGS – these are very popular and a valuable source of fundraising
£930.65	Coffee Mornings	£2,808.68	
£4,277.00	Wedding and Funeral Fees	£5,764.00	APPEALS – this covers collections for external charities. This year monies were collected for The Turkey and Syria Earthquake Appeal
£979.17	Appeals	£363.61	
£5,256.17	TOTAL	£8,936.29	
	Other Income		GRANTS – Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme covering the VAT on our church roof repair
£1,601.00	Grants	£1,560.00	
/	Interest	£401.71	INTEREST – this was generated by our Heating Appeal fund and was reinvested into the account
£490.11	Funeral Collections	£10.00	AFTER-SERVICE REFRESHMENTS – this source of income continues to grow.
£1,125.96	After-Service Refreshments	£1,410.34	
£448.39	Other income	£336.59	OTHER INCOME – refunds and rebates, fees for admin, diocesan contributions to clergy cover whilst we are in vacancy
£3,665.46	TOTAL	£3,718.64	
	Estate Income		CHURCH HALL LETTINGS – we continue to put effort into developing this revenue stream (30% increase compared to last year)
£29,519.54	Church Hall Lettings	£38,380.85	
£9,925.00	Stier House Flat Rents	£11,700.00	STIER HOUSE FLATS show a steady income since both are now tenanted
£39,444.54	TOTAL	£50,080.85	
£100,847.06	TOTAL INCOME	£122,233.28	TOTAL INCOME shows approx. 21% increase from 2022

Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31 December 2023

Church and Estate Expenditure

2022	Outside Giving	2023	
£3,431.00	Tithes	£3,647.00	TITHES were issued to 8 charities in 2023
£1,755.39	Other Outside Giving	£463.61	OTHER OUTSIDE GIVING went to the Turkey and Syria Earthquake Appeal
£5,186.39	TOTAL	£4,110.61	
	Support Costs		
£20.00	Children's Ministry	£453.78	HOSPITALITY costs were for our interview day at the church
£0	PCC Expenses	£46.95	AFTER-SERVICE REFRESHMENTS are becoming a big part of our fellowship
£100.00	Hospitality	£134.45	
£441.62	Refreshments	£448.25	
£39.37	Evangelism	£0	
£600.99	TOTAL	£1,083.43	
	Direct Costs		
£19,500.00	Parish Share	£25,000.00	PARISH SHARE – Whilst we felt unable to give the Guided Pledge we had been assigned by the Diocese because of upcoming buildings costs, we did fulfil the amount we pledged
£261.51	Clergy/Ministry Team Expenses	£667.49	
£3,753.20	Assigned Fees	£2,759.00	
£23,514.71	TOTAL	£28,426.49	
	Running Costs		
£2,013.82	Electricity	£2,064.70	UTILITIES – see Appendix 1
£11,254.54	Gas	£11,851.56	STIER HOUSE COSTS – maintaining the flats in a suitable state for rental requires continuing expenditure. See Appendix 1
£225.96	Water	£110.00	EQUIPMENT & INSTALLATIONS – Major expenses this year were £360 for blinds for the Barnes Room, £739 for a new water heater in the Underchurch kitchen, £212 for partition dividers for church storage areas and £1139 for a Nativity backdrop
£8,030.31	Insurance	£9,145.79	REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE – Various works undertaken including plastering in the Men's Institute, repairs to the church organ, estate fence, church roof, church hall floor, flooring in the community toilets and Underchurch radiator. The majority of the costs for maintenance pertained to the various boilers, church organ, pest control, fire and security services, electrical inspections and PAT testing. See Appendix 1
£647.81	Service Costs	£414.90	SALARIES – cleaner, gardener, organist expenses, vergers, sound desk operators, visiting clergy & administrator wages
£1,374.16	Licences	£1,323.98	OTHER EXPENDITURE – Sundries, refunds/rebates, unpaid cheques
£4,527.79	Stier House Costs	£6,116.56	
£60.00	Gifts	£134.00	
£3,225.63	Equipment & Installations	£3,718.19	
£15,090.54	Repairs	£5,914.86	
£3,996.82	Building Maintenance	£7,777.52	
£11,965.00	Salaries	£12,799.40	
£596.37	Cleaning Materials/Hygiene	£1,008.96	
£236.28	Office Equipment & Stationery	£300.80	
£0	Publicity	£51.49	
£83.90	Grounds / Gardening Materials	£114.98	
£215.00	Website	£233.00	
£1030.72	Photocopier	£1,029.58	
£921.60	Telecommunications	£1,601.28	
£38.32	DBS	£4.79	
£97.65	P&P	£49.15	
£453.57	Bank Charges	£455.52	
£309.04	Flowers	£221.81	
£685.54	Other Expenditure	£126.81	
£67080.37	TOTAL	£66,569.63	
£96,382.46	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£100,190.16	TOTAL EXPENDITURE is approx. 4% increase from 2022

Appendix 1

Running Costs Breakdown

Utilities

	Church	Estate	Totals
Gas	£8,250.14	£3,601.42	£11,851.56
Electricity	£650.67	£1,414.03	£2,064.70
Water	£55.00	£55.00	£110.00

Other

	Church	Estate	Totals
Insurance	£3,940.71	£5,205.08	£9,145.79
Equipment/Installations	£3204.39	£513.80	£3,718.19
Building Maintenance	£4,548.96	£3,228.56	£7,777.52
Repairs	£3,239.99	£2,674.87	£5,914.86

Stier House

	Lower Flat	Upper Flat	Totals
Insurance	£218.28	£218.28	£436.56
Repairs	£2,188.00	£2,550.00	£4,738.00
Maintenance	£93.00	£93.00	£186.00
Letting Agent	£756.00	/	£756.00
	£3,255.28	£2,861.28	£6,116.56

Resources Used

Church & Estate – Incoming Resources

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Totals
Voluntary Giving	£41,845.13	/	£41,845.13
Gift Aid Recovered	£8,444.14	/	£8,444.14
Other Giving	£9,157.99	£50.24	£9,208.23
Activities	£8,572.68	£363.61	£8,936.29
Other Income	£3,316.93	£401.71	£3,718.64
Estate Income	£50,080.85	/	£50,080.85
	£121,417.72	£815.56	£122,233.28

Church & Estate – Outgoing Resources

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Totals
Outside Giving	£3,747.00	£363.61	£4,110.61
Support Costs	£644.65	£438.78	£1,083.43
Direct Costs	£28,426.49	/	£28,426.49
Running Costs	£65,348.22	£1,221.41	£66,569.63
	£98,166.36	£2,023.80	£100,190.16

Summary

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Totals
Incoming Resources	£121,417.72	£815.56	£122,233.28
Outgoing Resources	£98,166.36	£2,023.80	£100,190.16

End of Year Balances

	Balance 1 st Jan 2023	Funds received in 2023	Funds spent in 2023	Balance 31 st Dec 2023
Restricted Funds				
Heating Appeal	£33,660.05	£401.95	0	£34,062.00
Youth Ministry	£1,336.66	0	£438.78	£897.88
Organ Restoration	£463.00	0	£463.00	0
Church Hall Window Dressings	£239.87	0	£239.87	0
Toddler Group	£500.00	0	0	£500.00
Heating (Designated)	£200.00	£50.00	0	£250.00
Turkey Syria Earthquake Appeal	0	£363.61	£363.61	0
Diocesan Energy Grant	£518.54	0	£518.54	0
TOTAL	£36,918.12	£815.56	£2,023.80	£35,709.88
Unrestricted Funds				
General Funds	£40,707.62	£121,417.72	£98,166.36	£63,958.98

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

Independent Examiner's Report to trustees of St Gabriel's Church, Sunderland

I report on the accounts for the year ended 31 December 2024

Respective responsibilities of the Trustees and Independent Examiner

The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to

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

Basis of this report

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 considering any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the management committee concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in a full audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the accounts.

Independent examiner's statement

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

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

Signed 

Address ISLE MOUNT

..... PRIMROSE HILL

..... HAUGHTON LE SPRING DH4 6BH

Date 19.2.2024

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 together with the applicable accounting standards and the SORP (Statement of Recommended Practice) 2005.

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

FUNDS

Endowment funds are funds, the capital of which must be maintained. Only income arising from investment of the endowment may be used as restricted or unrestricted funds depending upon the purpose for which the endowment was established.

Restricted Funds represent (a) income from trusts or endowments which may be expended only on those restricted objects provided in the terms of the trust or bequest, and (b) donations or grants received for a specific object or invited by the PCC for a specific object. The funds may only be expended on the specific object for which they were given. Any balance remaining unspent at the end of each must be carried forward as a balance on that fund. The PCC does not usually invest separately for each fund. Where there is no separate investment, interest is apportioned to individual funds on an average balance basis.

Unrestricted Funds are general funds which can be used for PCC ordinary purposes.

INCOMING RESOURCES

Planned giving, collections and donations are recognised when received. Tax refunds are recognised when the incoming resource to which they relate is received. Grants and Legacies are accounted for when the PCC is legally entitled to the amounts due. Dividends are accounted for when receivable.

Interest is accrued. All other income is recognised when it is receivable. All incoming resources are accounted for gross.

RESOURCES EXPENDED

Grants and donations are accounted for when paid over, or when awarded, if that award creates a binding or constructive obligation on the PCC. The Diocesan parish share is accounted for when due. Amounts received specifically for mission are dealt with as restricted funds. Expenditure is generally recognised when it is incurred and is accounted for gross.

FIXED ASSETS

Consecrated and benefice property is not included in the accounts in accordance with s.96(2)(a) of the Charities Act 1993.

Moveable church furnishings held by the Vicar and Churchwardens on special trust for the PCC and which require a faculty for disposal are inalienable property, listed in the church's inventory, which can be inspected (at any reasonable time). For anything acquired prior to 2000 there is insufficient cost information available and, therefore, such assets are not valued in the financial statements. Subsequently no item has cost more than £1,000 so all such expenditure has been written off when incurred.

Equipment used within the church premises is depreciated on a straight-line basis over four years. Individual items of equipment with a purchase price of £500 or less are written off when the asset is acquired.

Investments are valued at market value at 1 December.

The values of Stier House, the Men's Institute, the Church Hall and Cutter Suite do not need to be included in the PCC accounts.

The insurance values are as follows:

Church (including contents)	£22,940,000
Stier House (buildings and contents)	£326,288
Men's Institute (including contents)	£768,008
Church Hall & Cutter Suite (including contents)	£3,330,000

Church Organisations – Year End Accounts (Summaries)

	Balances b/fwd	Income	Payments	Balances c/fwd
Men's Institute	£6,894.50	£2,979.70	£3,505.80	£6,368.40

Annual Report of the proceedings of the PCC

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is the key decision-making body of a Church of England parish. It consists of clergy, churchwardens and others, including those elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) of the parish. PCC meetings are held monthly, normally excluding April (when the APCM usually takes place), August (holidays) and sometimes December (due to seasonal commitments). Meetings are held on the third Tuesday of the month: members gather from 6.45 pm for prayer, before the business meeting begins at 7 pm.

All PCC members are aware of their responsibility as Trustees of a registered charity. Appointments made at the APCM in April 2023 are given in the Minutes section of this report: subsequently a new member, Peter Wilkinson, was co-opted and joined in September. During 2023 scheduled meetings were chaired by Churchwarden and Lay Chair John Donald and mostly held on Zoom, with arrangements made for those members unable to participate in this way from home.

Much activity took place around the production of a Parish Profile, with work beginning in January and a subcommittee appointed in May to produce a draft, the final version of which was presented to, and approved by, the PCC in July.

As the year progressed, the Ministry Team felt the time was right to return to offering the chalice at Holy Communion, with an option of intinction. The PCC approved a list of people selected to assist with the chalice, before the arrangement was introduced in September.

Reports were received from the Buildings Committee to keep PCC members updated on matters such as the Quinquennial Inspection which took place in 2023; updates on Safeguarding procedures were provided by our Parish Safeguarding Officer, and seasonal services and activities were reported on. Among financial proposals, the PCC approved an attractive, eye-catching Christmas display and urgent repairs to our church organ. Both of these decisions proved money well spent, enhancing outreach and appreciation.

Papers continue to be circulated by email wherever possible. Once the minutes of the regular meetings have been approved at the following meeting, a copy (with the exception of anything which the PCC regards as confidential) can be made available to members of the congregation who apply to the PCC Secretary to see them.

Linda Gowans
PCC Secretary

Annual Fabric Report (Churchwarden's Report)

The Churchwardens should see that the PCC carries out its responsibilities for the care, maintenance and insurance of the fabric of the church, the goods and ornaments of the church and the fencing of the church. Churchwardens should record in a logbook all alterations, additions, removals or repairs to the church in their care.

The Terrier, Inventory and Log Book are available to the PCC and are updated as and when anything is done to the church and church plant. The Wardens by law are the legal owners of the moveable contents of the church which include furniture, ornaments and plate. The church plant is broken into five different areas: the Main Church and Underchurch; the Church Hall and Cutter Suite; the Lower Flat, Stier House; the Upper Flat, Stier House; the Men's Institute.

At the last Archdeacon's visitation everything was as it should be in the church. Since then any alterations or additions can be found in the Buildings Committee report.

The main items of change identified for the future were:

1. The installation of a new heating system
2. Extra toilet facilities for the Narthex
3. Resurfacing the area outside the west door.

John Donald
Churchwarden

Buildings Committee Report

The Buildings Committee has continued to meet on a regular basis throughout 2023 under the Chair of John Wolfe.

The year 2023 has been another busy one for the committee, with the Quinquennial survey having been done in August which identified yet more major works the Church roof, Flower Room flat roof and several areas which needed urgent remedial work along with the annual gutter clearing.

Stier House continues to have both flats let: Keyline Properties continue to act as agents for the Lower Flat to handle letting matters, but all repairs and replacements come via the committee and, where necessary, the PCC for sign off.

The basic maintenance work, including inspection and testing of all electrical and mechanical systems, has continued with Peter MacLellan as Hon Secretary again overseeing the various works and visits required.

The Buildings Committee continue to look at alternatives to our existing heating system and members will be involved in meetings during the early part of 2024 regarding the possibility of a grant to help with the initial planning and identification of a new system. We must, however, get a system at the right price but sympathetic to our beautiful building which complies with our Listed Building status.

During the year, Andrew Donaldson and his Scout helpers continue to be active, undertaking various jobs around the buildings carried out at no cost to the church finances. We are greatly appreciative of their help and their part in enabling the ministry of St Gabriel's to continue in warm and secure buildings.

In this regard the committee have welcomed Peter Wilkinson to the fold. Peter joined St Gabriel's in 2022 and is as many of you will be aware fast becoming our Mr fix it!!

All certificates have been renewed during the year and PAT testing undertaken, so as a church we are fully compliant for insurance purposes.

It goes without saying that at 111 years old and a Grade 2 listed church, we have an old building /buildings which are much admired by visiting preachers, users such as Sunderland Symphony Orchestra who hold occasional concerts and visitors alike. Our position within the Deanery puts us ideally placed to go forward in faith and outreach in mission lead by the new Priest in Charge/Vicar once they are appointed in early 2024.

There are many jobs which are required, some that have been previously reported and some noted here.

1. The Flower Room flat roof will need to be replaced in 2024. Cost Circa £5/6K.
2. The area in front of the West Door needs to be resurfaced and Bollards erected to prevent cars using it as a Car Park. Cost Circa £2/3k.
3. The Church Hall windows will all need replacing in the coming months/years to ensure the safety of Hall users. The wood frames are rotting and can only be patched up for so long before we must act. (Est. £20k / £25k.) We are still keeping an anxious eye on matters and some remedial work to protect areas of sandstone which are eroding is planned for the Spring.
4. The Quinquennial survey again highlighted that the Narthex roof is very near the end of its natural life and will need a full replacement. (Est. £25k / 30k.) So far so good !! but as the Surveyor pointed out it had lasted since the last survey but he would not like to say it will last until the next one.

As ever, regular maintenance and small repairs must continue.

The Buildings Committee continue to pray and trust that in some way we will be guided and given the resources to take forward the tasks if this is the Lord's will.

Please continue to hold the work of the Buildings Committee in your prayers as they continue in their endeavours during 2024, and support any appeals for assistance as they move forward with priority works.

If you know of tradespeople who might be able to assist, let John Donald or myself know.

Peter MacLellan
Secretary to the Buildings Committee

Deanery Synod Report

We have three Deanery Synod meetings a year. The last one was on 22nd November, 2023, and was held in our church.

Since 2019, the Deanery has been affected by the global pandemic, closure of churches for worship during lockdown, wearing of face masks, fear, Brexit, loss of retail heart in towns, the cost of living crisis, and change of working patterns. However, there are signs of growth: we are thinking ahead, to create an updated plan.

There was much to pray about and consider. Also, we were discussing and praying about St Gabriel's getting a new incumbent. It has taken a lot of time and prayer over the last five years, and we now have Reverend Emma Parker coming to us.

We were given three questions to consider:

1. In our parish, what are the things we used to do, that have not restarted since lockdown?
2. What is new?
3. What can we do together, as a joint mission, to serve people in the parish?

Janet Fielding
Deanery Synod Member

Safeguarding Report

Introduction

I am pleased to report that the PCC has ensured that our church continues to be compliant with all Church of England guidance and statutory requirements.

Policies and Training

The Church of England updated its Safer Recruitment and People Management Guidance in 2021. It includes mandatory requirements for parishes that came into force on 4 January 2022. Diocesan advice and training have been followed and utilised advantageously during the year, and our SRPM policy and practice is now in operation.

Statutory annual policy reviews have been carried out. In particular "Safeguarding at St Gabriel's", "A Parish Statement of Good Safeguarding Practice" and "St Gabriel's Safeguarding

Policy". These required minimal amendments and the PCC authorised their display on the noticeboards about our premises.

All members of the PCC, who needed to, have updated their Safeguarding qualification to Foundation Level. Five members have completed Leadership Training.

The ParishDashboard* was adopted by the PCC last year and is currently up to date at Level 3. As a consequence of attaining this we have been given access to the recently developed **Hub***, which is designed to facilitate the collation of data in digital form, thus, hopefully reducing the Administrator's workload and Parish expenditure on stationery.

For those who would like to know more about the Parish Dashboard see the short addendum to this report.

Matters Resolved

On the third Sunday in November, St Gabriel's once more celebrated **Safeguarding Sunday**. This year the service was conducted by Revd Canon Dr Emma Parker .

The Year Ahead

During 2024 the PCC will continue to ensure that our church presents a safe and welcoming environment, in which all can thrive.

When the Reverend Canon Doctor Emma Parker is in post, all current documentation will need to be reviewed and the necessary amendments made.

Since 1995, Christian Churches in the UK have celebrated **Racial Justice Sunday**. This takes place on the third Sunday in February. Although the PSO discovered this after the first quarter's services had been published, happily it coincides with the visit of the Leprosy Mission, of which our Church is a sponsor.

**Developed by 'Clearly Simple Limited' for use in the Church of England.*

Addendum

Over recent years, Safeguarding within the Church has developed considerably. New policies and procedures are certainly making organisations safer, but they have also significantly increased the amount of administration for PCCs and PSOs. **The Safeguarding Dashboards** - now used by more than 600 parishes in over 30 dioceses - are making administration and governance simpler for everyone. They can be displayed on a mobile phone, tablet, or computer. Operating on a traffic light principle, authorised users can see the status of safeguarding at a glance. Green Lights bring assurance that all is well, Amber indicates that action is required and Red means that this is a matter of urgency. Every Dashboard light has an accompanying information page, which explains what needs to be done and also contains links to useful resources.

Safeguarding Hubs are helping parishes with safer recruitment and people management. The Hubs work equally well on a mobile phone, tablet or computer. Currently, this part of our Safeguarding is maintained by our Administrator.

Three tools are currently available: Role Creator, People Manager and Recruitment Tracker. Parishes can choose to use one, two or all three of these tools. However, as we are currently at Stage 1 of the Hub the Recruitment Tracker material is not yet available. Future tools will also help parishes with other areas of safeguarding.

Cuth Earl
Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO)
February 2024

Sunday School

Sunday School was blessed in 2023 as more children joined the group, which has been a real encouragement and joy for everyone at St Gabriel's. The group started the year by looking at characters from the Old Testament. A brand new initiative began in April, which was to have Messy Church approximately once a month at Sunday School. This has been enjoyed by the existing Sunday School children and has also led to some children who don't normally come to Sunday School coming to Messy Church. It is hoped that this will continue. Lilian, Emma, different members of the congregation and Andy (Wearside Youth For Christ) have all helped out at various times at Messy Church: it has been lovely to have a variety of people all helping together to serve Jesus. One of the most colourful Messy Church sessions was on the theme of Noah and the art from this can be seen on the display wall in the Underchurch.

Sunday School have helped read prayers and Bible readings in church at various services throughout the year, including Mothering Sunday, Harvest and Toy Service. Sunday School leaders and children enjoyed the preparation and taking part in the King's Coronation party in May. Two of the Sunday School leaders have also continued to volunteer for WYFC by assisting Andy going into local primary schools in the lead up to Easter and Christmas to help children learn about Jesus.

The Crib service has continued to draw in a high number of people and a lot of families come annually. This service was again led by Sunday School leaders ably assisted by the Sunday School children as well as all the children who came along to the service. Costumes had been purchased during 2023 depicting the different characters and animals in the Christmas story and these were loaned to children who came to the service if they wanted to get dressed up. Sunday School have a brand new Christian topic to look forward to when they return in 2024.

Jenni Little
Sunday School Leader