



**TUESDAY 6th MAY 2025, 7.30 pm in PARISH CENTRE
ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING
FOR THE ELECTION OF CHURCHWARDENS**

AGENDA

All persons whose names are entered on the church electoral roll of the parish, or resident in the parish whose names are entered on a register of local government electors by reason of such residence, are entitled to vote at the election of churchwardens.

1. Bible Reading and Prayer
2. Apologies for absence
3. Minutes of 2024 Election of Churchwardens Meeting
4. Matters arising
5. Thanks to Churchwardens
6. Election of Churchwardens
7. Any other business

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

AGENDA

Every lay person whose name is entered on the Church Electoral Roll of the parish (and no other person) is entitled to vote at the election of parochial representatives of the laity.

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Minutes of 2024 APCM
3. Matters arising
4. New Electoral Roll Report
182 people on Electoral Roll of which 31 live outside of the parish
5. Annual Report – including fabric, deanery synod and Safeguarding reports
6. Presentation of the accounts for 2024 & resolution to accept the accounts
7. Rector's Report
8. Deanery Synod Election: 2 spaces for 2023 – 2026
9. PCC Elections: 5 spaces available
10. Appointments: Auditor, proposal David Nattrass
11. Any Other Business
12. Closing Prayer

**Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting
Election of Churchwardens
Held on Monday 24th April 2024**

Revd Matt Strand welcomed 44 people to the meeting.

Minutes of 2023 Election of Churchwardens meeting

All who were present at 2023 meeting agreed, 11 abstentions

Thank you to our Churchwardens

Thank you to our Churchwardens who have served the parish in the past year, those being Sue Begg, Elaine Rayner and Brian Armstrong

Elections of Churchwardens

Nominations are:

Sue Begg, nominated by Peter Jeynes, seconded by Tom Appleby
Elaine Rayner, nominated by Sharon Dodds, seconded by Tom Appleby
Brian Armstrong, nominated by Sharon Dodds, seconded by Tom Appleby
Dorothy Hall, nominated by Tom Appleby, seconded by Vivienne Watson

All agreed unanimously.

Any other business

There was none

**Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting
held on Monday 24th April 2024**

No Matters arising from 2023 meeting.

Electoral Roll Report

329 people on electoral roll (4 people have joined, 5 people have died, 1 person has moved away).

Annual Report – including fabric, deanery synod and safeguarding reports.

As booklet which has been available the last two Sundays. Accepted as accurate record of things which have been happening in the life of the church. All agreed.

Presentation of accounts for 2023

There were no questions submitted to the Accountants from the congregation.

Resolution to accept the accounts for 2023 as an accurate record – unanimous

Rector's Report – this was shared with congregation on Sunday morning 4.5.25

APCM 24 Rector's Report Based on Acts 4.5-12 & John 10.11-18

This morning, my sermon is going to be a bit different to normal. As part of the annual church meeting – the APCM that is taking place tomorrow evening at 7.30pm in church, there is always a Rector's Report. But of course, the only people who then hear that are those who attend the meeting. I am therefore going to share some thoughts with you as we look back to last year and forward to this year. But before I get into the details, let's take a brief look at today's passage.

Jesus says that he is the good shepherd. By that, he means that a shepherd who will do whatever it takes to protect his sheep. If you pay someone to look after your sheep, if there is any sign of danger, they will run away – thinking only about themselves and their own safety and survival. But if you are the shepherd and they are your sheep, you care deeply for them and do whatever it takes to protect them. There is a deep connection, bond and understanding between the sheep and the shepherd.

Jesus says of himself in John 10.14 "I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me." One of the key markers of what it means to be a follower of Jesus [i.e. one of his sheep] is that his sheep "listen to my voice". Of course, Jesus demonstrates that he is the good shepherd by making the ultimate sacrifice, by laying down his life for the sheep.

A significant part of what it means for us to be a sheep of the good shepherd is to grow in hearing God's voice, discerning where he is leading us and following his guidance. As we live out our life as a church together every day, we are seeking to do the same.

Today this is an opportunity to talk about that journey. For us as a church, we went through this listening and discernment together through our prayer room and various meetings, and this process started about 18 months ago.

We agreed our vision to be: "A multigenerational church, that makes life-long disciples of Jesus, where everyone flourishes."

Multi-generational – church of all ages. Life-long disciples of Jesus – this is our purpose for existing as a church. Where everyone flourishes – whoever we encounter through the ministry of the church, we want them to flourish.

We want to flourish together across our broad spectrum of services and activities. We believe that ultimate flourishing comes from being a disciple of Jesus.

This discernment process also included the change of our service pattern. The outworking of this vision every day can be seen in the APCM booklet with lots of reports about what has been happening in life of the church during the past year or so. These reports represent a lot of hard work, prayer, passion and energy as so many people give their time towards the fulfilment of what God has called us to as a church.

I would like to say a big thank you to everyone who has contributed and volunteered towards the life of this church over the past year in whatever way. Whether the ministry or activity is specifically mentioned in the booklet or not. You are what make this church what it is.

A few examples of what this vision has meant in practice this year, I think would be helpful. This is not an exhaustive list!

Multi-generational:

The children's work on a Sunday morning and Messy Church,

Launching of our toddler group Rhyme Time, Work with schools.

Life-long disciples of Jesus:

Developing our small groups, meeting with the leaders to discuss how to best support them, day time and evening Lent Course, Alpha Course with the other churches in January

Where Everyone Flourishes:

Warm spaces, Development of the café, new menu, pastoral care, visits and care homes, social events such as quiz.

Dave and Miriam joined us in July and have played a very significant part in this work and are both doing an excellent job. If we compare our annual attendance statistics to last year, our church has grown. We had more people through our doors at Christmas and Easter compared to the previous year. This has happened alongside challenges, such as the heating in the church. Thank you to everyone who donated or helped with that process, which is ongoing.

We are also in a significantly changed cultural landscape even compared to 10 years ago. What it means to be the church today is very different.

Funerals 2014 142 vs 2023 60

Weddings 2014 37 vs 2023 12

Baptisms 2014 93 vs 2023 42

We have to keep looking forward and to the future. As a team, we are constantly thinking and praying about how to develop the work and life of the church. Specifically, we have done and are doing that through the Diocesan 'Health for Growth' Learning Community.

A small group of us have been going to sessions at Cuthbert House every couple of months and thinking about various aspects of the church's life, including our vision, discipleship, values and structures. This is where the survey we did in January came from. This process is ongoing, and we haven't come to the end. But part of this process has helped us to think about our values as a church. If vision is about the destination we are working towards – by the grace of God, what we

want to see in the future. Values are about who we are on the journey towards the fulfilment of our vision.

We have developed 3 values that I want to share with you today, that were agreed at our latest PCC meeting. These values will help to shape our ministry and thinking in the future. They are both a part-reflection of who we are now, but also aspirational for who we want to be going forward. The 3 values all have the value itself and a short explanation of what that means.

Christ focused: All we do points to Christ.

All of our ministry and life together, however people interact with us, we want to point to Christ.

Generous Hospitality: All are welcomed, valued and known.

If you come through the doors of the church, Parish Centre or someone's home we want to be a church who go above and beyond to make everyone feel welcome.

Growing together: All have a place and part to play.

We want more than just everyone to feel welcome, we also want everyone to feel like they belong, it is a space to build deep relationships and we want to make space for everyone to be able to contribute and grow.

Over the next 3 Sunday's, our sermons are going to be looking at these values in more detail. The vision and values will both be really helpful as we continue to develop the life of the church. I am not here today to tell you we have got everything sorted. There are lots of areas that we pray will continue to grow and develop.

For example, to give you a little snap shop: We are currently finalising the details for the children and youth worker role. We hope to advertise for that soon. We are reflecting on how we best facilitate discipleship and exploring new groups. We are going to be running another Alpha Course in September (a daytime version). Developing the Parish Centre – we have received a grant for new tables, are improving the acoustics in Cuthbert (large hall). We are planning on more social events this year

Thank you for being part of this journey as we seek to listen to the voice of the Good Shepherd and follow his lead. Please continue to pray for the process and the next steps. Thank you again, for all that you do, all your prayers and support as we seek to follow God faithfully in Chester le Street.

Follow up questions from Rector's Report

Baptisms – there hasn't been baptism visitors going to families, we still hold baptism preparation evenings before the baptism services.

Christmas Day and Easter services – wonderful services – will there be more opportunities to worship as a whole parish at other times of the year. We reflect on how we do that in the future, we are all going together in the same direction through different services to welcome more people in.

We respond to where we are now culturally, baptisms, funerals and weddings are all low. People do value the services but do things differently.

Follow up after funerals – families feedback is very positive.

Deanery Synod Elections nominations

We have four vacancies for this: Rachel Orr, proposed by Peter Southern, seconded by Elaine Rayner all in favour.

Peter Southern, proposed by James Stothard, seconded by Rachel Orr
Deanery Synods will be working with a new Bishop, when appointed and will decide on clergy number appointments moving forward.

Thankyou to Mike Heaps for his service on the Deanery Synod and has decided to stand down

PCC Elections: Nominations

Norma Hedley, proposed by Michelle Dundas seconded by Aileen Armstrong

Sharon Dodds proposed by Jan Rowland, seconded by Terry Culkin

June Austin, proposed by Malcolm Austin, seconded by Jan Rowland
James Hall, proposed by Frances Hall, seconded by Malcolm Rowland
All agreed

Thank you to all those who have served on the PCC over the last year.
Anne Smith will stand down.

Appointments

Current Auditors: DMC North Accountants – all agreed to continue with them.

Any other business

Rachel Orr – attended today a Collective Worship at C of E School, It's great to see how the children interact – Rachel is a Foundation Governor at the school along with Revd Matt and Revd Dave, the school needs co-opted governors, if you are interested speak to Rachel. Great to see lots of events which involve lots of children in church.

Tessa Condor – thank you to the team and all involved in all that goes on in our church.

Paul Vincent – asked for church heating system update – we are confident that the heating will be installed soon. It will be two boilers as the 'Greener' option was not possible, after much investigating, in church this time. Petitions will go up for a month shortly and then hopefully agreed by the Chancellor.

Joyce Armstrong – loves the 11 am service – enjoys the joy of the children being there.

Peter Southern – part of the stewarding team, encourage others to join the team.

Louise Vincent – feels church is moving forward, intergenerational, wondered if there are any plans for toilets in church– Matt recognises there are accessibility challenges with the church building, lots of challenges, the reality to put in toilets will be part of a long term plan as will take hundreds of thousands of pounds as well as other projects in church. We are talking about this.

Closing prayers – led by Revd Dave.

APCM Reports 2025

PCC Report 2024-2025 – Dorothy Hall, PCC Secretary

The PCC had 20 members this year and six meetings have been held. The following matters were covered:

- The setting up of a Net Zero Action Group
- The future appointment of a new Children and Youth worker
- Safeguarding: the need for everyone who has a Church role to do safeguarding training
- Purchase of new tables and chairs for the café
- Installation of bike rack and noticeboard outside the Parish centre
- Energy audit
- Health for Growth course update
- Budget and cash flow
- Mission giving
- Safer recruitment of volunteers
- Reports from Deanery Synod meetings
- Appointment of extra daytime staff member in café
- New Church heating and insurance payment-what to do with surplus funds
- Parish Pledge
- Net Zero Action Group – actions to be taken
- Key Leaders meeting
- Fire Training
- Updating of DBS database
- End of year accounts and budget for 2025
- Legacy Policy
- Font Cover
- Fall of weathervane

- Diocesan Safeguarding Policy approved and Safeguarding Action Plan agreed

Deanery Synod Report (Full Minutes are available)

We are in the second of a three year cycle for the Synod, which has held three meetings on 28th May, 17th July and 6th November 2024. The representatives for the parish of Chester-le-Street are Mike Heaps (stood down in April 2024), Alex Nelson and from last APCM Rachel Orr and Peter Southern joined.

Issues discussed were:

- Presentation from Revd Paul Child's, Parish Giving Advisor
- Elections to Diocesan Synod
- News from around the deanery and updates on vacancies and Appointments
- Presentation from Beth Miller, Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor

Fabric Report 2024/2025 – Brian Armstrong, Churchwarden

Work done in our Church and Parish Centre

The Church Building

After a long and cold winter and a lot of work and negotiations we eventually were able to replace the church heating boilers with new more efficient ones. Many thanks to all who helped us get this work done and especially to the very hard working engineers from GR Heating and Plumbing who did the removal and installation for us.

Thanks to the congregation for their patience and financial support during this difficult period.

We have had some issues with our church roof during this period. The flashing between the tower and the Anker's House failed and we had

some leaks in the Anker's House but because of Elaine's prompt response there was little damage to the building.

A few months ago, the Weathervane on the top of the Spire unscrewed itself because it had seized up and fell down causing some damage to the tower and the church roof. The roof was repaired very quickly but as many of you may have seen we had to have a firm of Steeplejacks to inspect the spire for any signs of damage that we couldn't see. We are awaiting their reports but the initial verbal response is that the spire is in excellent condition but we may need some work done on the lightening conductors. We are also seeking clarification on whether we need to replace the weathervane.

In the 2023 quinquennial report we were told that the rain gutters and downspouts needed repairs and re painting. We have had quotes from 3 companies and have selected one contractor to do the work which will take place as soon as the weather gets warmer.

The insurance company told us that the wooden cover on the old font which is on a counter balance lifting mechanism should not be used for health and safety reasons. We have therefore put a notice on it and have put some bungee cords on it to stop it being used accidentally.

The Parish Centre

Many thanks to the team of hardworking volunteers who organized the planning, purchasing and ironing of the soundproofing drapes for 'Cuthbert' hall. The sound is much improved. Thanks to Malcolm Rowland, Bob Davison and Dave Mallams for putting them up. Malcom has also made improvements to the sound system and hardwired the computer so it can be controlled from the back of the hall. This has much improved the flow and enjoyment of the 11am service.

Malcolm has also fitted LED lights into the cleaner's cupboard, disabled toilet and connecting corridor. He has also installed new hand driers in the toilet blocks. One of the Ladies toilets has been fitted with a combination lock to keep it for the staff only as often the toilets are left in a poor condition by the end of the day. We had to have nearly all the Ladies toilet pans re fastened to the floor and new waste pipes fitted.

There was also a broken toilet seat, not really sure what has caused these problems but hopefully they have been resolved.

The floor in 'Mary' hall has been re varnished and will be done on a regular basis as it is used for Rhyme Time our toddler group. The sports Hall floor in Cuthbert was in a very poor state and has been stripped back resealed and varnished. It will be maintained on a regular basis also.

Unfortunately, we had some damage done to the Parish Centre roof by thieves who stole the lead flashing from the chimney stack and roof gutter even though it was protected by smart water. This was replaced and some new roof tiles were fitted. There has been some movement of roof tiles at the front of the building, these were also replaced with new ones.

The Parish Centre had to be closed for a couple of days because of a blocked drain. The drain company dug up the floor in the cleaner's cupboard but failed to repair the drain. We had to replace some floor tiles thanks to Bob for doing that. Everyone is happy to hear that we seem to have solved the problems we were having with the drains in the Parish Centre. We found some old collapsed drains that are not used but hadn't been capped off. They have now been capped off and we have had no further problems since. We are hoping to replace an internal inspection cover in the chair store area in Cuthbert with an airtight seal to prevent any smells entering the building.

After a safety check on the gas systems we had to have a new safety interlock valve fitted to the gas supply in the kitchen. We also replaced the condensing water pump on the heating boiler and need to replace the pressure unit pump which is failing. The kitchen had its deep clean during the Christmas break.

In our quest to get to NetZero we have adjusted the fire doors to prevent draughts and installed radiator insulation foil behind the radiators that are fastened to outside walls and are looking at lots of different ways to reduce our carbon footprint. You will be hearing much more about this in the near future.

We have replaced the tables and chairs in the cafe area and Mary. Thanks to Elaine for her work in getting a grant to help us with the cost

of this upgrade Also a big thanks to the team of volunteers who came armed with tools to put together the tables and a thank you to Andrew Gardiner for taking away the old tables and chairs.

Finally, a very big thank you to anyone who has helped with the upkeep of our Parish Centre and especially to Bob Davison who devotes many hours of his time to the day to day upkeep of the Parish Centre.

Safeguarding – Sarah Hindle

As named Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) for St Mary & St Cuthberts Church I wish to report the following.

There is currently one ongoing safeguarding incident to report at this present time.

All existing safeguarding incidents have been actioned and dealt with following the appropriate diocese safeguarding procedures.

In the past 12 months we have had 3 safeguarding incidents and one historical safeguarding disclosure was reported. All have been fully investigated by the safeguarding team and where necessary outside agencies have been involved. As safeguarding lead I have liaised with the police and Diocesan Safeguarding Officer (DSO) Beth Miller.

In the last 12 months I have attended all necessary safeguarding training needed for this role. During this time I have continued to develop my professional relationship with the DSO.

Safer Recruitment of volunteers

The Diocese of Durham has introduced Parish Safeguarding Dashboards to support Parishes in reviewing and monitoring their local safeguarding policies and procedures. The dashboard is rooted in safeguarding actions which are necessary under the Church of England 'Promoting a Safer Church' policy and the Durham Diocesan Safeguarding Policy.

During the past 12 months we have made good progress in completing this dashboard as we add details of training and checks completed by volunteers for different roles within the church. We thank all those who have completed and updated their training thus far. Support from the PCC is welcomed in achieving this.

On 12th April we hosted a safeguarding training session for our Deanery which was led by Sheila Bamber from the Diocese. This was well attended and received much positive feedback.

An audit of Parish Dashboards will take place in May to determine progress being made and identify areas of concern.

An appreciation is extended to Sharon Dodds, Deputy PSO for all her hard work and dedication which occurs behind the scenes, updating the Parish Dashboard on an ongoing basis.

It is imperative that we work together as a team to help keep our church safe.

For all those involved in keeping our church safe, we give thanks.

Parish Charities: Henry Smith Charity 2024 – Elaine Rayner

Since our last report we have made the following donations:

- 1 fridge
- 1 freezer
- 4 Grocery Vouchers
- 1 washing machine
- 1 double bed
- 1 house deposit
- 1 fridge freezer

These have been, or will be, fully refunded to us by the Henry Smith Charity.

We currently hold £1890.91 from the Henry Smith Charity.

We welcome applications for small grants to those in need who live within our Parish or the old District Council of Chester le Street.

Warm Spaces Report 2024-25 – Michelle Dundas

Our warm spaces continues to meet twice weekly on Tuesdays and Fridays, we have 8 volunteers split between the two meetings and approximately 20 regular guests. Our guests are offered hot drinks with cake and biscuits and during the winter the addition of soup or sandwiches, our guests enjoy colouring in and sometimes we have bingo, we were also blessed with a table tennis table which is enjoyed greatly.

During our sessions we feel it is not just about giving out refreshments but spending time getting to know our guests, offering emotional support, pastoral care and prayer when needed and showing Gods love in all we do. So we sometimes need to assess and adapt how we run our meetings and change accordingly. We celebrate birthdays with a cake and card, each guest receives a food bag once a month and we hold a Christmas party and gift a present for each of them.

We have also been able to provide 60 meals to Durham food bank with food donations. We have emergency food bags made up for anyone in need, For the homeless we have flasks and camping mats which were bought with a donation and clothes gifted from mountain warehouse. We also offer clothes to our guests for a small donation which goes back into Warm spaces funds

Going forward we are hoping to have some training on Mental health issues so we have a better insight on how to support our guests when needed.

None of the above would be possible without the generous donations of food, money and clothes from our church family and your love and prayers.

Thank you from the warm spaces team.

Matthew 25:35

For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in.

Chester le Street Litter Picking Heroes – Ian Hoult

In Chester le Street, where the rivers flow,
Heroes gather, their spirits aglow.
Together they strive, their hearts to the core,
Making a difference, and so much more.

With gloves and bags, they march each day,
Clearing the litter, showing the way.
Over 2000 bags, they've collected with pride,
1500 vapes, recycled, set aside.

1400 hours of volunteer might,
New members welcomed, joining the fight.
For God's glory, they care for the land,
A cleaner world, by their loving hand.

On Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Sundays they meet,
Christ-focused, growing, their mission complete.
Generous hospitality, values they share,
A living demonstration, showing they care.

"Why do you litter pick?" they ask with cheer,
"To make a difference, to hold nature dear."
"Seeing the change, the best thing of all,
More people join, answering the call."

"Helps the community, self-satisfaction too,
Well-organised, welcoming, through and through."
"Educate the masses, target the need,
Together we flourish, together we lead."

"Community contribution, making a mark,
but never the spark."
"Environmental impact, blight to erase,
Volunteering together, a friendly embrace."

"To help the environment, to keep fit,
Photos of triumph, the litter we split."
"Nature, people, God, cleanest town in sight,
Bins and signs, a future so bright."

"Love for Chester le Street, community care,
Schools aware, keeping it fair."
"Improve the area, pollution to fight,
Social media push, equipment in sight."

"Supporting each other, friendships anew,
For the work we do."
"Environmental, social, wellbeing blend,
Fab team, like-minded, till the end."

In Chester le Street, where heroes unite,
For God's glory, they shine so bright.
Looking after our world, with love and grace,
Chester le Street Litter Picking Heroes, leading the race.

Christians Against Poverty (CAP) Job Club – Ian Goulding

In 2024 we hosted 3 separate job club courses, each of 8 weeks in length, and journeyed with 25 local jobseekers. The 4 trained job coaches and 5 befrienders have assisted these 'job clubbers' through a weekly course focused on improving motivation and self confidence as well as introducing them to the employers mindset and assisting them to improve their CV, job applications and interview techniques. Alongside the course we have met with the individuals in a safe coaching environment always with at least two of the church volunteers present to work specifically on CV's, areas of personal need, signposting to other agencies, referring to CAP Debt Centre managers and of course interview practice.

There have been many notable successes this year both in individuals finding paid roles and getting started with relevant volunteering opportunities which could lead to paid roles. We have continued to invite job clubbers to attend church and two did attend and love Christmas services in 2024. The DWP Job Centre remains confident to

refer individuals to our Job Club. We are making a difference in Chester le Street.

The CAP job club only happens through the generous support of church, the ongoing encouragement of church and all the wonderful volunteers (Dennis, Malcolm, Paul, Mike, Bryan, Ann, Sue, Karen) who give up their time so willingly, as well as staff in the Parish Centre and kitchen including Jan who gives us much support.

Please continue to pray for the unemployed people in our town that they can see opportunity ahead because we know a job brings so much more than a wage. We have just completed Job Club number 16 and look forward to number 17 very soon. If you have time to get alongside a job seeker and support their learning and development we'd love to have more volunteers, please get in touch.

Bereavement Support group report – Paul & Louise Vincent

The first bereavement support group ran from Easter 2024 to December 2024 on a fortnightly basis on a Wednesday afternoon in Eardulph room, Parish Centre from 1.30 to 3pm.

This group typically had 12 to 15 people, some moved away, and new folk joined. Membership was from churches all around Chester Le Street.

We discussed various bereavement topics taking a theme each meeting. All of us shared our experiences and feelings as and when we felt comfortable, which proved to be helpful as we supported each other. We ended the course with a Christmas meal at the Lambton Worm.

Our next group started in January, and is due to finish in the early summer.

Many thanks to those who have contributed and enabled these meetings, we have hugely valued their support. Members have made new friends and we have helped each other to grow around our loss.

Louise and I have learnt much which we trust we can use in future groups.

Members of the first BSG have moved on to a fortnightly bereavement drop in Eardulph which is proving to provide invaluable ongoing support. "Just come and be alongside folk."

Care Home Services – Paul & Louise Vincent

Monthly services are held in Picktree Court and now Durham house. Services have to take account of various faith backgrounds and physical and or cognitive disabilities.

We work closely with the home's activity coordinators (who are a real blessing to us) so that we can incorporate arts and crafts that the residents have created into the service.

As well as the usual readings homily and prayers, we try and make it as participatory as possible, and using sight touch and smell and weight as well as listening. So for example in a harvest service we "made" soup by passing round raw vegetables and then putting them into a pot. For many it was the first time they'd handled a vegetable in years.

On another occasion we did a "beach hunt" of things we'd picked up from beaches on Shetland to celebrate the beautiful world God has created. We are blessed with 15 to 25 people at each service.

Pastoral Team – Louise Vincent

The Pastoral Team continues to offer pastoral care to any member of the congregation in need. This includes regular individual visits for general support and prayer, ad-hoc visits on request, bereavement visits and many regular Home Communion visits.

During the past year we have established a regular service, with Holy Communion for those who wish, at **St Mary's Nursing Home**.

We continue to hold a monthly service at **Picktree Court Care Home** and have begun monthly Holy Communion visits for several residents across both sites of **Lindisfarne Care Home**.

Despite the retirement of several volunteers, we continue to hold a monthly communion service at **The Elms**. We extend our sincere gratitude to Doreen Butts and Jean Turnbull for their years of dedicated service.

Holyoakes Drop-in group at South Pelaw continues to be a blessing to the community, thanks to its volunteers.

As a team, we are very keen to link with anyone across the parish who is involved in pastoral care of any kind, so that we might better understand, coordinate and appreciate the wonderful work that goes on.

Prayer Ministry is now available during the 11am Sunday service thanks to the efforts of members of the Pastoral Team, as well as others within the congregation.

Prayer Ministry Report – Louise Vincent

Many thanks to our wonderful prayer ministry team for making themselves available to pray with members of the 11.00am Sunday services. Each Sunday prayer ministry is on offer, thanks to our faithful team. We praise God for His faithful response to our prayers.

Prayer ministry at the 9.30am service was explored, but not taken up.

At the 11.00am service, there are 2 prayer ministry stations set up near the front of the main hall in the parish centre. Prayer ministry is available after the services, however on Holy Communion Sundays, it is available immediately after receiving communion during the service. At intergenerational services, if someone would like prayer, they're invited to approach a member of the prayer ministry team after the service.

The number of people looking to receive prayer ministry varies from week to week. It is always an honour to pray with those who come forward and a great encouragement some children have requested prayer.

People do not appear to have to wait for prayer ministry either during or at the end of services and we just about always manage to have 2 members of the prayer ministry team available. However, it would be

helpful if more people were able to join the team as holiday times are challenging.

We're excited to welcome a male onto the team as this is something for which we have prayed.

If you are interested in joining the prayer ministry team, please contact Jan in the office or speak to a member of the team. Safeguarding training is required and we follow a code of conduct.

Our aim in prayer ministry is to come alongside people to facilitate healing and wholeness. Your prayers for prayer ministry are very much appreciated.

Small Groups – Revd Miriam Wakefield

St Mary and St Cuthbert's currently has seven small groups which meet regularly throughout the year. Small groups are a key way that people can develop in their discipleship and receive spiritual nourishment. Many of the groups have been meeting together for several years and good friendships have been formed as people have grown together in faith.

Each group decides whether to study a theme or a book of the bible, and there are many resources available to use. Some groups include sung worship in their time together and draw on other creative arts such as poetry or artwork. At Christmas one group distributed small knitted angels to the people of Chester-le-Street, some members of this group have also begun praying for the railway station and the staff there.

Over the last year those leading small groups have begun meeting with Miriam quarterly to reflect, receive some input and support one another. A new group was formed last summer which has been meeting fortnightly. It is hoped that in the coming year another group will be formed so that more people can benefit from being part of a group.

Mothers' Union January – December 2024 – Aileen Armstrong

Our membership has remained fairly constant throughout the past year, totalling 52 including indoor members. We have had 2 new members enrolled in the year and two former members have moved to other parts of the country to live closer to their families.

We have met regularly every second and fourth Monday each month, with slight variations due to Bank and School holidays. These meetings are regularly attended by 25 to 30 members.

At our Annual General Meeting in February, we were able to welcome Sue Brissenden as our new Branch Leader, after a nomination by a branch member, seconded by two more members was accepted by the majority of the assembly. Branch leader and Committee Members have met monthly to organise meetings and fundraising events.

During this year, many of our members can be seen ministering in many Church activities, Baptisms, Messy Church, Toddler Rhyme Time, Warm Spaces, in the Cafe and in Church services generally. For Mothering Sunday posies of daffodils were assembled and gifted by Mothers' Union to be presented to all those, in a mothering role, attending church services that day. Bookmarks being gifted to those attending the Thursday service in the same week.

Members have continued to raise funds or donate goods to support local needs as well as Mothers' Union projects in this country and abroad. By celebrating and sponsoring influential women in our lives we were able to raise funds for Mothers' Union annual fundraising event to aid mothers in developing countries. Goods donated at our Harvest Festival service in October went to the aid of The People's Kitchen in Newcastle. An Open Afternoon in December in the form of a Christmas Fayre gave us the opportunity to raise funds for Mothers' Union work at home and abroad.

We were privileged this year to welcome our new staff members to meetings. In January we were delighted to be able to celebrate Holy Communion with Rev. Matt for the first time since his coming to Chester-le-Street. We were also able to welcome Rev. Matt again later in the year to celebrate Holy Communion with us again. Rev. Miriam joined

us at our Celebration of Women meeting in March giving us a very interesting talk about the strength of women in the Church. Rev. Miriam was to speak later in the year at the Carol Service, which for the very first time was a joint service with Townswomen's Guild Branches in our town. And Rev. Dave joined us at our last meeting before the Summer break telling us about his journey of Faith before coming up north.

We were honoured to have Rev Mary as our guest speaker when we hosted Lady Day Service for our combined Chester-le- Street and Houghton Deanery when we were joined by members of other branches in the Deanery. We, too, have travelled to join other branch members for Deanery events, travelling to St. Barnabus, Bournmoor for Quiet Day Reflection and St. Michael and All Angels, Houghton-le-Spring for the Overseas Service.

June was a special month which included our new Branch Leader's Commissioning Service in June, when Sue Brissenden, organised this service to include her favourite hymns and readings, was presided over by Rev. Matt, followed by refreshments which included Mothers' Union themed cupcakes!. Also at this very special event Committee members reaffirmed their vows and some members were awarded long service awards. At our second meeting of this month we welcomed Rachel Orr who entertained us in her own special way with delightful songs, some of which we joined in with.

Other Branch based events included a fact finding meeting to establish what members, liked, disliked and wanted included in our meetings, in order to inform new Branch leader and Committee for future planning. Sue Brissenden, our new Branch Leader, also organised a meeting to inform Branch members how she, being born with a missing right hand, performed everyday tasks including beautiful needlework.

Other guest speakers at meetings were Peter Jeynes leading one of our services during Lent. Paul Vincent, who gave a very moving account of his visit to Auschwitz, Kathleen Wilson, who talked about Mothers' Union work in Prison, and Sue Begg, who brought to us awareness of Modern Day Slavery.

Sue Begg and Michelle Dundas, both Committee members of the Branch, were instrumental in organising the Souls of our Shoes display

in The Parish Centre to raise awareness of domestic abuse during the annual 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence from November 25th to December 10th, which is actively supported by Mothers' Union.

Social events this year were a Christmas meal at The Wheatsheaf in Barley Mow in December. Also in December some of us joined a coach trip to Helmsley Christmas Tree Festival, which also included a visit to Thirsk. Both events being organised by Social Secretary, Michelle Dundas.

Some members attended Diocesan events, including Council meetings and The Founder's Day Services held at Waddington Street Chapel in Durham. Our Branch was also represented at two very special Diocesan events, the Indoor members' Prayer Circle and the Mothers' Union Festival Service, both held at Durham Cathedral.

As a Branch, we have been very busy embracing new challenges and changes which we hope will bear fruit in the future.

Branch leader and the Committee would like to thank all staff members, including Jan, and all our members for their prayers, generosity and support throughout the year.

Net Zero Action Group for 2024 – Rachel Orr

1. A Net Zero Action Group has been formed and they have met twice in 2024.
 - a. Brian Armstrong
 - b. Rachel Orr
 - c. Peter Jeynes
 - d. Peter Southern
 - e. Paul Vincent
 - f. Bryam Wilson
 - g. Rev Matt Strand
2. Form 1 has been submitted and Bethan Still has confirmed receipt and that it contains more than enough detail for the first submission.
3. Peter Jeynes and Rachel Orr attended the online session provided by the diocese on Monday 14th October for quick wins.

4. A practical path to net zero carbon checklist for your church has been completed with priority action and explore further actions identified.
5. We already have an energy report for the church building and the diocese are making representation for an energy audit to be undertaken for the Parish Centre.
6. We have already completed The Energy Footprint Tool (EFT) which is required should we submit an application for a grant.
7. Form 2 completion has now been extended to the end of March 2025. **SUBMITTED**
8. The group would like to submit an application for a grant to replace the light fittings and bulbs in the Parish Centre for LEDS where applicable. This would require quotes prior to submitting the form. This is part of the 'quick wins' grant application. Funding for this would have to be spent first by the church and then an invoice sent to the diocese for reimbursement. This needs further clarification and exploration. **IN PROGRESS**
9. The group have put in some tentative timescales.

Although this report details the work of the Net Zero Group for 2024, further progress has been made and quotes along with grant applications are ready to submit shortly.

Children & Youth Report – Will Hoy

Group Overview's

Group Name: Messy Church
Group Leader (with responsibility): Rev. Dave Edmondson
Group Leaders: 9
Group Members: 42 children (currently on the system)

Group Name: Youth Meal
Group Leader (with responsibility): Rev. Dave Edmondson
Group Leaders: 2
Group Members: 5 young people

Group Name: Creative Ministry
Group Leader (with responsibility): Will Hoy
Group Leaders: 2

Group Members: 6 young people

Group Name: Sunday Morning Groups

Group Leader (with responsibility): Rev. Dave Edmondson, Sharron Pritchard

Group Leaders: 3 + helpers

Group Members: Approx 20 semi-regular toddlers/children/young people

As a church we currently have over 50 toddlers, children and young people who are signed up to one or more activities.

Messy Church Report

We have had such an exciting year for Messy Church. We have grown in numbers and have been able to reach more and more families through the outreach and activities which we do.

Achievements and Highlights

One of our highlights from the last year was our July Messy Church which took place in the Rectory Garden. There was a different atmosphere than normal, with us being outside and doing slightly different activities.

Activities and Events

During the year, we met 11 times – each month excluding August.

Each month we have a different theme, excluding the obvious themes, like Easter and Christmas, we also focus on parables, and many different stories teaching us lots of different things.

In our July Messy Church, as per our new tradition this took place in the Rectory Garden, having smaller activities, and also having a BBQ.

The first half of the session (4-5pm) runs in Mary, where there is a variety of crafts made for all ages, that way there is something for everyone. We usually have one food craft, followed by 5-6 craft/building activities.

After the children finish their crafts and activities at around 5pm, they walk across to the church for a short, fun-filled service. Normally we start off with a game or activity which is linked to the theme, for example, finding the sheep around the church for the parable of the lost sheep. The celebration (the service) consists of the story being told (which is normally in an interactive way), pictures of what the children have made, discussions on what they most enjoyed, and then it is followed by an action song, as well as an interactive talk and prayer.

Once the celebration time has finished, we head back over to the Parish Centre to share a meal together (normally it is something like Pizza, Fries and Chicken Nuggets, or Pasta Bake). Thank you to Anne and her team in the kitchen for always bringing together such a lovely meal.

Youth Meal Report

With this being the first year of Youth Meal, it is safe to say that it has started off a great success. Going from nothing to having multiple young people who are so engaged is a really good thing to see.

Achievements and Highlights

Over this past year, there have been so many achievements and highlights from what we have done. Some of the young people who come to our group have never really cooked or baked before. Knowing this and seeing how far they have come is such a lovely sight.

Activities and Events

During the year we met most months on the 4th Sunday night. The young people arrive, and we start to cook and bake what they requested the month before. We split up in smaller groups to do each task to – this is so they can all be doing something and are not sharing a simple task.

Once all whatever we are cooking is in the oven, we tend to sit down at the table all together, we play some table games, and we also go through and discuss whatever the biblical theme/topic of the night is.

Once they have all eaten, they can take any of their left-over food back with them, and we decide what we will make the following month.

Creative Ministry Report

Achievements and Highlights

Our highlight of the year was our Christmas performance, where we had a stunning performance in both services, and members of our team lead the readings during both of the Christingle Services.

Activities and Events

Over the year we have met almost all Friday's to have a catch-up, play some games, and practice future performances.

Challenges We Have Faced

Once again this year we have struggled with numbers as it is not something which appeals to everyone. Next year we will meet and make a plan on how to continue.

Sunday Morning Groups Report

This year has been a great year for our Sunday Morning groups. We have had some amazing achievements this year which are highlighted below.

Achievements and Highlights

This year on top of our usual Kids Group, we have launched a Youth Group and Toddler Group. This is a huge achievement for us that we now have 3 different groups going out, and also the fact that there are so many keen volunteers within our church who are eager to help out.

Activities and Events

These groups meet during the 11am Services in the Parish Centre (excluding the first Sunday which is our intergenerational service).

We use a mix of recourses – some of which are Bubble & Squash from Scripture Union, Roots from the Church of England and other resources to gather content for our groups.

Generally speaking we have a similar focus as the service, though at parts of the year (such as Easter), we spend much more time going through the Easter story part by part, digging it all up.

Rhyme Time – Lynda Beveridge

When Dave announced that he and Caitlin were going to start a toddler group, they said that it was going to be a structured time and would include singing, a story, bubbles and a signed blessing. Refreshments would then be served during social and play time.

Initially, three volunteers stepped forward with Dave and Caitlin leading, and the volunteers signing families in, talking with the adults who came, playing with the children and serving refreshments. Another volunteer has since joined.

As Dave and Caitlin have moved on to pastures new, the volunteers along with Reverend Miriam have stepped up and are now leading the group. Rhyme Time has continued to grow in the number of children attending with twenty- one children on at least one occasion. This is probably our limit given restraints of space and manpower.

Rhyme Time is not just a toddler group. It is a community that has given so many people support, space and connection. It has had far more reaching effects than we could ever have imagined. The ripple effect of that small community that started in just less than two years is amazing. We have had numerous baptisms in our church and there will be a wedding in May as a direct consequence of parents bringing their children to Rhyme Time.

I asked some of the people who attend our group to say what Rhyme Time means to them. Here are a few things they said:

“This is one of my favourite classes to come to each week. I was made to feel really welcome on the first week. I felt confident to come here with two children. It’s nice and relaxed”

"This is a safe environment for adults and children. It is really welcoming and lovely. It has brought my grandson out of himself who was very shy to begin with. He is much more confident and when I ask him, 'Shall we go to Rhyme Time?' He says, 'Yes. To the church.' He loves coming.

'Lots of entertainment for my son and a nice break for me'.

"There is always an extra pair of hands to help with my two children. Everyone is welcoming and friendly. Some of my friends have started to come with me.

And from one of our volunteers, "I really enjoy the ministry. I enjoy the children and their families, I especially enjoy talking to the adults as they need all the help and support they can get. It is often the first church that the children experience and that's important.

We have met a lot of amazing people and have had great conversations. Through this group, the church has managed to reach people who have become part of a community, and who have been supported and helped in all sorts of ways through God's love.

May God's blessings go with Dave and the family and the family and may Rhyme Time continue to flourish.

Open the Book – Norma Hedley

Open the Book material has changed since our original team was formed in 2015. When we first began Open the Book the team went into Chester-le-Street CofE school nearly every week. Covid changed everything and we had a break from going into any school. Last Summer old and new members went for training with the new material at Cuthbert House in Durham and a new team was formed. Instead of just going into one school we now go into 4 schools (Chester-le-Street CofE, Cestria, Newker and Red Rose) but now each school gets a visit once a month instead of weekly. Thank you to all the team members who take this bible story telling into schools. It is appreciated by the school staff and children.

Parish Centre Café

It has been another busy year in the Parish Centre Café, it continues to be an amazing outreach for our church. It is a safe space for those who come daily, weekly or those who are just popping in.

We are so thankful for our incredible volunteers, who work tirelessly and faithfully alongside our Catering staff, Sharon Phillips, Ben Milner, Caroline MacKay-Christie and Will Hoy – we wouldn't be able to operate without them. We are always looking for extra volunteers who would be interested in joining them.

Our aim for the Café is to be affordable whilst being able to cover its own costs.

Charity registration number 01130847

**THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH OF ST MARY'S & ST CUTHBERT'S
ANNUAL REPORT AND UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024**

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH OF ST MARY'S & ST CUTHBERT'S

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

The Incumbent The Rev. Matthew Strand

Charity number 01130847

Principal address Church Chare
Chester-le-Street
County Durham
DH3 3QB

Independent examiner David McFarlane (ACA)
DMC North Accounting Services
A1 Marquis Court
Team Valley Trading Estate
Gateshead
NE11 0RU

Bankers Barclays Bank PLC
6/7 Market Place
County Durham
DH1 3ND

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH OF ST MARY'S & ST CUTHBERT'S

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THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH OF ST MARY'S & ST CUTHBERT'S

COUNCIL MEMBERS REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

The trustees present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2024.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the charity's governing document, the Charities Act 2011 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)".

Objectives and activities

St Mary and St Cuthbert's Parochial Church Council (PCC) has responsibility for co-operating with the incumbent, Revd Matthew Strand, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. It also has maintenance responsibilities of the Church Centre complex of the Parish Church of St Mary and St Cuthbert, Chester-le-Street. Correspondence may be addressed to the Church Office, Parish Centre, Church Chare, Chester-le-Street, Co Durham, DH3 3QB.

The PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship at our church and to become part of our parish community. The PCC maintains an overview of worship throughout the parish and makes suggestions on how our services can improve the many groups that live within our parish. Our services can involve the many groups that live within our parish. Our services and worship put faith into practice through prayer and scripture, music and sacrament.

The PCC is governed by the Church of England measures which comprise of 1) the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956 as amended and 2) the Church Representation Rules (contained in schedule 3 to the Synodical Government Measure 1969 as amended).

When planning our activities for the year, the incumbent and the PCC have considered the Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the specific guidance on charities for the advancement of religion. We have described some of the activities we have undertaken to fulfill our objectives below.

Achievements and performance

We aim to give away 5% of the congregation's giving from the previous year and we have achieved that goal - to the agreed charities/mission agencies - local, national and international.

The church's ministry is guided by our vision to be: "A multi-generational church that makes life long disciples of Jesus, where everyone flourishes" and values: "Christ Focussed, Generous Hospitality, Growing Together".

Church attendance

A new electoral roll is being prepared for the Annual Parochial Church Meeting being held on 6th May, 7.30pm.

Financial review

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH OF ST MARY'S & ST CUTHBERT'S

COUNCIL MEMBERS REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

The general, unrestricted income of the PCC in 2024 was £282,760 compared to unrestricted income in 2023 of £271,044.

The organ restoration fund balance stood at £5,994 at the year end. This is restricted towards the repairs and restoration of the organ, and much of the work was undertaken during 2019.

As regards unrestricted expenditure, £115,500 Parish Share has been paid over during the year compared with £110,000 in 2023. Overall, the excess of ordinary unrestricted expenditure over income gave rise to a deficit for the year on unrestricted funds of £47,620 compared to a deficit of £9,861 in 2023. Although this deficit has risen, it should be noted that £30,000 was transferred into the unrestricted fund from restricted in the 2023 year end. This was due to land which was sold in the year previously being categorised as restricted in the accounts.

The policy of the PCC is to maintain a minimum cash reserve within its unrestricted funds of £10,000, to enable it to manage the church's normal expenditure requirements. Year end unrestricted bank balances total £32,097, well in excess of the £10,000 limit. Restricted funds are held until such time as expenditure arises for which they may be used in accordance with the restrictions placed upon their use.

There has been two legacies in the year totalling £96,453, of which £94,453 was restricted in nature.

Risk Factors

The Council members has assessed the major risks to which the PCC is exposed, and are satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate exposure to the major risks.

In relation to the management of the major risks that have the potential to adversely affect the work of the church, these are considered by the relevant sub-committees and issues are raised at Council meetings where action is necessary. A formal policy for the protection of children and vulnerable adults has been put in place by the PCC and, in accordance with its terms, the necessary DBS searches are made through diocesan channels.

The Standing Committee on behalf of the PCC is responsible for health and safety and maintenance issues within the Parish Centre.

The Standing Committee is responsible for the initial management on behalf of the PCC of financial risks. The same Committee also manages health and safety and maintenance issues within the church building and for compliance with the 5 yearly programme of inspection required of church buildings by the Church of England central authorities. The quinquennial survey was carried out in 2023 and therefore the next report is due in 2028.

This survey covered the general condition of the church, and the recommended time frame for improvements. The area of most concern is the failed boiler which requires immediate action.

Structure, governance and management

The PCC is governed by the Church of England measures which comprise of 1) the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956 as amended and 2) the Church Representation Rules (contained in schedule 3 to the Synodical Government Measure 1969 as amended) .

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH OF ST MARY'S & ST CUTHBERT'S

COUNCIL MEMBERS REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

Members of the PCC are either ex officio or elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) in accordance with the Church Representation Rules, or may be co-opted.

During the year the following served as members of the PCC:

Clergy (ex officio):

Rev Matt Strand, Rector
Rev Dave Edmondson, Associate Rector
Rev Miriam Wakefield, Curate

Church Wardens (ex officio):

Brian Armstrong
Sue Begg
Elaine Rayner
Dorothy Hall

Treasurer:

Mr Malcolm Austin

Deanery Synod Representatives (ex officio):

Alex Nelson
Rachael Orr (elected 2024)
Peter Southern (elected 2024)

Elected and Co-opted Members:

Edna Sanderson (2nd year of 2nd term)
Tom Appleby (2nd year of 2nd term)
Sharon Dodds (1st year of 2nd term)
James Hall (1st year of 2nd term)
Abbie Winter (3rd year of 1st term)
Ann Wilson (3rd year of 1st term)
Kathryn Brown (2nd year of 1st term)
Norma Hedley (1st year of 1st term)
June Austin (1st year of 1st term)

Committees

Our Parochial Church Council met six times through the year as usual.

Standing Committee: This is the only committee required by law.

It has power to transact the business of the PCC between its meetings, subject to any directions given by the Council. Attends to the Financial concerns of the Parish and the Fabric of the Church.

The Council members report was approved by the Board of Council Members.


.....
Rev Matthew strand

Trustee

Dated: 19/5/25

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH OF ST MARY'S & ST CUTHBERT'S

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH OF ST MARY'S & ST CUTHBERT'S

I report to the trustees on my examination of the financial statements of The Parochial Church of St Mary's & St Cuthbert's (the charity) for the year ended 31 December 2024.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the charity you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act).

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

Independent examiner's statement

Since the charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of , which is one of the listed bodies.

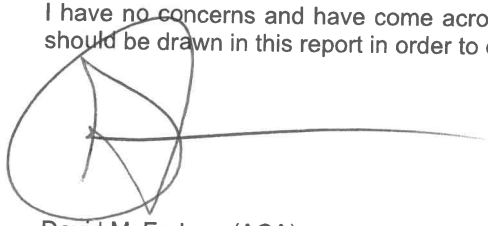
Your attention is drawn to the fact that the charity has prepared financial statements in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) in preference to the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice issued on 1 April 2005 which is referred to in the extant regulations but has now been withdrawn.

I understand that this has been done in order for financial statements to provide a true and fair view in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Practice effective for reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2015.

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

- 1 accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the 2011 Act; or
- 2 the financial statements do not accord with those records; or
- 3 the financial statements do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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



David McFarlane (ACA)
A1 Marquis Court
Team Valley Trading Estate
Gateshead
NE11 0RU

Dated: 22 May 2025

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH OF ST MARY'S & ST CUTHBERT'S

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted funds	Endowment funds designated	Restricted funds	Endowment funds general	Total	Unrestricted funds	Endowment funds designated	Restricted funds	Endowment funds general	Total
		2024	2024	2024	2024	2024	2023	2023	2023	2023	2023
		£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Income and endowments from:											
Donations and legacies	2	157,816	-	131,094	-	288,910	147,265	-	26,399	-	173,664
Charitable activities	3	26,680	-	-	-	26,680	30,379	-	-	-	30,379
Other trading activities	4	95,142	-	-	-	95,142	78,133	-	-	-	78,133
Investments	5	1,848	-	8,632	-	10,480	1,606	-	616	-	2,222
Other income	6	1,274	-	-	-	1,274	13,661	-	-	-	13,661
Total income		282,760	-	139,726	-	422,486	271,044	-	27,015	-	298,059
Expenditure on:											
Raising funds	7	67,531	-	-	-	67,531	59,647	-	-	-	59,647
Charitable activities	8	262,849	4,660	43,813	-	311,322	251,258	3,845	8,143	-	263,246
Total expenditure		330,380	4,660	43,813	-	378,853	310,905	3,845	8,143	-	322,893
Net gains/(losses) on investments		-	-	-	148	148	-	-	-	(136)	(136)
Net (outgoing)/incoming resources before transfers		(47,620)	(4,660)	95,913	148	43,781	(39,861)	(3,845)	18,872	(136)	(24,970)

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH OF ST MARY'S & ST CUTHBERT'S

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Endowment funds designated 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Endowment funds general 2024 £	Total 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Endowment funds designated 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Endowment funds general 2023 £	Total 2023 £
Net (outgoing)/incoming resources before transfers		(47,620)	(4,660)	95,913	148	43,781	(39,861)	(3,845)	18,872	(136)	(24,970)
Gross transfers between funds		(212)	9,277	(9,064)	-	1	30,000	-	(30,000)	-	-
Net movement in funds		(47,832)	4,617	86,849	148	43,782	(9,861)	(3,845)	(11,128)	(136)	(24,970)
Fund balances at 1 January 2024		98,696	21,784	527,482	5,656	653,618	108,557	25,629	538,610	5,792	678,588
Fund balances at 31 December 2024		50,864	26,401	614,331	5,804	697,400	98,696	21,784	527,482	5,656	653,618

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH OF ST MARY'S & ST CUTHBERT'S

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2024

	Notes	2024 £	£	2023 £	£
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	12		487,268		484,568
Investments	13		5,804		5,656
			<u>493,072</u>		<u>490,224</u>
Current assets					
Stocks	14	60		60	
Debtors	15	22,950		21,050	
Cash at bank and in hand		196,167		148,663	
		<u>219,177</u>		<u>169,773</u>	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	16	(14,849)		(6,379)	
Net current assets			204,328		163,394
Total assets less current liabilities			<u>697,400</u>		<u>653,618</u>
Capital funds					
Endowment funds - general			5,804		5,656
Income funds					
Restricted funds			614,331		527,482
Endowment funds - designated			26,401		21,784
Unrestricted funds			50,864		98,696
			<u>697,400</u>		<u>653,618</u>

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 6/5/25


 The Rev'd Matthew Strand
 Trustee

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH OF ST MARY'S & ST CUTHBERT'S

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

1 Accounting policies

Charity information

The Parochial Church of St Mary's & St Cuthbert's is governed by the Church of England measures which comprise of 1) the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956 as amended and 2) the Church Representation Rules (contained in schedule 3 to the Synodical Government Measure 1969 as amended)

1.1 Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the charity's [governing document], the Charities Act 2011, FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" ("FRS 102") and the Charities SORP "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (effective 1 January 2019). The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The charity has taken advantage of the provisions in the SORP for charities not to prepare a Statement of Cash Flows.

The financial statements have departed from the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 only to the extent required to provide a true and fair view. This departure has involved following the Statement of Recommended Practice for charities applying FRS 102 rather than the version of the Statement of Recommended Practice which is referred to in the Regulations but which has since been withdrawn.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

1.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

1.3 Charitable funds

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

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Endowment funds are subject to specific conditions by donors that the capital must be maintained by the PCC.

The accounts include all transactions, assets and liabilities for which the PCC is responsible in law. They do not include the accounts of church groups that owe their main affiliation to another body or those that are informal gatherings of church members.

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH OF ST MARY'S & ST CUTHBERT'S

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

1 Accounting policies

(Continued)

1.4 Income

Collections are recognised when received by 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, the amount due is quantifiable and its ultimate receipt by the PCC is reasonably certain.

Sales of books and magazines are accounted for gross.

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

1.5 Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement, and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Expenditure is classified by activity. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources. Central staff costs are allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges are allocated on the portion of the asset's use.

Expenditure is recognised on an accrual basis as a liability is incurred.

Fundraising costs comprise the costs associated with attracting voluntary income and the costs of trading for fundraising purposes including the PCC's cafe.

Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the PCC in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.

Governance costs include those costs associated with meeting the constitutional and statutory requirements of the PCC.

All costs are allocated between the expenditure categories of the SOFA on a basis designed to reflect the use of the resource. Costs are analysed in the notes to the accounts as requested by the Trustees. This is a departure from the SORP which requires support costs to be allocated between the different activities engaged. The analysis in these accounts is thought to provide a more meaningful analysis to the readers of the accounts.

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH OF ST MARY'S & ST CUTHBERT'S

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

1 Accounting policies

(Continued)

1.6 Tangible fixed assets

Consecrated land and buildings and moveable church furnishings

Consecrated and benefice property is excluded from the accounts by s.96(2)(a) of the Charities Act 2011. No value is placed on moveable church furnishings held by the church wardens 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 moveable church furnishings, whether maintenance or improvement, is written off as expenditure in the SOFA and separately disclosed.

Other fixtures, fittings and equipment

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost or valuation, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

Plant and equipment	15% reducing balance
Fixtures and fittings	15% reducing balance

Freehold land and buildings are retained for Church use. These are stated at cost and have not been depreciated due to their market value being considered to be higher than their carrying value.

1.7 Stocks

Net realisable value is the estimated selling price less all estimated costs of completion and costs to be incurred in marketing, selling and distribution.

2 Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total
	2024	2024	2024	2023	2023	2023
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Gift Aid	95,274	-	95,274	95,737	-	95,737
Legacies	2,000	94,454	96,454	-	-	-
Regular non gift aid donations	7,036	-	7,036	6,567	-	6,567
Sundry donations	3,873	5,417	9,290	3,789	24,729	28,518
Miscellaneous appeals	-	1,794	1,794	-	1,670	1,670
Insurance claims	-	29,429	29,429	-	-	-
Income tax recoverable on gift aid	32,755	-	32,755	26,567	-	26,567
Collections (open plate) at all services	16,878	-	16,878	14,605	-	14,605
	<u>157,816</u>	<u>131,094</u>	<u>288,910</u>	<u>147,265</u>	<u>26,399</u>	<u>173,664</u>

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH OF ST MARY'S & ST CUTHBERT'S

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

3 Charitable activities	Magazine income		PCC fees		Clergy fees		Total		Magazine income		PCC fees		Clergy fees		Total	
	2024	£	2024	£	2024	£	2024	£	2023	£	2023	£	2023	£	2023	£
Sales within charitable activities	1,185		13,491		12,004		26,680		1,659		15,810		12,910		30,379	

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH OF ST MARY'S & ST CUTHBERT'S

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

4 Other trading activities

	Unrestricted funds	Unrestricted funds
	2024	2023
	£	£
Fundraising	9,214	7,567
Parish centre lettings	28,419	19,075
Catering income	57,509	51,491
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Other trading activities	95,142	78,133
	<hr/>	<hr/>

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH OF ST MARY'S & ST CUTHBERT'S

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

5 Investments

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total
	2024 £	2024 £	2024 £	2023 £	2023 £	2023 £
Income from unlisted investments	1,848	8,632	10,480	1,606	616	2,222

Restricted investment income is high in 2024 due to 2 years of Bayles interest being received.

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH OF ST MARY'S & ST CUTHBERT'S

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

6 Other income

	Unrestricted funds	Unrestricted funds
	2024 £	2023 £
Net gain on disposal of tangible fixed assets	-	11,736
Feed in tariff	1,274	1,925
	<u>1,274</u>	<u>13,661</u>

7 Raising funds

	Unrestricted funds	Unrestricted funds
	2024 £	2023 £
<u>Trading costs</u>		
Catering costs	25,049	22,317
Parish Centre wages costs	42,482	37,330
	<u>67,531</u>	<u>59,647</u>
Trading costs	<u>67,531</u>	<u>59,647</u>

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH OF ST MARY'S & ST CUTHBERT'S

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

8 Charitable activities

	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Depreciation and impairment	6,577	6,102
Missionary Societies	6,879	790
Relief agencies	2,344	83
Magazine costs	400	393
Parish centre costs	37,225	42,635
Clergy fees surrendered to Diocese	18,029	19,486
Parish shares	115,500	110,000
Bank charges	8	-
Organ restoration	437	-
Curate house expenses	1,425	941
Church running expenses	82,488	44,384
Pension contributions	930	802
Salaries, wages and honoraria	28,869	27,213
Sundry expenses	600	550
Machine lease and expenditure	2,784	2,980
Accountancy fees	2,890	2,890
Independent examination fees	650	650
Legal fees	3,287	3,347
	<hr/> 311,322	<hr/> 263,246
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<hr/> 311,322	<hr/> 263,246
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Analysis by fund		
Unrestricted funds	262,849	251,258
Endowment funds - designated	4,660	3,845
Restricted funds	43,813	8,143
	<hr/> 311,322	<hr/> 263,246
	<hr/>	<hr/>

Church running expenses have increased in the year due to £29.4k being paid out relating to the repair of the heating system. This restricted expense was covered by an insurance claim received in the year.

9 Trustees

None of the Council members (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration or benefits from the PCC during the year.

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH OF ST MARY'S & ST CUTHBERT'S

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

10 Employees

Number of employees

The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

	2024 Number	2023 Number
	8	6
	<u>8</u>	<u>6</u>
Employment costs	2024	2023
	£	£
Wages and salaries	67,587	60,677
Social security costs	-	3
Other pension costs	930	802
	<u>68,517</u>	<u>61,482</u>

There were no employees whose annual remuneration was £60,000 or more.

11 Taxation

The charity is exempt from tax on income and gains falling within section 505 of the Taxes Act 1988 or section 252 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects.

12 Tangible fixed assets

	Freehold land and buildings £	Plant and equipment £	Fixtures and fittings £	Total £
Cost				
At 1 January 2024	450,000	101,480	90,774	642,254
Additions	-	9,277	-	9,277
	<u>450,000</u>	<u>110,757</u>	<u>90,774</u>	<u>651,531</u>
At 31 December 2024	450,000	110,757	90,774	651,531
Depreciation and impairment				
At 1 January 2024	-	86,428	71,258	157,686
Depreciation charged in the year	-	3,650	2,927	6,577
	<u>-</u>	<u>90,078</u>	<u>74,185</u>	<u>164,263</u>
At 31 December 2024	-	90,078	74,185	164,263
Carrying amount				
At 31 December 2024	450,000	20,679	16,589	487,268
	<u>450,000</u>	<u>20,679</u>	<u>16,589</u>	<u>487,268</u>
At 31 December 2023	450,000	15,052	19,516	484,568
	<u>450,000</u>	<u>15,052</u>	<u>19,516</u>	<u>484,568</u>

The freehold land and buildings comprise of the Parish Centre. The Waldrige Mission Church site and the equity share of 16 Park Road North were both sold during the year.

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH OF ST MARY'S & ST CUTHBERT'S

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

13 Fixed asset investments

	Total £
Cost or valuation	
At 1 January 2024	5,656
Valuation changes	148
At 31 December 2024	<u>5,804</u>
Carrying amount	
At 31 December 2024	<u>5,804</u>
At 31 December 2023	<u><u>5,656</u></u>

The investment relates to The Lisle and Dorothy Pattison Gift (394.189 Charifund Units).

The Trust Fund is an endowment trust and the income earned may be used for the general purposes of the PCC.

14 Stocks

	2024 £	2023 £
Finished goods and goods for resale	60	60

15 Debtors

	2024 £	2023 £
Amounts falling due within one year:		
Gift aid recoverable	19,000	16,165
Prepayments and accrued income	3,950	4,885
	<u>22,950</u>	<u>21,050</u>

16 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2024 £	2023 £
Accruals and deferred income	14,849	6,379

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH OF ST MARY'S & ST CUTHBERT'S

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

17 Fund details

The unrestricted funds comprise the General and Areas/Groups Funds as well as the equity share of 16 Park Road North. All other funds are restricted in their use.

The endowment funds comprise of the trust fund as shown in note 12.

The bank account balances are represented by funds as follows:

Fund	Balance @ 01.01.24	Change in year	Transferred in year	Balance @ 31.12.24
General	71,441	(39,344)		32,097
Fabric	R 17,912	86,891		104,803
Organ Restoration Fund	R 6,431	(437)		5,994
Miscellaneous	R 31,590	394		31,984
Centre recoupment	R 21,289			21,289
	148,663	47,504	-	196,167
Total restricted bank balances	R			164,070
Total unrestricted bank balances				32,097

18 Designated funds

Designated funds comprise of the net book value of assets purchased out of restricted funds which become unrestricted assets once purchased.

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH OF ST MARY'S & ST CUTHBERT'S

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

19 Analysis of net assets between funds	Unrestricted funds		Designated funds		Restricted funds		Endowment funds		Total		Unrestricted funds		Designated funds		Restricted funds		Endowment funds		Total	
	2024	£	2024	£	2024	£	2024	£	2024	£	2023	£	2023	£	2023	£	2023	£	2023	£
Fund balances at 31 December 2024 are represented by:																				
Tangible assets	10,867		26,401		450,000		-		487,268		12,784		21,784		450,000		-		484,568	
Investments	-		-		-		5,804		5,804		-		-		-		5,656		5,656	
Current assets/(liabilities)	39,997		-		164,331		-		204,328		85,912		-		77,482		-		163,394	
	50,864		26,401		614,331		5,804		697,400		98,696		21,784		527,482		5,656		653,618	

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH OF ST MARY'S & ST CUTHBERT'S

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

20 Related party transactions

There were no disclosable related party transactions during the year (2023 - none).