

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF HOLY ASCENSION, UPTON-BY-CHESTER

England & Wales · Charity number 1131069

Details

Other names HOLY ASCENSION UPTON PCC

Status Registered

Legal form Previously excepted

Registered 2009-08-10

Register [View on the Charity Commission register](#)

Contact

Address Holy Ascension Church
Church Lane
Upton
Chester
Cheshire
CH2 1DJ

Phone 01244 383518

Email office@holyascension.org.uk

Website www.holyascension.org.uk

Activities

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

Activities: The purpose of the Church of Holy Ascension in Upton is: To be the people of God in this place, committed to Christ, to one another and to service in the community; together, we worship God with joy and love and with openness to renewal by the Holy Spirit.

Classification

- **How:** Provides Buildings/facilities/open Space, Provides Services
- **What:** Religious Activities
- **Who:** The General Public/mankind

Geography

- **Area of benefit:** UNDEFINED. IN PRACTICE, LOCAL.
- Cheshire West & Chester

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2024-12-31	£138,632	£138,321	-	-
2023-12-31	£115,460	£123,563	-	-
2022-12-31	£112,622	£116,212	-	-
2021-12-31	£107,238	£98,277	-	-
2020-12-31	£118,691	£110,490	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
REV Paul Newman	Chair	2016-09-07
BARBARA JEAN CAPSTICK		
Colin Curtis Bain		2015-09-07
Colin Stuart Foden		2015-09-07
Elizabeth Ann Squire		2015-12-15
Graham Robert Barley		2019-04-14
Heather Hill		2024-05-13
Jack Croft		2026-04-19
Michael Richard Curtis		2014-04-27
Peter Martin LLOYD		2024-04-21
Robert Merion Evans		2017-04-23
Sally Olga Oonah Symes		2022-05-08
Susan Burgess		2015-09-07
Susan Margaret Campbell		2022-05-08

Accounts

Annual Report and Accounts of
The Parochial Church Council of
Holy Ascension, Upton by Chester
For the year ended 31st December 2024



Registered Charity Number: 1131069

Vicar's Report

Welcome to our Annual Report for the year ended 31st December 2024.

Our Church's Mission Statement:

To be the people of God in this place, committed to Christ,
to one another and to service in the community:

Together we worship God with joy and love,
with an openness to the renewal by the Holy Spirit.

Over the past year as a Church, we have been looking to be just as our Mission Statement says and as you look through this booklet and read about the many varied activities and groups that we are running as a Church in the community, I hope that you are as encouraged by it as much as I am.

To do all this involves an awful lot of people and I am fortunate to be a Vicar of so many volunteers who are prepared to use their talents and give their time to make this happen.

This has resulted in us seeing more people attending both our regular Church services and the activities that we run and it gives me great encouragement for the year ahead.

God bless

Paul

Administrative Information

Holy Ascension is in Church Lane, Upton, Chester and is part of the diocese of Chester within the Church of England.

Correspondence address is: The Parish Office, Holy Ascension Community Hall, Demage Lane, Chester, CH2 1EL

Incumbent: Revd Paul Newman

Reader Emeritus: Mrs Barbara Capstick

Parish Safeguarding Officer: Mrs Tara Newman,
email safeguarding@holyascension.org.uk

Bank: Unity Trust Bank, Four Brindleyplace, Birmingham B1 2JB.

Independent examiner: John McLintock FCA FCCA

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Holy Ascension is a charity registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales, charity registration number: 1131069.

When planning our activities for the year, the PCC gave consideration to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the specific guidance to charities concerned with the advancement of religion.

The PCC is a body corporate and operates under the Parochial Church Councils Powers Measure 1956 and the Church Representation Rules 2020.

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

The PCC currently has 13 members and normally meets on the second Monday of each alternate month in the Kempe Room.

Members of the PCC:

Elected: Graham Barley
Susan Campbell
Michael Curtis - Churchwarden
Rob Evans
Colin Foden - Churchwarden
Heather Hill - Appointed 13th May 2024
Peter Lloyd - Appointed 21st April 2024
Liz Squire
Sally Symes

Co-opted: Colin Bain.

Ex officio: Sue Burgess
Barbara Capstick
Paul Newman.

Bible Study Group

There are 19 members of this group, 17 from Holy Ascension and 2 from other churches.

We meet on the 1st and the 3rd Thursday of the month in the Kempe room at 2.40pm for coffee/tea/ biscuits and a time of fellowship.

Our study begins at 3.00pm with prayers followed by 'what's on' events.

This year we have studied:

- The Feast of Epiphany
- Genesis -early chapters
- The Lord's Prayer
- The Letter of James

In February and June we were pleased to welcome David Savage from St. Columba's R.C. Church to speak to us about The Hebrew Scripture and The Wisdom Books of the Old Testament.

We are always pleased to welcome new members to join us.

Barbara Capstick

Caring & Sharing Lunch

On the second Wednesday of each month, a light lunch is served in the Kempe room after the communion service. It is a time when we can gather together for food and fellowship. Everyone is welcome.

Jane Curtis

Caring and Sharing Christmas
Lunch in the Kempe room.



Choir

The choir with its three committed members has continued to lead our singing at our 9.00am Sunday Choral communion service.

Revd Paul Newman

Christian Aid

Christian Aid supporters have been busy raising funds by doing bucket collections, Street to Street collections and Churches Together Lent lunches. Chester is England's best fund raising traditional group and there is a notice in the Kempe Room that explains this as well as a big thank you to all.

The total amount raised was £22,839.02, sadly this was a decrease of £7,000 despite all the efforts to diversify from the normal house to house collections. The main fund raising event was the street to street collection and our church members collected £1,023, which was lower than last year. Chester as a whole raised £13,823.68 with many churches taking part.

Please look on the notice board for posters advertising events and support them whenever you can. Thank you.

Margaret Bain

Churches Together in Upton

This is a group comprising representatives from three churches in Upton.

Holy Ascension Representatives are: The Vicar, Barbara Capstick, John Butler and Margaret Whaley.

St. Columba's are Father William, Rev. Lawrence Hordley and David Savage.

Upton URC's are Margaret Hainsworth, Jane Morris and John Hainsworth.

Churches together in Upton has again been funded by a CTU surplus.

The main expenditure during the year was an organist for two Fifth Sunday Services and Remembrance Day Reflections.

The Fifth Sunday services are well attended and generally appreciated by between 25 -30 worshippers, rotated round the Churches with refreshments and fellowship afterwards. The Upton Prayer diary is published yearly.

Coffee Mornings are held on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of the month (Excepting August). Lent and Advent material is readily available to share at these coffee mornings; one coffee morning had a visit from 3 Guide Dogs and their handlers, together with a sales table. Carol Singing took place at a December coffee morning.

A fellowship Lunch was held for Christian Aid at Holy Ascension in May. A successful Quiz Night was held in October. A wreath was laid at the War Memorial by a member of the Churches Together Committee on Remembrance Day. A visit to Chester Cathedral took place and included a guided tour, refreshments and Choral Evensong.

Whilst not strictly a Churches Together event; “Knitting for Africa” received enthusiastic support from the three churches congregations.

John Butler

Connect Group

The ‘Connect’ group is aimed at the younger ladies who come to Holy Ascension Church, to offer them a chance to take time out from their work / family commitments and get together, get to know each other and support each other in the journey of life.

In 2024 (except in Lent) up to 16 ladies met for a range of activities that have included our January Potluck Supper, making Confetti Cones for use at a wedding, a walk to and around the Chester Zoo environmental area, a cake and catch up evening, an evening of playing ‘Herd Mentality’ and finishing the year with the activity of creating Christmas table or door decorations at the start of Advent. We always open with a prayer and then at the end of the evening we take the opportunity to finish with a time of sharing and praying for each other, a chance to offer each other our support and to thank God for blessing our time together. A branch off the ‘Connect’ group is our bible study group where 9 of us meet weekly in term time to study Gods’ word and pray. We use the Life Builder study guides by IVP to lead us in our studies. In 2024 we started the year studying the book of ‘James – Faith that works’, followed by ‘Meeting Jesus’ where over 13 sessions we explored in detail aspects of Jesus life and teachings. In November we followed a 4 week Advent study ‘Because of Bethlehem’ by Max Lucado which helped us to focus on the real meaning of Christmas. All the studies we have followed have been challenging and have helped us to focus and grow in our relationship with Christ through group discussions, personal reflection and prayer.

Tara Newman

Electoral Roll Report

At the time of the APCM in April there were 134 names on the Roll and, by the end of the year, this had increased to 145.

Every six years a completely new Roll is drawn up. This will happen again in 2025 when, inevitably, there will be a drop in numbers.

Graham Barley

Fabric Report

We continue to look after our buildings and our graveyard and endeavour to keep them in good states of repair. We did some work on our hedges to open up views of our church and our clock was repainted and gilded following two generous donations, one in memory of a past member, Jennifer Benson, and the other to celebrate the wedding of our Church Patron, His Grace Hugh Grosvenor the Duke of Westminster.

Revd Paul Newman

Fellowship Group

We had a busy programme in 2024 with 30-45 people, on average, attending the meetings.

We meet in Church on the third Monday of the month at 2.30pm, followed by tea and biscuits in the Kempe Room after the talk.

We started the year with a talk given by Tim Ditchburn 'The Story Teller' who runs a traditional oral storyteller group at the Storyhouse. February was a talk by Harvey Stephens, chief gardener at Eaton Hall and in March Linda Webb told us about James Hampson Spencer who was a Chemist in Chester from 1876 and had a passion for photography.

In April we had hymns and readings to celebrate Easter.

29 members had an outing in May to Upton Golf Club to have Afternoon Tea, a good time was had by all!

There was a fascinating talk about Medical Detection Dogs in June.

The history and work of the R.N.L.I. in September followed in October by 'The History of the Deva Hospital'. November brought Ken Pye with his talk 'The Joy of Scousers and Scouse'!!

We finished the year with our annual Carol Service of Nine Lessons and Carols.

Margaret Brizell



Fellowship Group members enjoying afternoon tea
at the golf club

Finance

The Receipts and Payments accounts for the year ended 31st December 2024 are set out at the end of the Annual Report.

Unrestricted Fund

There was a surplus of receipts over payments of £267.

Voluntary income was up £12,500 compared with the previous year. This was mainly due to an increase in collections at services of £3,711, as numbers attending church services have increased, the receipt of three legacies totalling £9,000 and an increase in tax recovered of £1,412 on the additional giving.

Total receipts were up £13,651 on the previous year. Income from social activities increased due to the regular running of the Afternoon Tea and a very successful Christmas Fayre, community hall hire income also increased.

In 2024 we paid our parish share of £75,344 in full. The 2025 parish share will be £77,605 an increase of 3%.

Expenditure is always kept under review and we managed to keep total expenditure to only £3,090 above the 2023 level.

At the yearend there was £15,270 in the general fund bank accounts.

Unrestricted Designated Funds

During the year the clock renovation was completed; the cost being shown as unrestricted designated church running expenses of £12,058. Fortunately, this cost was met by two generous donations.

The Musical Tots designated fund was set up to ensure that the fees from the weekly sessions would cover any future costs associated with running the group. The Musical Tots sessions ceased to run in March 2020 and the PCC considers it unlikely that such a tots group will be run in the foreseeable future so the fund balance has been transferred to the general fund.

The Hall fund represents money allocated by the PCC to pay for future improvement works on the community hall such as a new boiler and kitchen.

Restricted Funds

The movements on restricted funds are set out in note 2 to the accounts.

During the year the PCC decided to amalgamate the Family Workers' Fund with the Sunshine Tots' Fund to create a new Children's Fund which will be used to finance future work with children.

Reserves policy

It is the PCC policy to maintain a balance on unrestricted funds which equates to a level they consider necessary to meet forthcoming needs.

Sue Burgess

Flower Arranging Team

This year our team of 19 ladies and 2 gentlemen continue to work with enthusiasm and expertise to arrange beautiful flower arrangements to celebrate the festivals of Easter, Ascension, Harvest, Remembrance Christmas and also for Weddings.

The rota for flowers to be placed in the Sanctuary and on the War Memorial each week (except during Lent) is solely supported by generous donations from the congregation for which we are very grateful. Further donations for flowers are given at Christmas and Easter and throughout the year in memory of family and friends.

Our church is very fortunate to have so many folk who give a great deal of their time to arrange flowers throughout the year for which we are very grateful.

We are always pleased to welcome anyone who wishes to join us.

Barbara Capstick

Foodbank

As a church, we support Cheshire's Food bank. Members of the congregation bring items of food or toiletries to church and once a month the Bains or Graham Barley take everything to the food bank in Ellesmere Port.

A slip telling us how much food was taken that month to the food bank is pinned on the notice board in the church entrance alongside a list of food urgently required. Last year we sent 452 Kgs which only supports 34 people.

At the moment the food bank is distributing more food out than they are receiving so please add an extra item on your shopping list to support this charity. A Big Thank You to everyone who has donated in the last year.

Margaret Bain

Heartbeat

As agreed by the PCC in 2023 the magazine was produced on a bi-monthly basis during 2024. However, its editor, Sharon Forsdyke, resigned her post in December 2024 after ten years valuable service which together with a dearth of contributors in recent months meant it has been difficult to produce a quality magazine, the content of which being relevant to our church life. It is for these reasons that it was unanimously resolved by the PCC to cease the publication of Heartbeat from March 2025.

Health and Safety

Thankfully, there are no major problems to report. One or two remedial items have been carried out, primarily the purchase of a boiler for the community hall kitchen replacing the use of kettles at functions. Several 'people orientated' risk assessments have taken place under the banner of Safeguarding.

Fire precaution inspections are up to date and portable electrical inspections are in train. The usual preventative checks took place at the Christingle service which ran smoothly. It is hoped that the Kempe Room will be decorated during the early part of May 2025 followed by the fitting of acoustic ceiling tiles to deaden sound. This will help users who suffer from hearing difficulties.

Again on a 'positive' note, the hedges bordering Church Lane have been lowered to enable their shearing to take place at a safer height.

Colin Foden

Music Group

The band has continued to enjoy assisting the worship at our 10.45 service during the past 12 months. We now have seven members playing a variety of instruments, which means we have an average of five players available each week, barring sickness and holidays. We are continuing to increase our repertoire, playing two or three hymns each week and music at the end of the service. Holy Communion on the second Sunday of the month gives us the opportunity to play while Communion is being taken.

We have an 'honorary member' George, who has delighted the congregation on two occasions this year singing his own compositions of beautiful Easter and Christmas songs while playing the guitar. We look forward to hearing more during this year!

Thank you to the congregation for their support and encouragement and if there are any other musicians who would like to join us, please contact Paul or myself.

Mary Foden

Safeguarding

Holy Ascension takes its duty and obligation to protect all extremely seriously. We have adopted the National Church of England's robust procedures and guidelines. You can find out more about the national policies and procedures at www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding.

In 2024

- new PCC members were appointed and checks were carried out through the Disclosure and Barring Services for them to gain a DBS certificate and then to go on and complete the safeguarding training requirements as set out in the National and Diocesan policies.
- As a church we registered for the 'Parish Safeguarding Dashboard' which we were invited to do by the Diocese. This is a simple to use, online tool, accessed via the computer or smartphone, to help the PCC keep track of Safeguarding in our church. There are 3 levels and we completed Level 2 in January 2025. It has required us to look at all the activities we do in the church, add them to the dashboard and through questioning ensure that we are doing all we need to do to ensure as a church we are safe. It has

been a lengthy process so far and is far from complete, but we have made great progress with it.

- A Safeguarding Report has been prepared and received at each PCC meeting to ensure the PCC are up to date with actions that have been taken, need approving or need discussing and any new reports or requirements from the safeguarding dashboard.

If you have any safeguarding concerns or issues of a safeguarding matter then you can find useful contact information at www.chester.anglican.org/social-responsibility/safeguarding or you can contact Tara our Safeguarding Officer at safeguarding@holycension.org.uk.

Tara Newman

Sewing Group

Sewing group continues to meet every Thursday morning in the Kempe Room between 10.00am and 12noon. During the year we made Easter and Christmas decorations which were sold at the Christmas Fayre and Hospice coffee mornings. We also made pinafore dresses and drawstring bags which were sent to Africa with the 'Fish and Chip' Jumpers that members knitted.

Everyone is welcome to come along for coffee/tea, biscuits, chat and company irrespective of sewing or knitting ability.

Sue Burgess

Sunday Club

Our age range of the children we have presently is 5 – 10 years old and we usually have 5/7 children every week and have seen three new children regularly joining us. A rota of 4 ladies supports the leader to enable the Sunday Club and this has worked well throughout the year.

We use the ROOTS material as a basis for the Sunday Club activities. We always start with action songs, games, read a story / passage from the Bible, perhaps watch a video, a discussion time, prayer and some sort of craft activity.... the aim is to make our time together fun and stimulating as we learn about God.

Presently we are learning about 'Hearing God's call' as in the story of Samuel and also 'Responding to God's Call as in the story of Jonah.

It's a privilege to teach the children about God and Jesus and to see how the children are making links and connections to previous stories and topics covered as they encounter God throughout the Bible.

We pray that all of the children continue to grow in their relationship with Christ and that what they learn with us on a Sunday morning will be a foundation for their lives now and in the future.

Tara Newman

Table Tennis

The all male group which meets Monday and Thursday mornings at 9-30 in the back room of the Community Hall has now reached the apostolic number twelve. Games of doubles are played at a steady pace during the two hour duration. There are a couple of breaks for tea, biscuits and inevitable discussions of current affairs. Bryan Jones, one of the members, publishes a comical TT magazine each month which is turning out to be a 'must read' among the group.

Colin Foden



Table Tennis group members

The Children's Society

The annual box opening in September raised £1,518-15 for the work of the Children's Society. The Christingle Service in December raised a further £150-57. The money will go to provide help and support for vulnerable children.

Margaret Brizell

Upton Heath Church Of England Primary School

Nia Bradley and I are the representatives from Holy Ascension Church on the Local Academy Committee (LAC) – akin to Governors – for Upton Heath School. Our roles include termly meetings with the school and whilst our main focus is on the Christian Distinctiveness within the school, we also take note of aspects such as, pupil standards, behaviour, and support for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities etc. We meet with staff and pupils to talk about work and school which helps us to make judgements which we feed back into meetings. Both Nia and I visit the school's collective acts of worship – I even helped Paul during one of his regular weekly assemblies with the children. The children take an active part in the daily acts of worship that involve singing, prayers and a story or topic with a religious focus.

Early last year the school received a good judgement from Ofsted in their inspection. Later in 2024 Upton Heath was successful in achieving the required standard in its inspection by the Church of England, with many positive statements in the report about the school's Christian Vision, the pupils' wellbeing and links with the church and community.

Rick Hawkley

World Day of Prayer

On 1st March 2024 we welcomed to St. Columba's Church over 40 members from the URC, St. Columba's and Holy Ascension Churches to the service written by Christian women from Palestine. This service was written 5 years ago, when no-one could have envisaged the situation in Palestine in 2024. With the on-going warfare, the theme of the service was very appropriate: 'I beg you, bear with one another in love'. We therefore began our service with a short time of prayer and reflection for all the people of the Holy Land.

This same service is used in 170 countries and islands world-wide. An estimated 3 million men, women and young people will take part in the service. In the UK some 6,000 services will be held on this day.

Afterwards we enjoyed a time of fellowship with refreshments.

Barbara Capstick

Approved by the PCC on 10th March 2025 and signed on their behalf by
Revd Paul Newman (PCC Chair)..... 

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Holy Ascension, Upton-By-Chester

Receipts and Payments Accounts for the Year Ended 31st December 2024

	Note	Unrestricted Fund	Unrestricted Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2024	Total 2023
<u>Receipts</u>		£	£	£	£	£
Voluntary receipts						
Planned giving		48,044	-	-	48,044	47,918
Collections at services		10,345	-	1,191	11,536	6,896
Donations		2,036	7,156	1,290	10,482	5,903
Gift Aid recovered		12,916	-	-	12,916	11,504
Grants received		202	927	5,000	6,129	-
Legacies		9,000	-	-	9,000	3,509
		82,543	8,083	7,481	98,107	75,730
Activities for generating funds	3	5,698	-	398	6,096	2,717
Church Activities	4	30,009	-	1,003	31,012	33,906
Investment Income	5	3,417	-	-	3,417	3,107
Total Receipts		£121,667	£8,083	£8,882	£138,632	£115,460
<u>Payments</u>						
Church activities						
Parish Share		75,344	-	-	75,344	71,757
Fees remitted		2,997	-	-	2,997	5,027
Clergy and Staffing costs		5,714	-	-	5,714	4,862
Church costs	6	17,977	12,058	1,856	31,891	21,007
Vicarage costs		4,561	-	-	4,561	4,139
Hall running costs		11,418	-	-	11,418	10,975
Mission giving and donations		1,906	-	2,614	4,520	5,055
		119,917	12,058	4,470	136,445	122,822
Cost of generating Funds	7	1,483	-	393	1,876	741
Total payments		£121,400	£12,058	£4,863	£138,321	£123,563
Surplus of receipts over payments		267	(3,975)	4,019	311	(8,103)
Transfer between funds		4,050	(4,050)	-	-	-
Cash at bank and in hand						
1 st January 2024		10,953	14,540	15,109	40,602	48,705
31 st December 2024		£15,270	£6,515	£19,128	£40,913	£40,602

Approved by the PCC on 10th March 2025 and signed on their behalf by:

Rev. Paul Newman *P. Newman*

Mr. Michael Richard Curtis. *Michael R Curtis*

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Holy Ascension, Upton-By-Chester**Statement of Assets and Liabilities as at 31st December 2024**

	Unrestricted Fund	Unrestricted Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2024	Total 2023
	£	£	£	£	£
Cash at bank and in hand					
Lloyds Current Account	7,991	-	4,598	12,589	9,769
Unity Trust Bank - Current Account	5,434	-	-	5,434	6,037
Unity Trust Bank - Deposit Account	27	-	3,011	3,038	7,752
CCLA – Deposit Account	1,658	6,515	11,318	19,491	16,178
CCLA – Building in Faith	-	-	-	-	17
Cash in Hand	160	-	21	181	493
Children’s Fund Account	-	-	43	43	43
Flower Fund	-	-	137	137	313
	£15,270	£6,515	£19,128	£40,913	£40,602
Other Monetary Assets					
Gift Aid Recoverable	£3,734	-	-	£ 3,734	£3,997
An amount of £1,633 paid in VAT on the clock’s restoration is recoverable under the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme and will be claimed in 2025.					
Investment Assets					
3,841.83 (3,841.83)					
Shares in The CBF					
Church of England Fund	£88,834	-	-	£88,834	£86,846
Fixed assets retained for church use					
The fixed assets retained for church use are Holy Ascension Community Hall, the Organ (refurbished 2013) and the AV system.					
All assets belong to the unrestricted fund.					
Liabilities	£	£	£	£	£
Fees	£34	-	-	£34	£187

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Holy Ascension, Upton-By-Chester

Notes to the Receipts and Payments Accounts for the Year Ended 31st December 2024

1. The financial statements of the PCC have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 using the Receipts & Payments basis.
2. The movements in designated and restricted funds during the year were:

	Balance b/fwd.	Receipts	Payments	Transfer	Balance c/fwd.
Restricted	£	£	£	£	£
Family Workers	650	-	-	(650)	-
Flower Fund	313	1,003	1,179		137
Sunshine Tots	3,543	-	-	(3,543)	
Children's fund	-	-	563	4,193	3,630
Caring & Sharing	205	462	259	-	408
Other	10,398	7,417	2,862	-	14,953
	£15,109	£ 8,882	£4,863	£-	£19,128

During the year the PCC decided to amalgamate the Family Workers Fund with the Sunshine Tots Fund to form a new Children's Fund which will be used to finance future work with children.

	£	£	£	£	£
Designated					
Hall	6,515	-	-	-	6,515
Musical Tots	4,050	-	-	(4,050)	-
Clock Fund	3,975	8,083	12,058	-	-
	£14,540	£8,083	£12,058	£(4,050)	£6,515

The Musical Tots Fund was originally set up so that the group would be self- financing. The group ceased to run in March 2020 and the PCC considers it unlikely that a similar group will run in the future, therefore the fund balance has been transferred back to the general account.

	Unrestricted Fund	Unrestricted Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2024	Total 2023
	£	£	£	£	£
3. Activities for generating funds					
Social events	4,855	-	398	5,253	2,703
Sundry receipts	843	-	-	843	14
	£5,698	£-	£398	£6,096	£2,717

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Holy Ascension, Upton-By-Chester**Notes to the Receipts and Payments Accounts for the Year Ended 31st December 2024**

	Unrestricted Fund	Unrestricted Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2024	Total 2023
	£	£	£	£	£
4. Church activities					
Fees for weddings and funerals	8,212	-	-	8,212	12,164
Community Hall hire	21,327	-	-	21,327	20,006
Magazine	470	-	-	470	30
Flower fund	-	-	1,003	1,003	1,706
	£ 30,009	£-	£1,003	£31,012	£33,906
	£	£	£	£	£
5. Investment income					
Dividends	2,411	-	-	2,411	2,374
Interest	1,006	-	-	1,006	733
	£3,417	£-	£-	£3,417	£3,107
	£	£	£	£	£
6. Church activities					
Church running expenses	15,020	12,058	124	27,202	16,189
Cost of services	1,664	-	-	1,664	956
Administration	1,241	-	-	1,241	1,791
Magazine	52	-	553	605	787
Flower fund	-	-	1,179	1,179	1,284
	£17,977	£12,058	£1,856	£31,891	£21,007
	£	£	£	£	£
7. Cost of generating funds					
Social events	£1,483	£-	£393	£1,876	£741

**Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of the Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical
Parish of Holy Ascension, Upton by Chester (registered charity number: 1131069).**

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity for the year ended 31st December 2024 which are set out on pages 1 to 4.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

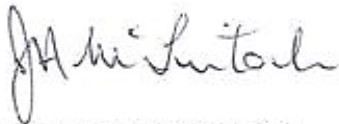
I report in respect of my examination of the charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

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

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

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



John McIntock FCA FCCA
2 Windmill Rise
Upton
Chester

Date 10th March 2025

Accounts

**Annual Report and Accounts
of the Parochial Church Council of
Holy Ascension, Upton by Chester**

For the year ended 31st December 2023



Registered Charity Number: 1131069

Vicar's Report

Welcome to our Annual Report for the year ended 31st December 2023.

As you read this I want you to be encouraged by the many activities that take place within our church community. We have many people who serve others in lots of ways within the church community through the running of groups, giving lifts, cleaning, flower arranging, leading us in worship or prayer, making cups of tea, welcoming, setting up, doing gardening, there are many other ways of serving that occur that I could mention, but don't have the space to do it. Why are many individuals serving each other in this way? Because as a community of believers we are seeking to become the church that God would have us be.

So I want you to enjoy reading the reports, thank God for those serving in this ministry and see where you could get involved in the coming year.

God bless

Paul

Our stated purpose

To be the people of God in this place, committed to Christ, to one another and to service in the community: Together we worship God with Joy and Love, with an openness to the renewal by the Holy Spirit.

Administrative Information

Holy Ascension is in Church Lane, Upton, Chester and is part of the diocese of Chester within the Church of England.

Correspondence address is: The Parish Office, Holy Ascension Community Hall, Demage Lane, Chester, CH2 1EL

Incumbent: Revd Paul Newman

Reader Emeritus: Mrs Barbara Capstick

Parish Safeguarding Officer: Tara Newman,
email safeguarding@holyascension.org.uk

Bank: Unity Trust Bank, Four Brindleyplace, Birmingham B1 2JB.

Independent examiner: John McLintock FCA FCCA

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Holy Ascension is a charity registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales, charity registration number: 1131069.

When planning our activities for the year, the PCC gave consideration to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the specific guidance to charities concerned with the advancement of religion.

The PCC is a body corporate and operates under the Parochial Church Councils Powers Measure 1956 and the Church Representation Rules 2020. The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. All church members are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC.

The PCC currently has 11 members and normally meets on the second Monday of each alternate month in the Kempe Room.

Members of the PCC:

Elected: Graham Barley
Susan Campbell
Michael Curtis - Churchwarden
Rob Evans
Colin Foden - Churchwarden
Jean Machan – Resigned 13th November 2023
Liz Squire
Sally Symes

Co-opted: Colin Bain.

Ex officio: Sue Burgess
Barbara Capstick
Paul Newman.

Bible Study Group

There are 17 members of this group, 15 from Holy Ascension and 2 from other churches. We meet fortnightly in the Kempe room at 2.40pm with coffee/tea/biscuits and a time of fellowship. Our study begins at 3.00pm with prayers followed by 'what's on' events.

This year we have studied:

- **The Fruits of the Spirit** - following Paul's Lent talks
- **The Feast of St. Barnabas** - in June
- **Growing Older and Wiser** - a Life builder course
- **Advent preparation**

We were challenged by these various studies. They gave us an opportunity through discussion to share our thoughts and understanding of the passages which encouraged us to continue at home.

For both our July and December meetings we chose favourite readings on selected religious themes.

We are always pleased to welcome new members to join us.

Barbara Capstick

Caring & Sharing Lunch

On the second Wednesday of the month, a light lunch is served in the Kempe room after the communion service. It is a time when we can gather together for food and fellowship. All are welcomed.

Hilary Woodcock

Choir

Our choir although small in number continues to be a valuable support and lead to our 9.00 Sunday morning services each week.

Revd Paul Newman

Christian Aid

Christian Aid supporters have been busy raising funds by doing bucket collections, Street to Street collections and Churches Together lent lunches as well as an evening of music and readings by Trevor Dennis supported by local musicians.

The total fund raising was £27,314.63. Sadly this is a decrease of £10,000 despite all the effort from the above fund raising activities.

The main fund raising event was the street to street collection and our church members collected £1,127.06, which was lower than last year. Chester as a whole raised £18,161.64 with many churches taking part.

Please look on the notice board for posters advertising events and support them whenever you can.

Margaret Bain

Churches Together in Upton

The events this year were funded by the CTU surplus.

The main expenditure was for an Organist to play at the fifth Sunday services, also the wreath for Remembrance Sunday.

We share worship on the fifth Sunday in the month, on a rota with the URC and St. Columba's, as well as a Remembrance Sunday reflection at one of the Churches. These services are interesting and have about 25+ in the congregation. The fellowship over refreshments is popular. We lay a Wreath on behalf of the three Churches after the short service at the War Memorial. Advent and Lent material for sharing is readily available. A weekly prayer diary is provided for the Churches to use. The World Day of Prayer was held in March at the URC. There were two fellowship lunches, Lent (proceeds to the Hospice) and Christian Aid. A collection was held at Christmas for Chester Aid for The Homeless. The twice monthly Coffee Mornings are very popular and raise a significant amount of money to be donated to charity; through occasional Bring and Buys and Raffles - Over £1000 in the last year. Carols were "sung" during the Coffee Morning nearest Christmas. A visit to Chester Cathedral was well received with a tour, refreshments and Evensong.

Holy Ascension Representatives are M. Whaley, B. Capstick, J. Butler and Rev. P Newman.

John Butler

Connect Group

The 'Connect' group is aimed at the younger ladies who come to Holy Ascension, to offer them a chance to take time out from their work / family commitments and get together, get to know each other and support each other in the journey of life.

We have been fortunate to meet throughout 2023/ 2024 for a range of activities that have included making a macramé keyring, a walk along the canal by the Countess of Chester and the surrounding countryside, two Catch Up & Cake evenings, meringues and scones in the summer, making a beaded star, creating Christmas decorations and most recently our Potluck Supper in January ...a wonderful opportunity to sample new foods!

We always open with a prayer and then at the end of the evening we take the opportunity to finish with a time of sharing and praying for each other, a chance to offer each other our support and to thank God for blessing our time together. A branch off the 'Connect' group is our bible study group where 7 of us meet weekly in term time to study Gods' word and pray. We use the Life builder study guides to lead us in our studies and in 2023 we continued with the 'I am sayings of Christ' followed by 'Proverbs – Learning to live wisely'. This January we have embarked on studying the book of 'James – Faith that works'. So far the studies are helping us to grow in our understanding of how our faith should be seen in our actions and the way we live out our lives each day.

Tara Newman

Electoral Roll Report

In March 2023 there were 127 names on the Roll. 11 new members were added but, sadly, five members passed away.

Every sixth year the preparation of a completely new Church Electoral Roll takes place, which means that everyone must come off the Roll and re-apply. The next occasion for the preparation of this new Roll will be in 2025.

Graham Barley

Fabric Report

We have continued looking after our buildings and our graveyard making sure that it is in a good state of repair. At the beginning of the year our clock broke down and wasn't working for six months but this has now been repaired. We have done some work on the roof, had our fire-alarm system in the Kempe room replaced and are looking to replace some of the lighting in our church.

Revd Paul Newman

Fellowship Group

We have had a busy programme in 2023 with 30-40 people, on average, attending the meetings.

We meet in Church on the third Monday of the month at 2.30pm, followed by tea and biscuits in the Kempe Room after the talk.

We started the year with a talk by Graeme White "Is Chester a North West, Welsh Border, or West Midland City?". There was plenty of discussion after the talk but there was no answer to the question!

February was a talk about the R.S.P.B. with some lovely photographs. March was a talk by Monty Mercer from Hoole History and Heritage Society about "The Royal Agriculture Show in Hoole in 1893".

We had a Songs of Praise in April with Dennis Jones playing the organ. Coral Greenwood made a return visit in May with "The History of Musical Theatre".

Graham Loach returned to speak about "Memories of the 60's" in June.

In the autumn we started with "Guide Dogs for the Blind" and October with a talk about "The Work of the Children's Society".

We welcomed the Revd. David Chesters in November who gave a fascinating talk about "Heraldry and Ceremonial".

We finished the year with our annual Carol Service of Nine Lessons and Carols.

Margaret Brizell

Finance

The Receipts and Payments accounts for the year ended 31st December 2023 are set out at the end of the Annual Report.

Unrestricted Fund

There was an excess of payments over receipts for the year of £10,294.

Voluntary income was down £5,182 compared with the previous year. Both planned giving and collections fell resulting in a corresponding fall in gift aid recovered. However, the receipt of two legacies and a slight increase in income from church activities meant that total income remained static at £108,016. Total expenditure increased by £4,987 largely due to increased gas and electricity prices for both the church and community hall.

In 2023 we paid our parish share of £71,757 in full. The 2024 parish share will be £75,344, an increase of 5%.

At the yearend there was £10,953 in the general fund bank accounts.

Unrestricted Designated Funds

During the year the clock was repaired and the first stage payment for this was made out of the Clock Fund. We also received a donation of £4,000 towards re-painting the clock face which should happen during 2024.

The Musical Tots designated fund was set up to ensure that the fees from the weekly sessions will cover any future costs associated with running the group. The Hall fund represents money allocated by the PCC to pay for future improvement works on the community hall such as a new boiler and kitchen.

Restricted Funds

The movements on restricted funds are set out in note 2 to the accounts.

Reserves policy

It is the PCC policy to maintain a balance on unrestricted funds which equates to a level they consider necessary to meet forthcoming needs.

Sue Burgess

Flower Arranging Team

Our team of 14 ladies and 2 gentlemen continues to work with enthusiasm and expertise to create beautiful flower arrangements to celebrate the festivals of; Easter, Ascension, Harvest, Christmas and Weddings.

This year we were very excited to be planning flowers in Church to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles 3rd and Queen Camilla on Saturday May 6th.

Preparations began on Thursday May 4th and we opened the Church on Friday May 5th and Sunday May 7th. Visitors enjoyed flowers celebrating the King's life;

- Church porch -amazing flowers represented The COMMONWEALTH
- The Font -the magnificent Crown symbolised MONARCHY
- 6 Nave Windows -depicted the King's many concerns and interests:

Conservation of Trees, Painting, Organic Farming, Music, Ecology

- 4 Transept Windows -England, Wales, Scotland, Ireland.

On Tuesday May 9th the arrangements were dismantled and taken out to folk who were housebound.

After expenses the balance of the Donations were given to the Church.

Flowers are placed in the Sanctuary and on the War Memorial each week.

These are purchased by generous donations from the congregation.

Our church is very fortunate to have so many folk who give a great deal of their time and expertise to arrange flowers throughout the year, for which we are very grateful.

Barbara Capstick

Foodbank

As a church, we support Cheshire's Food bank. People bring items of food to church and leave them on the back cupboard then the Bain's as well as Graham Barley take it to the food bank in Ellesmere Port once a month. Each month a slip telling us how much was taken to the food bank is pinned on the notice board in the church entrance alongside a list of food urgently required. At the moment the food bank is distributing more food than they are receiving so please add an extra item on your shopping list to support this charity.

A big thank you to everyone who has donated in the last year.

Margaret Bain

Heartbeat

At the end of 2023 the PCC came to the decision that six issues will be produced to cover the year. Therefore the amalgamation following the combined December/January issue will be as follows: February/March, April/May, June/July, August/September, and October/November and will cover 24 pages for each issue.

Coloured pages will continue to be limited to four pages a month and for the foreseeable future 150 copies will be printed to be collected from Church.

Heartbeat continues to be available via the website as a PDF.

Sharon Forsdyke

Health and Safety

There is little to report. The one major incident involved the decorative corbel above the lectern crashing to the ground, thankfully during the night, on one Tuesday last year. This now has been re-fixed by a qualified stonemason. An inspection of other similar structures has taken place. The usual risk assessments took place prior to the Christmas celebrations with buckets of water in appropriate places at the Christingle service when candles were lit.

The checking of fire prevention equipment together with portable and fixed electrical equipment is up to date. The church steps have been re-painted white to assist parishioners who suffer from poor eyesight.

Finally, some new wet floor signs have been purchased for use at the Community Hall.

Colin Foden

Music Group

The Church music group has continued to grow. The group now numbers 6, with the addition of a clarinettist and a cellist. We continue to play on 3 or 4 Sundays of the month at the 10.45 service and we have been pleased with the appreciation shown by the congregation. As usual the Christmas period was very busy. As well as our normal services we were pleased to be asked to play at the Christingle service, the Crib service on Christmas Eve and our Christmas Day service.

We shall continue to build up our repertoire.

Mary Foden

Safeguarding

Holy Ascension takes its duty and obligation to protect all extremely seriously. We have adopted the National Church of England's robust procedures and guidelines. You can find out more about the national policies and procedures at www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding.

Earlier in 2023 Tara Newman was appointed as our church Safeguarding Officer, she has spent her time getting much of the safeguarding up to date including obtaining certificates from Disclosure and Barring Services for all of the PCC members and all of those working with our church children in the Sunday Club. All of those have also fully completed all of the safeguarding training requirements set out in the National and Diocesan policies.

New paperwork relating to volunteers in the Sunday Club has also been put in place to ensure our Safer Recruitment requirements are also met and is now in place for any future volunteers within the church.

If you have any safeguarding concerns or issues of a safeguarding matter then you can find useful contact information at www.chester.anglican.org/social-responsibility/safeguarding or you can contact Tara our Safeguarding Officer at safeguarding@holycension.org.uk.

Tara Newman

Schools

We continue to build links with our church school Upton Heath. We have two members of the church who act as governors. We take an assembly every Wednesday afternoon and the school come into church and do a class assembly at the major festivals of the year.

We have also had Acresfield School come into church at Christmas and take a Christmas production.

Revd Paul Newman

Sewing Group

Sewing group continues to meet every Thursday morning in the Kempe Room between 10.00am and 12noon. During the year we made Easter and Christmas decorations which were sold at the Christmas Fayre and Hospice coffee mornings. Everyone is welcome to come along for coffee/tea, biscuits, chat and company irrespective of sewing or knitting ability.

Sue Burgess

Sunday Club

Our age range of the children we have presently is 5 – 10 years old and we usually have 4/6 children every week. A rota of 4 ladies support Tara in leading the Sunday Club and this has worked well throughout the year.

We use the ROOTS material as a basis for the Sunday Club activities. We always start with action songs, games, read a story/passage from the Bible, perhaps watch a video, a discussion time, prayer and some sort of craft activity... the aim is to make our time together learning about God's love in a fun and stimulating way. Presently we are learning about 'Hearing God's call as in the story of Samuel and also 'Responding to God's Call as in the story of Jonah.

All of us that have been working with the children over the past year have seen how they have grown in knowledge and understanding of God's love for them and how they are relating other stories and learning to the new stories they encounter. We pray that all of the children continue to grow in their relationship with Christ and that what they learn with us on a Sunday morning is a foundation for their lives.

Tara Newman

Table Tennis

The group which meets every Monday afternoon and Thursday morning in the back room of the Community Hall has grown significantly in number during the last twelve months. It provides a much needed social outlet for senior male members of the church. While retaining the current Monday afternoon session, it is hoped, shortly, to use the main hall on a Thursday afternoons in order to add other activities such as pool and indoor bowls.

Colin Foden

The Children's Society

The annual box opening in September raised £1,316-30 for the work of The Children's Society. The Christingle Service in December raised a further £163-90. The money will go to provide help and support for vulnerable children.

Margaret Brizell

World Day of Prayer

We welcomed a congregation of over 60 members from the URC, St. Columba's and Holy Ascension Church to the service which was written by Christian women from Taiwan.

During the service, accounts were read by three women describing their lives living in poverty, in fear of abuse from a partner or in isolation because of disability, sexuality or an ethnic background. Sadly there are many ongoing conflicts in Taiwan at this time, so the people are very much in need of our prayers.

This same service is used in 170 countries and islands worldwide. An estimated 3 million men, women and young people will have taken part in the service, which is translated into 60 languages. In The UK alone some 6,000 services took place on this day. We enjoyed singing traditional songs. In our prayers we gave thanks for the women who prepared the service and for the work of the W.D.P. Organisation in spreading the gospel message around the world. A collection was given for Christian Charities worldwide.

Afterwards delicious traditional refreshments were served and enjoyed over lively conversation.

It is always uplifting when the Churches Together in Upton meet for this special Service of International and Ecumenical worship and prayer.

Barbara Capstick

Approved by the PCC on 11th March 2024 and signed on their behalf by

Revd Paul Newman (PCC Chair).....
P. Newman

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Holy Ascension, Upton-By-Chester

Receipts and Payments Accounts for the Year Ended 31st December 2023

	Note	Unrestricted Fund	Unrestricted Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2023	Total 2022
		£	£	£	£	£
<u>Receipts</u>						
Voluntary receipts						
Planned giving		47,918	-	-	47,918	50,451
Collections at services		6,634	143	119	6,896	8,087
Donations		478	4,000	1,425	5,903	2,674
Gift Aid recovered		11,504	-	-	11,504	13,982
Grants received		-	-	-	-	2,035
Legacies		3,509	-	-	3,509	-
		70,043	4,143	1,544	75,730	77,229
Activities for generating funds	3	2,666	51	-	2,717	2,705
Church Activities	4	32,200	-	1,706	33,906	30,133
Investment Income	5	3,107	-	-	3,107	2,555
Total Receipts		£108,016	£4,194	£3,250	£115,460	£112,622
<u>Payments</u>						
Church activities						
Parish Share		71,757	-	-	71,757	69,666
Fees remitted		5,027	-	-	5,027	3,779
Clergy and Staffing costs		4,862	-	-	4,862	4,329
Church costs	6	16,685	1,669	2,653	21,007	20,037
Vicarage costs		4,139	-	-	4,139	3,710
Hall running costs		10,975	-	-	10,975	8,068
Mission giving and donations		4,364	-	691	5,055	6,607
		117,809	1,669	3,344	122,822	116,196
Cost of generating Funds	7	501	-	240	741	16
Total payments		£118,310	£1,669	£3,584	£123,563	£116,212
Excess of payments over receipts		(10,294)	2,525	(334)	(8,103)	(3,590)
Transfer between funds		-	200	(200)	-	-
Cash at bank and in hand						
1 st January 2023		21,247	11,815	15,643	48,705	52,295
31 st December 2023		£10,953	£14,540	£15,109	£40,602	£48,705

Approved by the PCC on 11th March 2024 and signed on their behalf by:

Rev. Paul Newman

P. Newman

Mr. Michael Richard Curtis.

Michael R. Curtis

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Holy Ascension, Upton-By-Chester
Statement of Assets and Liabilities as at 31st December 2023

	Unrestricted Fund	Unrestricted Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2023	Total 2022
	£	£	£	£	£
Cash at bank and in hand					
Lloyds Current Account	2,077	1,654	6,038	9,769	24,715
Unity Trust Bank - Current Account	3,706	2,331	-	6,037	8,088
Unity Trust Bank - Deposit Account	1,848	356	5,548	7,752	1,136
CCLA – Deposit Account	2,829	10,199	3,150	16,178	13,349
CCLA – Building in Faith	-	-	17	17	17
Cash in Hand	493	-	-	493	295
Sunshine Tots Account	-	-	43	43	1,014
Flower Fund	-	-	313	313	91
	£10,953	£14,540	£15,109	£40,602	£48,705
Other Monetary Assets					
Gift Aid Recoverable	£3,997	-	-	£ 3,997	£3,470
Investment Assets					
3,841.83 (3,841.83)					
Shares in The CBF					
Church of England Fund	£86,846	-	-	£86,846	£79,378
Fixed assets retained for church use					
The fixed assets retained for church use are Holy Ascension Community Hall, the Organ (refurbished 2013) and the AV system.					
All assets belong to the unrestricted fund.					
	£	£	£	£	£
Liabilities					
Fees	£187	-	-	£187	£460

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Holy Ascension, Upton-By-Chester

Notes to the Receipts and Payments Accounts for the Year Ended 31st December 2023

1. The financial statements of the PCC have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 using the Receipts & Payments basis.

2. The movements in designated and restricted funds during the year were:

	Balance b/fwd.	Receipts	Payments	Transfer	Balance c/fwd.
Restricted	£	£	£	£	£
Family Workers	650	-	-	-	650
Flower Fund	91	1,706	1,284	(200)	313
Sunshine Tots	3,543	-	-	-	3,543
Caring & Sharing	-	445	240	-	205
Other	11,359	1,099	2,060	-	10,398
	£15,643	£3,250	£3,584	£(200)	£15,109

	£	£	£	£	£
Designated					
Hall	6,515	-	-	-	6,515
Musical Tots	4,050	-	-	-	4,050
Clock Fund	1,250	4,194	1,669	200	3,975
	£11,815	£4,194	£1,669	£200	£14,540

	Unrestricted Fund	Unrestricted Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2023	Total 2022
	£	£	£	£	£
3. Activities for generating funds					
Social events	2,652	51	-	2,703	2,481
Sundry receipts	14	-	-	14	224
	£2,666	£51	£-	£2,717	£2,705

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Holy Ascension, Upton-By-Chester

Notes to the Receipts and Payments Accounts for the Year Ended 31st December 2023

	Unrestricted Fund	Unrestricted Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2023	Total 2022
	£	£	£	£	£
4. Church activities					
Fees for weddings and funerals	12,164	-	-	12,164	9,925
Community Hall hire	20,006	-	-	20,006	19,219
Magazine	30	-	-	30	-
Flower fund	-	-	1,706	1,706	989
	£ 32,200	£-	£1,706	£33,906	£30,133
	£	£	£	£	£
5. Investment income					
Dividends	2,374	-	-	2,374	2,361
Interest	733	-	-	733	194
	£3,107	£-	£-	£3,107	£2,555
	£	£	£	£	£
6. Church activities					
Church running expenses	14,004	1,669	516	16,189	16,289
Cost of services	840	-	116	956	1,101
Administration	1,791	-	-	1,791	1,446
Magazine	50	-	737	787	265
Flower fund	-	-	1,284	1,284	936
	£16,685	£1,669	£2,653	£21,007	£20,037
7. Cost of generating funds					
Social events	£501	£-	£240	£741	£16

Independent Examiner's Report to the members/trustees of the Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Holy Ascension, Upton by Chester (registered charity number: 1131069).

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity for the year ended 31st December 2023 which are set out on pages 1 to 4.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

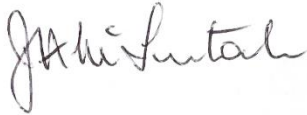
I report in respect of my examination of the charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

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

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

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



John McIntock FCA FCCA
2 Windmill Rise
Upton
Chester

Date 11th March 2024

Accounts

**Annual Report of the Parochial Church Council of
Holy Ascension, Upton by Chester**

For the year ended 31st December 2022



Registered Charity Number: 1131069

Vicar's Report

A big thankyou goes out to **EVERYBODY** who has enabled us to keep being the body of Christ, his Church, around Upton and the wider area. There are too many people to mention by name, but thank you.

It is a great privilege to be the Vicar of a church that has a talented community of believers who offer up their own skills, abilities, time and energy to bring about different activities.

As you look through this booklet you will see that as a church, we are blessed with the many groups that run and offer a wide range of activities to both the members of our church and the wider community.

As I reflect on this year, on the whole, it has been a good year as we have seen mostly a return to normality throughout the services we hold here at Holy Ascension. There are still some minor changes that we have had to continue to do as we seek to protect each other. But it has also been a year of great sadness as we have lost loved ones from our congregation who have gone to be with the Lord.

My hope and prayer is that as we enter into a new church year we will continue to reach out into our community with the message of love and hope that Jesus Christ offers to all.

God Bless.

Revd Paul Newman

Our stated purpose

To be the people of God in this place, committed to Christ, to one another and to service in the community: Together we worship God with Joy and Love, with an openness to the renewal by the Holy Spirit.

Administrative Information

Holy Ascension is in Church Lane, Upton, Chester and is part of the diocese of Chester within the Church of England.

Correspondence address is: The Parish Office, Holy Ascension Community Hall, Demage Lane, Chester, CH2 1EL

Incumbent: Revd Paul Newman

Reader Emeritus: Mrs Barbara Capstick

Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator: Angela Blundell, email safeguarding@holyascension.org.uk

Bank: Unity Trust Bank, Four Brindleyplace, Birmingham B1 2JB.

Independent examiner: John McLintock FCA FCCA

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Holy Ascension is a charity registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales, charity registration number: 1131069.

When planning our activities for the year, the PCC gave consideration to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the specific guidance to charities concerned with the advancement of religion.

The PCC is a body corporate and operates under the Parochial Church Councils Powers Measure 1956 and the Church Representation Rules 2020. The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. All church members are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC.

The PCC currently has 12 members and normally meets on the second Monday of each alternate month in the Kempe Room.

Members of the PCC:

Elected:

Colin Attwood - Resigned 8th May 2022
Graham Barley - Re-appointed 8th May 2022
Susan Campbell - Appointed 8th May 2022
Michael Curtis - Churchwarden
Rob Evans - Re-appointed 8th May 2022
Colin Foden - Churchwarden
Sharon Forsdyke - Resigned 10th February 2022
Vera Gerrard - Resigned 8th May 2022
Jean Machan - Re-appointed 8th May 2022
Glenys Sherwin - Resigned 8th May 2022
Liz Squire - Re-appointed 8th May 2022
Sally Symes - Appointed 8th May 2022
Sheila Taylor - Resigned 8th May 2022
Margaret Whaley - Resigned 8th May 2022

Co-opted: Colin Bain.

Ex officio:

Sue Burgess
Barbara Capstick
Dave O'Brien - Died 20th October 2022
Paul Newman.

(A.C.F.) The Fellowship Group

We have been able to have a full programme in 2022 apart from our September meeting which was the day of the Queen's funeral.

We continue to meet on a Monday afternoon in Church which is proving popular. We have anything from 25 to 50 attending the meetings.

We have had a very varied programme starting in January with a talk "Ness Gardens Past and Present", February was "Chester Postcards". We have been on "A Norwegian Coastal Voyage", revisited "The Kimbuta Rural Development Programme" in Uganda and heard about "Christian Aid to the Homeless in Chester".

June was "The Fabulous Fifties" which involved some audience participation in songs of the era!!

We learnt about the building of the Llangollen Railway and our last speaker in November spoke about "The Smugglers of New Brighton and their Involvement with the Wormhole Caves".

We finished the year with our annual Carol Service of Nine Lessons and Carols.
Margaret Brizell

Bible Study Group

There are 18 members of this group, 16 from Holy Ascension and 2 from other churches. We meet fortnightly on a Thursday afternoon in the Kempe Room beginning at 2.45 with tea, cake and fellowship.

Our opening time of Worship begins with music and prayers, led by one of the members. We pray for the many situations of concern locally and nationally and issues which are on our hearts.

This year we are studying Paul's Letter to the Philippians, using a Lifebuilder Study Guide. This takes us through a passage with questions for discussion, which is very much extended by using a variety of Bible translations and other material.

These afternoons give us an opportunity to share our thoughts and understanding of a Bible passage and to learn from both the studies and from each other. Hopefully they encourage us to continue reading and learning at home. We close with a time of prayer.

New members are always welcome to join us.

Barbara Capstick

Choir

The choir continues to lead the singing at the 9.00am service.

Revd Paul Newman

Christian Aid

Christian Aid is one of the charities the members of the church support. The big fund raiser is the door to door street collection that we have been doing since I took over in 1999. Like a lot of Charities, the volunteers get older so cannot do as much but we in our church still take part in the Christian Aid week unlike the other Upton Churches. There is always a mid-week lunch fund raiser after one of the 10:15 Wednesday services which is well supported. Last year we as a church raised £992 compared to £984 in Christian Aid week and we supported other activities like Songs of Praise and St Mary's Evening of Music and Readings by Trevor Dennis. Further events will be shown on the church notice board and magazine.

Thank you to everyone who help me in various ways with this valuable charity.

Margaret Bain

Churches Together in Upton

Still affected to a degree by COVID, the year passed in a similar way to last year. The membership has reduced with Holy Ascension and Upton URC having the majority of representatives. At the end of the year it was regretted that there had been no attendees from St Columba's for a few meetings.

The fifth Sunday services resumed and were held at the three churches. Holy Ascension offered to provide the Remembrance Day Reflection on behalf of St Columba's; which was well received. Donations in cash and kind were given to the food bank, homeless and the Hospice.

During the year consideration of the representation from the three churches reached deadlock. The Churches Coffee Mornings (known as Altogether Upton) separated from Churches Together and now have their own organisation. They do, however, financially support Churches Together as well as supporting local and national charities.

John Butler

Connect Group

The 'Connect' group is aimed at the younger ladies who come to Holy Ascension, to offer them a chance to take time out from their work / family commitments and get together, get to know each other and support each other in the journey of life. We have roughly 20 ladies in the group and welcomed two more ladies in September.

Although we have managed to meet up more this year some of our activities in 2022 were still affected by the COVID pandemic. Some of the group were still shielding due to personal or family reasons but the WhatsApp group has enabled us all to remain in contact and has been a fantastic way to ask and receive prayer

for situations we encounter.

Where health and timing has allowed, it has been really wonderful to meet in person and catch up! In June 2022, we were guided and inspired by Barbara Capstick to make beautiful floral table decorations which were displayed at the flower festival to celebrate the Queens Platinum Jubilee! We had a 'catch up and cake' in September and then back to creating wonderful Christmas table / door decorations in November 2022. We are hoping for a more regular once a month meet up in 2023 starting with our 'Potluck Supper' in January which was a great success with wonderful food.

A branch off the 'Connect' group is our bible study group, 6/7 of us meet weekly in term time to study God's Word and pray. Since April 2022 we have used the Life Builder study guides on 'Woman of God', 'The I am sayings of Jesus' and leading up to Christmas we studied 'the Coming of the Saviour'. All the studies have enabled us to further explore the Bible and how it can impact our own personal relationship with Jesus too.

Tara Newman

Electoral Roll Report

In line with Church Representation Rules, a new Electoral Roll was prepared in 2019. In March 2022 there were 121 names on the roll.

Jane Curtis

Fabric Report

As a church we continue to keep our building in good overall condition and repairs are carried out as and when the need arises.

At the moment our clock has stopped working and we are in the process of getting quotes to get it repaired.

Revd Paul Newman

Finance

The Receipts and Payments accounts for the year ended 31st December 2022 are set out at the end of the Annual Report.

Unrestricted Fund

There was an excess of payments over receipts for the year of £5,238.

Despite a fall in planned giving during the year, voluntary income remained static at £75,225 due to a slight increase in collections at services and gift aid recovered. Income from community hall hire increased by £7,341 during the year

as we were able to open the hall as normal for most of the year. This meant an overall increase in total income of £4,357.

In 2022 we paid our parish share of £69,666 in full. The 2023 parish share will be £71,757, an increase of 3%.

During the year we had to carry out repairs to the church roof and organ hence the significant increase in church running costs. These costs, together with the community hall running costs, are going to increase significantly in 2023 as we are currently paying much more for both gas and electricity than in 2022.

Unrestricted Designated Funds

During the year a Clock Fund was set up to put aside money to be used to pay for repairs to the clock. The proceeds of the Christmas Fayre went into this fund. The Musical Tots designated fund was set up to ensure that the fees from the weekly sessions will cover any future costs associated with running the group. The Hall fund represents money allocated by the PCC to pay for future improvement works on the community hall such as a new boiler and kitchen.

Restricted Funds

The movements on restricted funds are set out in note 2 to the accounts.

Reserves policy

It is the PCC policy to maintain a balance on unrestricted funds which equates to a level they consider necessary to meet forthcoming needs.

Sue Burgess

Flower Arranging Team

This has been an exciting year for us with the Celebration of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee taking centre stage in June. We joined with members of Upton Flower Club, who had worked hard in 2022 to raise funds to finance this event. The flowers began at the lych-gate along the drive to the church porch. Here the arrangements included glorious flowers, flags and memorabilia from the Commonwealth, celebrating the Queen's special links with all 54 countries. Inside the Church there were stunning arrangements to celebrate the 70 years of her reign; beginning with a magnificent Crown on the Font. Others depicted her enthusiasm for horse racing and dogs, Windsor Castle, music, and the 4 countries of the UK.

The wonderful white arrangements in the Sanctuary reminded us that the Queen began her reign by kneeling in prayer at the Altar in Westminster Abbey. Flowers by the Remembrance Book and on the Prayer table gave us a quiet place to pray for Ukraine and those whom we have loved but see no more. The Kempe Room

which was decorated with flags and flowers in red, white and blue had tables overflowing with delicious cakes.

More than 110 folk volunteered to arrange flowers, bake cakes, steward, Spring clean the Church, tidy the grounds, climb ladders to 'hang' arrangements, make countless cups of tea and wash-up etc!

Over the 4 days we were open, we welcomed over 800 visitors. Donations in excess of £3,000 were allocated to the Hospice, Ukraine, the Church and the Flower Club.

Our Church Flower team of 14 ladies and 2 gentlemen continue to work throughout the year with enthusiasm and expertise to create arrangements to celebrate the festivals of Easter, Ascension, Harvest, Christmas and Weddings. These arrangements are solely supported by generous donations from the congregation. Our church is very fortunate to have so many folk who give a great deal of their time to arrange flowers throughout the year, for which we are very grateful.

Barbara Capstick

Foodbank

As a church we support the Foodbank and the congregation are encouraged to buy extra items of food and leave it at the back of the Nave. Once a month the donations are taken to the foodbank in Ellesmere Port and from there, the food is distributed to those who desperately need to feed themselves and their families. Usually there is about 33.4 kilos a month donated but it would be good to get back to Pre-COVID times when it often was 65 kilos. Thank you to those who donate regularly and it is hoped that more of us will think about others when doing the weekly shop.

Margaret & Colin Bain, Graham Barley

Heartbeat

The first print run, since suspension during COVID, began again with the October 2022 issue.

The PCC came to the decision that 20 pages would now suffice for each issue, excepting the December/January and July/August issues which would cover 24 pages; that coloured pages should be limited to four pages a month and that for the time being 150 copies will be printed to be collected from Church. This will be evaluated over time.

Heartbeat continues to be available as an online PDF.

The Editor wishes to thank all those who have contributed articles to Heartbeat over the past year.

Sharon Forsdyke

Health and Safety

Although the threat of serious illness from COVID 19 has diminished, the virus has still not left us and we continue to take precautions at Holy Communion services by dipping the host and passing the peace by waving to each other rather than shaking hands.

Apart from the eradication of a moth infestation in the church carpet during the year, there is nothing to report regarding other topics of a hazardous nature. White lines have been repainted on church steps, paths are even, exterior lighting is in order and supplies of grit were applied to paths on icy mornings. Risk assessments took place and health and safety rules were applied over the Christmas period prior to the erection and removal of the star on the tower and the provision of buckets of water at appropriate points around the church during the use of candles at the crib service.

The five year inspection of fitted electrical appliances is overdue but it is noted that Paul has identified a suitable contractor to undertake this work probably at the same time the improvement to the interior lighting takes place.

As regards the Community Hall, several chairs have been afflicted by moth and these have been withdrawn from service pending treatment with an appropriate spray. A patch of mould caused by a leaking exterior downspout has been treated. It is suggested that, come the clement weather, a working party be formed to tidy the ground (especially dried leaves) to the side and rear of the hall.

Colin Foden

Music Group

Our music group lost Dave, its leader, which had a massive impact. The Music group continues to play a part in leading the worship at our Sunday 10.45am service.

Revd Paul Newman

Safeguarding

Holy Ascension takes its duty and obligation to protect all extremely seriously. We have adopted the national Church of England's robust procedures and guidelines.

You can find out more about the national policies and procedures at www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding.

If you have any safeguarding concerns or issues of a safeguarding matter then you can find useful contact information at www.chester.anglican.org/social-responsibility/safeguarding or you can contact our parish safeguarding co-ordinator at safeguarding@holyascension.org.uk

Sewing Group

Sewing group continues to meet every Thursday morning in the Kempe Room between 10.00am and 12noon.

During the year we made items such as Easter and Christmas decorations, mobile phone rests, bags etc. which were sold at the Christmas Fayre and Hospice coffee mornings.

Everyone is welcome to come along for coffee/tea, biscuits, chat and company irrespective of sewing or knitting ability.

Sue Burgess

Sunday Club

Since April 2022 Sunday Club has steadily been getting back to normal, but it was in September 2022 that we saw a more regular attendance of children and some new families too. Our age range of the children we have presently is 5 – 16 years old and we usually have at least 6/8+ children every week.

We now have a rota of 4 ladies that have offered to support Tara in leading the Sunday Club as we learn about the love God has for each of us in a fun and stimulating way. We always start with action songs, games, read a story / passage from the Bible, perhaps watch a video, a discussion time, prayer and some sort of craft activity....a lot packed into a short time!

We are back to using mainly the ROOTS material but sometimes take our morning activities from internet websites. Presently we are also covering the 'Fruits of The Spirit', matching the sermon content of the 10.45am service. It's a real privilege to share and talk with children about what we are learning each week and to begin to understand how they understand the stories from the Bible. I pray that all of the children come to know God's love for them and are able to share this with those around them.

Tara Newman

The Children's Society

The annual house box opening in September raised £1,650 for the work of the Children's Society. This was £500 more than 2021.

The Christingle Service in December raised a further £210-99p.

The money will go to provide help and support for vulnerable children.

Margaret Brizell

Upton Heath CE Primary School

Our link with Upton Heath CE Primary School continues to be strong. We take a weekly assembly on a Wednesday afternoon and the school comes into church with a year group leading an assembly each term around the major Christian

Festivals to which their parents are invited. We also have a member of our church on the Schools Management Committee and one on the Trust which the school is part of.

Revd Paul Newman

World Day of Prayer - 'I KNOW THE PLANS I HAVE FOR YOU' Jeremiah 29:1-14.

It seemed so very appropriate to come together this year for our World Day of Prayer service on the 4th March aware of the very sad news of the violence and warfare in the Ukraine. On our display table was a globe and the blue and yellow Ukrainian flag.

Friday morning was sunny as we met at the Church of the Holy Ascension. The service was prepared by Christian women from different countries, this year from England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Traditional songs and stories telling the lives of some women in these countries.

It was hard to imagine that as the sun rises over Samoa, and makes its way around the earth it ends some 36 hours later as the sun sets over American Samoa. An estimated 3 million men, women and young people in 170 countries and islands will have taken part in this service translated into 60 languages. In the UK some 6,000 services will be held.

During the service three women from different backgrounds told us what their life was like living in poverty, in fear of abuse from a partner or in isolation because of disability, sexuality or ethnic background.

In our prayers we gave thanks for the work of women who prepared the service and for the work of this organisation in spreading the gospel message around the world.

Our final prayers were for the people of Ukraine at this time of fear and hardship, praying for them to have '***strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow.***'

The collection was for the work of World Day of Prayer for Christian Charities worldwide.

Delicious traditional refreshments were served and enjoyed over lively conversation.

It is good that the **Churches Together in Upton** share this special day with our three churches. This truly international and ecumenical day of prayer is always uplifting.

Barbara Capstick

Approved by the PCC on 13th March 2023 and signed on their behalf by

Revd Paul Newman (PCC Chair).....



The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Holy Ascension, Upton-By-Chester

Receipts and Payments Accounts for the Year Ended 31st December 2022

	Note	Unrestricted Fund	Unrestricted Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2022	Total 2021
		£	£	£	£	£
<u>Receipts</u>						
Voluntary receipts						
Planned giving		50,451	-	-	50,451	58,769
Collections at services		6,463	-	1,624	8,087	4,925
Donations		2,294	-	380	2,674	1,365
Gift Aid recovered		13,982	-	-	13,982	11,622
Grants received		2,035	-	-	2,035	1,838
Upton PCC Charitable Trust		-	-	-	-	340
		75,225	-	2,004	77,229	78,859
Activities for generating funds	3	1,161	1,250	294	2,705	18
Church Activities	4	29,144	-	989	30,133	26,073
Investment Income	5	2,555	-	-	2,555	2,288
Total Receipts		£108,085	£1,250	£3,287	£112,622	£107,238
<u>Payments</u>						
Church activities						
Parish Share		69,666	-	-	69,666	68,132
Fees remitted		3,779	-	-	3,779	4,936
Clergy and Staffing costs		4,329	-	-	4,329	3,144
Church costs	6	18,884	-	1,153	20,037	9,326
Vicarage costs		3,710	-	-	3,710	4,512
Hall running costs		8,068	-	-	8,068	6,997
Mission giving and donations		4,871	-	1,736	6,607	1,230
		113,307	-	2,889	116,196	98,277
Cost of generating Funds	7	16	-	-	16	-
Total payments		£113,323	£-	£2,889	£116,212	£98,277
Excess of payments over receipts		(5,238)	1,250	398	(3,590)	8,961
Cash at bank and in hand						
1 st January 2022		26,485	10,565	15,245	52,295	43,334
31 st December 2022		£21,247	£11,815	£15,643	£48,705	£52,295

Approved by the PCC on 13th March 2023 and signed on their behalf by:

Rev. Paul Newman

P. Newman

Mr. Michael Richard Curtis.

Michael R Curtis

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Holy Ascension, Upton-By-Chester
Statement of Assets and Liabilities as at 31st December 2022

	Unrestricted Fund	Unrestricted Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2022	Total 2021
	£	£	£	£	£
Cash at bank and in hand					
Lloyds Current Account	17,457	1,202	6,056	24,715	23,210
Unity Trust Bank - Current Account	3,582	-	4,506	8,088	8,425
Unity Trust Bank - Deposit Account	-	356	780	1,136	8,436
CCLA – Deposit Account	-	10,199	3,150	13,349	10,825
CCLA – Building in Faith	-	-	17	17	17
Cash in Hand	208	58	29	295	330
Sunshine Tots Account	-	-	1,014	1,014	1,014
Flower Fund	-	-	91	91	38
	£21,247	£11,815	£15,643	£48,705	£52,295
Other Monetary Assets					
Gift Aid Recoverable	£3,470	-	-	£ 3,470	£4,811
Investment Assets					
3,841.83 (3,841.83)					
Shares in The CBF					
Church of England Fund	£79,378	-	-	£79,378	£89,968
Fixed assets retained for church use					
The fixed assets retained for church use are Holy Ascension Community Hall, the Organ (refurbished 2013) and the AV system.					
All assets belong to the unrestricted fund.					
	£	£	£	£	£
Liabilities					
Fees	£460	-	-	£460	£372

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Holy Ascension, Upton-By-Chester

Notes to the Receipts and Payments Accounts for the Year Ended 31st December 2022

1. The financial statements of the PCC have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 using the Receipts & Payments basis.

2. The movements in designated and restricted funds during the year were:

	Balance b/fwd.	Receipts	Payments	Balance c/fwd.
Restricted	£	£	£	£
Family Workers	650	-	-	650
Flower Fund	38	989	936	91
Sunshine Tots	3,543	-	-	3,543
Other	11,014	2,298	1,953	11,359
	£15,245	£3,287	£2,889	£15,643

	£	£	£	£
Designated				
Hall	6,515	-	-	6,515
Musical Tots	4,050	-	-	4,050
Clock Fund	-	1,250	-	1,250
	£10,565	£1,250	-	£11,815

	Unrestricted Fund	Unrestricted Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2022	Total 2021
	£	£	£	£	£
3. Activities for generating funds					
Social events	937	1,250	294	2,481	18
Sundry receipts	224	-	-	224	-
	£1,161	£1,250	£294	£2,705	£18

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Holy Ascension, Upton-By-Chester

Notes to the Receipts and Payments Accounts for the Year Ended 31st December 2022

	Unrestricted Fund	Unrestricted Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2022	Total 2021
	£	£	£	£	£
4. Church activities					
Fees for weddings and funerals	9,925	-	-	9,925	13,242
Community Hall hire	19,219	-	-	19,219	11,878
Magazine	-	-	-	-	305
Flower fund	-	-	989	989	639
Sunshine Tots	-	-	-	-	9
	£ 29,144	-	£989	£30,133	£26,073
	£	£	£	£	£
5. Investment income					
Dividends	2,361	-	-	2,361	2,283
Interest	194	-	-	194	5
	£2,555	-	-	£2,555	£2,288
	£	£	£	£	£
6. Church activities					
Church running expenses	16,289	-	-	16,289	6,511
Cost of services	1,101	-	-	1,101	802
Administration	1,446	-	-	1,446	1,144
Magazine	48	-	217	265	-
Flower fund	-	-	936	936	869
	£18,884	-	£1,153	£20,037	£9,326
7. Cost of generating funds					
Social events	£16	-	-	£16	-

Independent Examiner's Report to the members/trustees of the Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Holy Ascension, Upton by Chester (registered charity number: 1131069).

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity for the year ended 31st December 2022 which are set out on pages 1 to 4.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

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

Independent examiner's statement

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

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

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



John McLintock FCA FCCA
2 Windmill Rise
Upton
Chester

Date 13 March 2023

Accounts

**Annual Report of the Parochial Church Council of
Holy Ascension, Upton by Chester**

For the year ended 31st December 2021



Registered Charity Number: 1131069

Revd Paul Newman

As I write this as we are getting back to a bit of normality, looking back, what a strange year it's been. Through the year we continued to run our services on Zoom at 10.00am on a Sunday and 8.00pm on a Wednesday Evening. It was great to see that the numbers continued to be over 50 people on our Sunday morning service and around 15-20 on our Wednesday compline. We also added a Zoom quiz night on a Friday evening for over 20 weeks and it was great to see so many families joining us. This along with the many phone calls, cake baking, gifts of flowers and chocolates all helped to keep us encouraged and our spirits up.

Despite the difficult situation of COVID and with all the pressures that people and families were facing we still managed to keep up with our financial obligations. This has left us as a church community in a good position. As we head into a new year, coming out of the restrictions, we look to reach out into our community with the message of love and hope which Jesus Christ offers.

A big thankyou goes out to **EVERYBODY** who has enabled us to keep being the body of Christ, his Church, around Upton and the wider area, there are too many people to mention but thank you.

God bless

Revd Paul Newman

Our stated purpose

To be the people of God in this place, committed to Christ, to one another and to service in the community: Together we worship God with Joy and Love, with an openness to the renewal by the Holy Spirit.

Administrative Information

Holy Ascension is in Church Lane, Upton, Chester CH2 1DJ and is part of the diocese of Chester within the Church of England.

Correspondence address is: The Parish Office, Holy Ascension Community Hall, Demage Lane, Chester, CH2 1EL

Incumbent: Revd Paul Newman

Curate: Revd Dave O'Brien

Reader Emeritus: Mrs Barbara Capstick

Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator: Angela Blundell, email safeguarding@holyascension.org.uk

Bank: Unity Trust Bank, Four Brindleyplace, Birmingham B1 2JB.

Independent examiner: John McLintock FCA FCCA

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Holy Ascension is a charity registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales, charity registration number: 1131069.

When planning our activities for the year, the PCC gave consideration to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the specific guidance to charities concerned with the advancement of religion.

The PCC is a body corporate and operates under the Parochial Church Councils Powers Measure 1956 and the Church Representation Rules 2020. The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. All church members are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC.

The PCC currently has 16 members and normally meets on the second Monday of each alternate month.

Members of the PCC:

Elected: Colin Attwood, Graham Barley, Michael Curtis (Churchwarden), Rob Evans, Colin Foden (Churchwarden), Sharon Forsdyke (Resigned 10th February 2022), Vera Gerrard, Jean Machan, Sally Powell (Resigned 15th November 2021), Glenys Sherwin, Liz Squire, Sheila Taylor, Margaret Whaley.

Co-opted: Colin Bain.

Ex officio: Sue Burgess, Barbara Capstick, Paul Newman, Dave O'Brien.

A.C.F. The Fellowship Group

Like all organisations The Fellowship Group has had another challenging year. Our first meeting was an Easter Praise Service held in Church. We were delighted to welcome Dennis Jones as our organist and although we could not sing the sound of the organ lifted our spirits.

We restarted our monthly meetings in September. We now meet in Church on a Monday afternoon.

Frank Mawdsley spoke in September about "Some Crucial occasions in a Christian Journey". Our speaker in October was Tom Livingston the stonemason at Chester Cathedral who gave a fascinating talk about the role of a medieval stonemason and how a modern day equivalent differs.

Helen Rutter, an assistant chaplain with the Cheshire Agricultural Chaplaincy, talked about her role and that of the chaplaincy in our November meeting.

The group organised and led a service of Nine Lessons and Carols in December.

Dennis Jones was our organist. We were able to sing again which was so uplifting and brought the Christmas spirit into our lives.

It is hoped that 2022 will enable us to continue with our monthly meetings.

Margaret Brizell

Bible Study Group

There are 17 members of this group, 15 from Holy Ascension and 2 from other churches.

During the COVID pandemic, when we were not able to meet from April 2nd 2020 to June 24th 2021, we kept in touch by a weekly Prayer letter, phone calls and door- step visits.

When restrictions eased, we met in my garden for a time of tea and chat in order to catch-up with one another and to share in prayers.

It was agreed that from September we would meet fortnightly in an afternoon on a Thursday in the Kempe Room.

We begin with coffee/tea and cake and a time of fellowship. One of the members leads us in prayer prior to the chosen session for discussion and the meeting closes with a prayer and the grace.

Our new study has been Paul's letter to the Philippians where we have followed Paul's travels into Philippi and his imprisonment, during which time he continued his work of evangelism. A letter which encourages us to rejoice and be joyful.

These afternoons give us an opportunity to share our thoughts and understanding and to learn from our studies and each other. Hopefully they encourage us to continue learning at home.

It has been good to share with one another after the many weeks of being 'house-bound' by COVID and we are grateful for the support and prayers for one another and the work of our Church.

We are always pleased to welcome new members to join us.

Barbara Capstick

Choir

After an absence due to the pandemic, the choir has now begun to lead the singing at the 9.00am service again.

Revd Paul Newman

Christian Aid

Last year's street collection took place by volunteers putting envelopes through doors in Upton and then people were encouraged to return them to designated houses in their road. This was successful and £1,425 including gift aid was raised. Trevor Dennis held three reading and music evenings in St Mary's Handbridge over the last year and raised £10,892 for Christian Aid. Thank you to those who supported him either in person or on Zoom.

Margaret Bain

Churches Together in Upton

Another unusual year, nevertheless Churches together in Upton were able to be as active as the situation allowed.

A couple of meetings were held at the URC where a variety of topics were discussed.

We had two "5th Sunday" services with hymns in August (Holy Ascension) and October (St. Columba's). Both were well attended and appreciated. There was a Quiz in October which was an enjoyable social occasion and raised money for CAFOD and Christian Aid. We had our usual advert in "Inside Upton", drawing attention to the Christmas Services at our three churches. A significant number of gifts for the homeless were distributed via CATH.

A highlight of the year was the restarting of the Churches Together Coffee Mornings. It was felt that the Pavilion was too cramped (and expensive) at present; therefore members of the committee decided to experiment with using the URC hall on a Thursday, every two weeks (instead of Monday every week).

This was very successful and the number of attendees soon built up to pre-pandemic levels.

John Butler

Connect Group

The 'Connect' group is aimed at the younger ladies who come to Holy Ascension, to offer them a chance to take time out from their work / family commitments and get together, get to know each other and support each other in the journey of life. Although we could not meet in person due to the COVID restrictions, we have had monthly evening Zoom meetings for a 'Catch Up & Prayer' session lasting for around an hour; with a theme, a song and prayer time, although only 4-6 ladies joined many more sent in their requests by WhatsApp and text. It was a great way to centre yourself and refocus on Christ in all the chaos!

Our WhatsApp group has been a vital way of communicating between us all: for general communication about services and meetings, prayer requests, updates on situations, words to support each other and sending pieces of scripture to encourage us all. Through the different forms of technology, we have been able to keep 'Connected' and I praise the Lord for that!

We have started to have a couple of 'in person' meetings and it's been great to catch up as we all find the courage to enter back into the real world!

A branch of the 'Connect' group is a bible study group that had been meeting before COVID and has continued to meet over the past year, restrictions allowing. We have used the study guides on 'Hope' and 'Woman of God' to encourage and guide us to follow Jesus knowing he is there with us all the way.

Tara Newman

Electoral Roll Report

In line with Church Representation Rules, a new Electoral Roll was prepared in 2019.

In March 2021 there were 122 names on the roll.

Jane Curtis

Fabric Report

As a church we continue to be blessed with our buildings which is to say they are overall in good condition.

We noticed that we had some water coming into a few areas of the church and we employed a roofing firm which has sorted out the situation.

Revd Paul Newman

Finance

The Receipts and Payments accounts for the year ended 31st December 2021 are set out at the end of the Annual Report.

Unrestricted Fund

Thank you to everyone who has donated to the church over the last couple of years allowing us to meet our financial obligations and achieve a surplus of receipts over payments of £7,050 for the year ended 31st December 2021.

During 2021 planned giving fell from £57,014 to £56,429 due to a significant decrease in envelope giving mainly whilst the church was closed. Several regular givers switched to donating by standing order which helped our cash flow and the PCC would like to encourage more people to donate by standing order in future. Collections at services were up on the 2020 total but remain significantly below what we would expect to receive in a 'normal' year. Consequently, the amount of Gift Aid we could claim on planned giving and under the Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme was down.

Fee income increased during the year due to a number of postponed weddings taking place and the community hall opened as soon as it could to regular users and more recently for one- off bookings so income was up on 2020 at £11,878. In 2021 we again paid our parish share of £68,132 in full. The majority of other expenditure was down in line with the reduction in church activities during the year.

The PCC has committed to donating 3% of the previous year's voluntary income to charity, however, during 2021, due to the timing of PCC meetings, donations totalling £2,550 were not paid until 2022 hence the fall in mission giving.

Unrestricted Designated Funds

The Musical Tots designated fund was set up to ensure that the fees from the weekly sessions will cover any future costs associated with running the group, however, it has not run since March 2020.

The Hall fund represents money allocated by the PCC to pay for future improvement works on the community hall such as a new boiler and kitchen.

Restricted Funds

The movements on restricted funds are set out in note 2 to the accounts.

Reserves policy

It is the PCC policy to maintain a balance on unrestricted funds which equates to a level it considers necessary to meet forthcoming needs.

Sue Burgess

Flower Arranging Team

Since the last report in 2019 our plans for arranging flowers were disrupted by the closure of the Church as a result of COVID.

Whenever we could we put flowers in the Church and were delighted to be able to get back to our usual routine during 2021.

Our team of 14 ladies and 2 gentlemen continue to work with enthusiasm and expertise to make beautiful flower arrangements to celebrate the festivals of Easter, Ascension, Harvest, Christmas and Weddings.

The rota for flowers to be placed in the Sanctuary and on the War Memorial each week (except during Lent) is solely supported by generous donations from the congregation for which we are very grateful. Further donations for flowers are given at Christmas and Easter and throughout the year in memory of family and friends.

Sadly the Flower Festival planned for this July has been cancelled.

However, members of the Flower Club are joining with us to decorate the Church to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee from Thursday June 2nd - Sunday June 5th. We would be very pleased to welcome anyone who wishes to help. Further details to come.

Our church is very fortunate to have so many folk who give a great deal of their time to arrange flowers throughout the year for which we are very grateful.

Barbara Capstick

Foodbank

As a church, we support the foodbank by bringing essential food to our church and then Colin and Margaret Bain take it once a month to the local foodbank. During COVID this did not happen but parishioners were encouraged to donate items at local supermarkets. We are now up and running again so please bring your donations to church as in the next few months, these donations will be needed even more as people struggle to feed their families.

Margaret Bain

Heartbeat

The magazine continues to be available as an online PDF only until such time as the PCC feel it is safe to resume the printed format.

Recent issues have condensed to 24 pages to reflect the temporary suspension of church and community activities. It is anticipated that this will increase in the future.

The Editor wishes to thank the Editorial Team for their sterling work in keeping the magazine going during some very challenging times.

Sharon Forsdyke

Health and Safety

With the urgent need to combat the COVID pandemic and its variants, it has been necessary to introduce new Health and Safety rules during the last 20 months. These have included the insistence and monitoring of hand sanitising mask wearing, social distancing within the pews, and the insurance of a free flow of fresh air. In addition, an alternative method of distributing the bread and wine at Holy Communion services was also adopted. It was also necessary to guide members of the congregation to a specified exit via the South Transept at the conclusion of services.

Regrettably during this period several of the routine church activities have had to be put on hold. It is evident, however, that thanks to the preventative procedures outlined above together with the national vaccination roll out attendances at church are improving and it can be seen that seasonal activities are being resumed.

In spite of several storms during the past months we have been fortunate to escape serious damage to the church and its environs. Annual safety inspection dates for the various church and church hall equipment have either been met or are being sought.

Colin Foden

Music Group

The music group continues to lead our worship at our Sunday 10.45am service. It is great to have such a committed and able group.

Revd Paul Newman

Safeguarding

Holy Ascension takes its duty and obligation to protect all extremely seriously. We have adopted the national Church of England's robust procedures and guidelines. You can find out more about the national policies and procedures at www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding.

If you have any safeguarding concerns or issues of a safeguarding matter then you can find useful contact information at www.chester.anglican.org/social-responsibility/safeguarding or you can contact our parish safeguarding co-ordinator at safeguarding@holyascension.org.uk

Sewing Group

Sewing group began meeting again in September 2021 and continues to meet every Thursday morning in the Kempe Room between 10.00am and 12noon. Our main project during the period was to make about two hundred lanterns which were distributed before Christmas to members of the parish.

Everyone is welcome to come along for coffee/tea, biscuits, chat and company irrespective of sewing or knitting ability.

Sue Burgess

Sunday Club

Due to the COVID pandemic and church being closed Sunday Club could not be held, but we have kept in touch with the families through the All Age Café service that happened in the church hall once a month, and through the delivery of cakes to those who could not make the All Age Services in the church once it had re opened.

Although church re opened in July 2021 it is only recently, February 2022, that we have seen a return to church of some of our families that previously attended and so Sunday Club has begun again.

We had been prepared for the children to return since July, but like everyone and everything it has taken time for normal / usual patterns of living to return.

It has been wonderful to catch up with children, see how much they have grown and talk with them about their experiences.

As before the aim of Sunday Club is to learn about the love God has for each of us in a fun and stimulating way. We always start with action songs, games, read a story / passage from the Bible, perhaps watch a video, a discussion time, prayer and some sort of craft activity.....a lot packed into a short time!

Tara Newman

The Children's Society

The annual box opening was held in September. We raised £1,090-51 and although lower than in previous years was an excellent sum. The Christingle service was held in December in Church when we were able to have our Christingles and lighted candles. We were able to send £182 to The Children's Society.

Margaret Brizell

Upton Heath CE Primary School

The link we have with Upton Heath CE Primary School, which is part of the Samara Trust, continues to be an important part of the work we do as a church. We have two members of the church on the Management Committee and we take an assembly each week in the school. The school also comes into church with the children around major Christian Festivals in the church year. When they do, a year group will lead an assembly for other year groups.

Revd Paul Newman

World Day of Prayer

Our World Day of Prayer service 2021 was eventually held on Friday September 24th at the United Reformed Church in Upton. Sadly, as a result of the COVID pandemic, we had to cancel it on 2 previous dates.

However, the service written by the women of Vanuatu was well attended. The theme was 'Build on a Strong Foundation' and members of all three churches took part – St. Columba's, Holy Ascension and the URC.

As they came in, participants were given small wooden crosses, made in the Holy Land, to be a reminder of our prayers for the world. We enjoyed singing the chosen hymns accompanied by organist Dennis Jones. The collection was sent to the WDP for the work of their charities throughout the world.

Barbara Capstick

Approved by the PCC on 28th March 2022 and signed on their behalf by

Revd Paul Newman (PCC Chair)

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Holy Ascension, Upton-By-Chester
Receipts and Payments Accounts for the Year Ended 31st December 2021

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Holy Ascension, Upton-By-Chester

Receipts and Payments Accounts for the Year Ended 31st December 2021

	Note	Unrestricted Fund	Unrestricted Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2021	Total 2020
<u>Receipts</u>		£	£	£	£	£
Voluntary receipts						
Planned giving		56,429	-	2,340	58,769	57,334
Collections at services		4,743	-	182	4,925	4,159
Donations		1,365	-	-	1,365	8,210
Legacies		-	-	-	-	5,500
Gift Aid recovered		11,622	-	-	11,622	14,294
Grants received		1,838	-	-	1,838	6,864
Upton PCC Charitable Trust		-	-	340	340	-
		75,997	-	2,862	78,859	96,361
Activities for generating funds	3	18	-	-	18	524
Church Activities	4	25,425	-	648	26,073	19,537
Investment Income	5	2,288	-	-	2,288	2,269
Total Receipts		£103,728	£-	£3,510	£107,238	£118,691
Payments						
Church activities						
Parish Share		68,132	-	-	68,132	67,624
Fees remitted		4,936	-	-	4,936	4,199
Clergy and Staffing costs		3,144	-	-	3,144	9,009
Church costs	6	8,457	-	869	9,326	10,682
Vicarage costs		4,512	-	-	4,512	4,001
Hall running costs		6,997	-	-	6,997	9,840
Mission giving and donations		500	-	730	1,230	4,885
		96,678	-	1,599	98,277	110,240
Cost of generating Funds	7	-	-	-	-	250
Total payments		£96,678	£-	£1,599	£98,277	£110,490
Surplus of receipts over payments		7,050	-	1,911	8,961	8,201
Cash at bank and in hand						
1 st January 2021		19,435	10,565	13,334	43,334	35,133
31 st December 2021		£26,485	£10,565	£15,245	£52,295	£43,334

Approved by the PCC on 28th March 2022 and signed on their behalf by:

Rev. Paul Newman *P. Newman*

Mr. Michael Richard Curtis. *M. R. Curtis*

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Holy Ascension, Upton-By-Chester

Statement of Assets and Liabilities as at 31st December 2021

	Unrestricted Fund	Unrestricted Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2021	Total 2020
	£	£	£	£	£
Cash at bank and in hand					
Lloyds Current Account	20,335	367	2,508	23,210	16,660
Unity Trust Bank - Current Account	5,374	1,050	2,001	8,425	4,249
Unity Trust Bank - Deposit Account	-	4,130	4,306	8,436	12,435
CCLA – Deposit Account	493	5,000	5,332	10,825	8,537
CCLA – Building in Faith	-	-	17	17	17
Cash in Hand	283	18	29	330	154
Sunshine Tots Account	-	-	1,014	1,014	1,014
Flower Fund	-	-	38	38	268
	£26,485	£10,565	£15,245	£52,295	£43,334
Other Monetary Assets					
Gift Aid Recoverable	£4,811	-	-	£ 4,811	£4,004
Investment Assets					
3,841.83 (3,841.83)					
Shares in The CBF					
Church of England Fund	£89,968	-	-	£89,968	£78,709
Fixed assets retained for church use					
The fixed assets retained for church use are Holy Ascension Community Hall, the Organ (refurbished 2013) and the AV system.					
All assets belong to the unrestricted fund.					
Liabilities	£	£	£	£	£
Fees	£372	-	-	£372	-

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Holy Ascension, Upton-By-Chester

Notes to the Receipts and Payments Accounts for the Year Ended 31st December 2021

1. The financial statements of the PCC have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 using the Receipts & Payments basis.
2. The movements in designated and restricted funds during the year were:

	Balance b/fwd.	Receipts	Payments	Balance c/fwd.
Restricted	£	£	£	£
Family Workers	650	-	-	650
Flower Fund	268	639	869	38
Sunshine Tots	3,534	9	-	3,543
Other	8,882	2,862	730	11,014
	£13,334	£3,510	£1,599	£15,245

	£	£	£	£
Designated				
Hall	6,515	-	-	6,515
Musical Tots	4,050	-	-	4,050
	£10,565	-	-	£10,565

	Unrestricted Fund	Unrestricted Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2021	Total 2020
	£	£	£	£	£
3. Activities for generating funds					
Social events	£18	-	-	£18	£524

	£	£	£	£	£
4. Church activities					
Fees for weddings and funerals	13,242	-	-	13,242	8,192
Community Hall hire	11,878	-	-	11,878	9,080
Magazine	305	-	-	305	1,106
Flower fund	-	-	639	639	410
Sunshine Tots	-	-	9	9	342
Musical Tots	-	-	-	-	407
	£ 25,425	-	£648	£26,073	£19,537

	Unrestricted Fund	Unrestricted Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2021	Total 2020
	£	£	£	£	£
5. Investment income					
Dividends	2,283	-	-	2,283	2,205
Interest	5	-	-	5	64
	£2,288	-	-	£2,288	£2,269
	£	£	£	£	£
6. Church activities					
Church running expenses	6,511	-	-	6,511	7,353
Cost of services	802	-	-	802	772
Administration	1,144	-	-	1,144	1,787
Magazine	-	-	-	-	412
Caring & Sharing	-	-	-	-	50
Flower fund	-	-	869	869	206
Sunshine Tots	-	-	-	-	82
Musical Tots	-	-	-	-	20
	£8,457	-	£869	£9,326	£10,682
7. Cost of generating funds					
Social events	-	-	-	-	£250

Independent Examiner's Report to the members/trustees of the Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Holy Ascension, Upton by Chester (registered charity number: 1131069).

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity for the year ended 31st December 2021 which are set out on pages 1 to 4.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

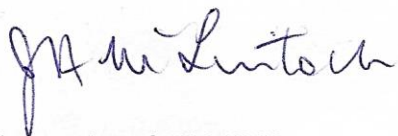
I report in respect of my examination of the charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

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

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

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



John McIntock FCA FCCA
2 Windmill Rise
Upton
Chester

Date 11.4.22

Accounts

Annual Report of the Parochial Church Council of
Holy Ascension, Upton by Chester

For the year ended 31st December 2020



Registered Charity Number: 1131069

Revd Paul Newman

What a strange year it has been for us all as we have had to make changes and accommodate living with Covid in our community. It's meant for us as a church that we have had to change the way that we run things. Lots of our Church groups have had to stop meeting or changed the way they are run with reduced numbers in attendance or via zoom. With this in mind it was decided at a PCC meeting that our Annual report for this year would be a shortened version, with no reports from any groups, this is not to say that the groups and its members have not been active in their support for each other. It's been very encouraging for me as the Vicar to hear all of the wonderful ways that people have found to support each other and the amount of phone calls, cards and little chocolate gifts and cakes that have always arrived just at the right time to keep the spirits up. I always find it amazing how God's timing always seems just right.

We have met as a PCC on Zoom which has meant that some of our members have not been able to join us, but we have tried to make sure that they are informed of what has been discussed and if decisions had to be voted on sought their opinions.

We have over the past year for most of it run our services on the digital format of 'Zoom', these being on a Sunday Morning at 10.00am and Wednesday evening at 8.00pm. The numbers on a Sunday morning have never dropped below 50 people meeting together and we have even had new people join.

As you will see, financially we have been able to meet our outgoings.

A big thankyou goes out to EVERYBODY who has enabled us to keep being the body of Christ, his church around Upton and the wider area, there are too many to mention here but thank you.

As I write this I am looking forward to the summer when all the adults will have had their vaccine and we hopefully will be able to get back to some normality.

Our stated purpose

To be the people of God in this place, committed to Christ, to one another and to service in the community: Together we worship God with Joy and Love, with an openness to the renewal by the Holy Spirit.

Administrative Information

Holy Ascension is in Church Lane, Upton, Chester and is part of the diocese of Chester within the Church of England.

Correspondence address is: The Parish Office, Holy Ascension Community Hall, Demage Lane, Chester, CH2 1EL

Incumbent: Revd Paul Newman

Curate: Revd Dave O'Brien

Reader Emeritus: Mrs Barbara Capstick

Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator: Angela Blundell, safeguarding@holyascension.org.uk

Bank: Unity Trust Bank, Four Brindleyplace, Birmingham B1 2JB.

Independent examiner: John McIntock FCA FCCA

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Holy Ascension is a charity registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales, charity registration number: 1131069.

When planning our activities for the year, the PCC gave consideration to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the specific guidance to charities concerned with the advancement of religion.

The PCC is a body corporate and operates under the Parochial Church Councils Powers Measure 1956 and the Church Representation Rules 2020. The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. All church members are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC.

The PCC has 18 members and normally meets on the second Monday of each alternate month at the Vicarage.

Members of the PCC:

Elected: Colin Attwood, Graham Barley, Michael Curtis (Churchwarden), Rob Evans, Jane Eaton (resigned 6th September 2020), Colin Foden (Churchwarden), Sharon Forsdyke (appointed 6th September 2020), Vera Gerrard, Jean Machan, Sally Powell, Glenys Sherwin, Liz Squire, Sheila Taylor, Margaret Whaley.

Co-opted: Colin Bain.

Ex officio: Sue Burgess, Barbara Capstick, Paul Newman, Dave O'Brien.

Electoral Roll Report

In line with Church Representation Rules, a new Electoral Roll was prepared in 2019.

In March 2020 there were 125 names on the roll.

Jean May

Fabric Report

As a Church we are blessed with our buildings and we continue to look after these in a number of ways.

Overall our church is in good condition, there are a couple of areas that need some attention and we are in the process of getting some quotes for the work that is needed.

Finance

The Receipts and Payments accounts for the year ended 31st December 2020 are set out at the end of the Annual Report.

Unrestricted Fund

Despite the exceptional circumstances during 2020 planned giving actually increased by £2,149 to £57,014. Several regular givers switched to donating by standing order which helped our cash flow during the year and the PCC would like to encourage more people to donate by standing order in the future.

As the church was closed for a significant period of time, collections at services were considerably down at £4,079, 41% of the 2019 total. This decrease in collections will adversely affect our cash flow in 2021 as it reduces the amount of Gift Aid we can claim under the Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme so it would be beneficial if more regular plate givers joined our planned giving scheme especially if they are taxpayers willing to sign Gift Aid forms. During the year we received two legacies totalling £5,500 which helped our cash flow and we intend to look at ways of encouraging more people to leave a gift to the church in their wills in future.

In 2020 we again paid our Parish Share of £67,624 in full which together with the Finance Committee's decision on 7th February 2020 to write off our arrears means that we owed £nil at 31st December 2020. We would like to express our thanks to the Finance Committee for their decision.

The majority of other expenditure fell due to the reduction in church activities.

Unrestricted Designated Funds

The Musical Tots designated fund was set up to ensure that the fees from the weekly sessions will cover any future costs associated with running the group.

The Hall fund represents money allocated by the PCC to pay for future improvement works on the community hall such as a new boiler and kitchen.

Restricted Funds

The movements on restricted funds are set out in note 2 to the accounts.

Reserves policy

It is the PCC policy to maintain a balance on unrestricted funds which equates to a level they consider necessary to meet forthcoming needs.

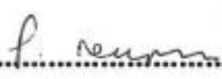
Safeguarding

Holy Ascension takes its duty and obligation to protect all extremely seriously. We have adopted the national Church of England's robust procedures and guidelines.

You can find out more about the national policies and procedures at www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding.

If you have any safeguarding concerns or issues of a safeguarding matter then you can find useful contact information at www.chester.anglican.org/social-responsibility/safeguarding or you can contact our parish safeguarding co-ordinator at safeguarding@holyscension.org.uk

Approved by the PCC on 26th March 2021 and signed on their behalf by

Reverend Paul Newman (PCC Chairman).....

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Holy Ascension, Upton-By-Chester

Receipts and Payments Accounts for the Year Ended 31st December 2020

	Note	Unrestricted Fund	Unrestricted Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2020	Total 2019
		£	£	£	£	£
<u>Receipts</u>						
Voluntary receipts						
Planned giving		57,014	-	320	57,334	55,168
Collections at services		4,079	-	80	4,159	10,800
Donations		585	-	7,625	8,210	1,471
Legacies		5,500	-	-	5,500	5,000
Gift Aid recovered		13,044	-	1,250	14,294	12,201
Grants received		4,857	-	2,007	6,864	-
Upton PCC Charitable Trust		-	-	-	-	7,530
		85,079	-	11,282	96,361	92,170
Activities for generating funds	3	524	-	-	524	5,252
Church Activities	4	17,622	407	1,508	19,537	37,755
Investment Income	5	2,269	-	-	2,269	900
Total Receipts		£105,494	£407	£12,790	£118,691	£136,077
<u>Payments</u>						
Church activities						
Parish Share		67,624	-	-	67,624	65,975
Fees remitted		4,199	-	-	4,199	5,828
Clergy and Staffing costs		2,568	-	6,441	9,009	13,924
Church costs	6	9,468	20	1,194	10,682	15,529
Vicarage costs		4,001	-	-	4,001	4,058
Hall running costs		9,840	-	-	9,840	11,064
Mission giving and donations		2,300	-	2,585	4,885	4,489
		100,000	20	10,220	110,240	120,867
Cost of generating Funds	7	250	-	-	250	2,779
Investment purchases		-	-	-	-	50,000
Total payments		£100,250	£20	£10,220	£110,490	£173,646
Surplus of receipts over payments		5,244	387	2,570	8,201	(37,569)
Transfer between funds		175	-	(175)	-	-
Cash at bank and in hand						
1 st January 2020		14,016	10,178	10,939	35,133	72,702
31 st December 2020		£19,435	£10,565	£13,334	£43,334	£35,133

Approved by the PCC on 26th March 2021 and signed on their behalf by:

Rev Paul Newman

P. Newman

Mr. Michael Richard Curtis

Michael R Curtis

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Holy Ascension, Upton-By-Chester

Statement of Assets and Liabilities as at 31st December 2020

	Unrestricted Fund	Unrestricted Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2020	Total 2019
	£	£	£	£	£
Cash at bank and in hand					
Lloyds Current Account	14,257	367	2,036	16,660	6,146
Unity Trust Bank - Current Account	2,858	1,050	341	4,249	4,658
Unity Trust Bank - Deposit Account	1,167	4,130	7,138	12,435	16,938
CCLA – Deposit Account	1,037	5,000	2,500	8,537	6,302
CCLA – Building in Faith	-	-	17	17	16
Cash in Hand	116	18	20	154	80
Sunshine Tots Account	-	-	1,014	1,014	754
Flower Fund	-	-	268	268	239
	£19,435	£10,565	£13,334	£43,334	£35,133
Other Monetary Assets					
Gift Aid Recoverable	£4,004	-	-	£ 4,004	£4,956
Investment Assets					
3,841.83 (3,841.83)					
Shares in The CBF					
Church of England Fund	£78,709	-	-	£78,709	£73,644
Fixed assets retained for church use					
The fixed assets retained for church use are Holy Ascension Community Hall, the Organ (refurbished 2013) and the AV system.					
All assets belong to the unrestricted fund.					
	£	£	£	£	£
Liabilities					
Parish Share Arrears	-	-	-	-	49,068
Fees	-	-	-	-	312

On 7th February 2020 the Finance Committee of Chester Diocesan Board of Finance agreed to write off Parish Share arrears of £49,068 so that the PCC could focus on the future.

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Holy Ascension, Upton-By-Chester

Notes to the Receipts and Payments Accounts for the Year Ended 31st December 2020

1. The financial statements of the PCC have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 using the Receipts & Payments basis.

2. The movements in designated and restricted funds during the year were:

	Balance b/fwd.	Receipts	Payments	Transfers	Balance c/fwd.
Restricted	£	£	£	£	£
Caring & Sharing	30	-	30	-	-
Family Workers	5,084	2,007	6,441	-	650
Flower Fund	239	410	206	(175)	268
Sunshine Tots	3,274	342	82	-	3,534
Other	2,312	10,031	3,461	-	8,882
	£10,939	£12,790	£10,220	£(175)	£13,334

	£	£	£	£	£
Designated					
Hall	6,515	-	-	-	6,515
Musical Tots	3,663	407	20	-	4,050
	£10,178	£407	£20	-	£10,565

	Unrestricted Fund	Unrestricted Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2020	Total 2019
	£	£	£	£	£
3. Activities for generating funds					
Social events	£524	-	-	£524	£5,252

	£	£	£	£	£
4. Church activities					
Fees for weddings and funerals	8,192	-	-	8,192	13,276
Community Hall hire	9,080	-	-	9,080	19,040
Magazine	350	-	756	1,106	1,641
Flower fund	-	-	410	410	991
Sunshine Tots	-	-	342	342	1,295
Musical Tots	-	407	-	407	1,512
	£17,622	£407	£1,508	£19,537	£37,755

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Holy Ascension, Upton-By-Chester**Notes to the Receipts and Payments Accounts for the Year Ended 31st December 2020**

	Unrestricted Fund	Unrestricted Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2020	Total 2019
	£	£	£	£	£
5. Investment income					
Dividends	2,205	-	-	2,205	677
Interest	64	-	-	64	223
	£2,269	-	-	£2,269	£900
	£	£	£	£	£
6. Church activities					
Church running expenses	6,477	-	876	7,353	7,708
Cost of services	772	-	-	772	1,233
Administration	1,787	-	-	1,787	2,363
Magazine	412	-	-	412	2,505
Caring & Sharing	20	-	30	50	224
Flower fund	-	-	206	206	876
Sunshine Tots	-	-	82	82	529
Musical Tots	-	20	-	20	91
	£9,468	£20	£1,194	£10,682	£15,529
7. Cost of generating funds					
Social events	£250	-	-	£250	£2,779

Independent Examiner's Report to the members/trustees of the Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Holy Ascension, Upton by Chester (registered charity number: 1131069).

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity for the year ended 31st December 2020 which are set out on pages 1 to 4.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

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

Independent examiner's statement

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

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

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



John McIntock FCA FCCA
2 Windmill Rise
Upton
Chester

Date 12.4.2021

