

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ST. MICHAEL AND ST PAUL, ALNWICK

England & Wales · Charity number 1131297

Details

Other names	ST MICHAEL & ST PAUL ALNWICK PCC
Status	Registered
Legal form	Previously excepted
Registered	2009-08-24
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	24 West Acres Alnwick NE66 2QA
Phone	01665606804
Email	stmichaelandstpaul@btconnect.com
Website	www.alnwickanglican.com

Activities

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

Activities: Provision of religious services according to the customs of the Church of England and associated, social and community focussed activities

Classification

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

Geography

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

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-12-31	£187,103	£190,001	-	-
2024-12-31	£714,653	£150,439	£754,435	0
2023-12-31	£231,729	£146,961	-	-
2022-12-31	£157,206	£149,292	-	-
2021-12-31	£325,096	£374,181	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Rev Christian Strang Mitchell	Chair	2023-05-13
ANDREW EOIN DUFF		2025-05-11
Annette Irene Playle		2024-04-14
Christopher Edward Gould		2026-04-26
Dr Patricia Elizabeth Everitt		2024-04-14
Henry Thomas Playle		2024-04-14
Ian Brown		2026-04-26
John Cooke MBE		2013-10-06
Judy Jobson		2022-04-03
Mrs Rosie Buxton		2015-04-12
Sarah Howard		2024-04-13
Susan Trafford		2023-03-26

Accounts

**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL
of
ST MICHAEL and ST PAUL
ALNWICK**

**Annual Report and
Financial Statements**

**for the year ended
31st December 2025**

**Incumbent
Revd Christian Mitchell**

**St Michael's Vicarage
Howling Lane
Alnwick, NE66 1DH**

**Bank
Barclays Bank plc
Alnwick**

**Independent Examiner
Mr George Clark FCPFA**

Registered Charity Number 1131297

Annual Report of the Parish of St Michael and St Paul, Alnwick 2025

Parochial Church Council 2025

The PCC is the governing body of the parish of St Michael and St Paul Alnwick. The PCC is a team made up of members of clergy and lay members of the church. Together they are responsible for the overall wellbeing, practical as well as spiritual, of their church, the church members, and the church buildings. The PCC also has a duty to promote the mission of the church within the wider community.

The PCC is also responsible for the internal maintenance and running of the Parish Hall. The Hall is leased from the Northumberland Estate which is responsible for the external fabric.

Ex officio members:

Chair: Revd Christian Mitchell
Curate: Revd Fran Bell

Churchwardens: Dr Patty Everitt
Ms Sal Howard

Deanery Synod Members: (elected in 2023 for 3 years)
Mrs Annette Playle Mrs Jean Darby
Ms Sal Howard

Elected Members:

Mrs Rosie Buxton (re-elected in 2025 for 3 years)
Mr John Cooke (re-elected in 2024 for 3 years)
Mr Richard Dale (re-elected in 2023 for 3 years)
Mrs Pat Tweed (elected in 2025 for 3 years)
Mrs Judy Jobson (elected in 2025 for 3 years)
Mrs Susan O'Neill (re-elected in 2023 for 3 years)
Mr Henry Playle (re-elected in 2023 for 3 years)
Mrs Susan Trafford (elected in 2023 for 3 years)

PCC Officers:

Vice Chair: Mrs Jean Darby
PCC Secretary: Mrs Rosie Buxton
PCC Treasurer: Mr Richard Dale

Assistant Church Wardens:

Mrs Pat Tweed
One vacancy

PCC Committees and other groups:

The Standing Committee is the only committee required by law. It has the power to transact the business of the PCC between meetings (subject to any directions given by the Council). Its members are Revd Christian Mitchell, Dr Patty Everitt, Ms Sal Howard, Mrs Jean Darby, Mr Richard Dale and Mr Henry Playle.

Clergy with permission to Officiate:

Revd Canon Sue Allen, Revd Canon Philip Bourne.

Readers:

Mrs Annette Playle, Ms Sal Howard, Mrs Anne Wager-Bradley

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Safeguarding Officer

Dr Patty Everitt

Church attendance:

Statistics as reported to the Diocese for 2025 (2024 figures in brackets)

Baptisms	6 (11)
Confirmation	0 (1)
Weddings	8 (2)
Funerals	16 (14) in Church, and 8 (9) at the crematorium or cemetery only.

Average attendance: 81 adults and 2 children (99 adults and 20 children)

Christmas: 142 communicants, 450 attendees (131 communicants, 437 attendees)

Easter: 101 communicants, 153 attendees (91 communicants, 131 attendees)

People in our "worshipping community" at the end of 2025:

Total	Children (Age 0-15)	Adults (Age 16+)
181	22	159

Review of the Year 2025

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

Volunteers:

We would like to thank all the volunteers who work so tirelessly to make our church the lively, welcoming and vibrant community that it is. There are many committees carrying out work in a variety of areas and many parishioners are members of more than one group. Without everybody's contribution we would not be able to keep the church running.

Church and School Links:

The links between the Church and NCEA Harry Hotspur C of E Primary School remain strong. The Vicar is an ex-officio governor of the school.

Communication:

The Church website is now live and information regarding details of our events and services can be found at www.stmichaelsalnwick.org.uk. The parish magazine, 'Gateway', is normally published every month. In addition St Michael's now has an Operations Manager, Helen Budd, who supports the day to day running of the church.

DEANERY SYNOD – *Hugh Williams, Alnwick Deanery Lay Chair*

We continue to work within the Diocesan ethos of "Seeking, Sharing, Sending" and Deanery Synod continues to be the principal link between parishes, the Diocese and the Central Church. Parishes are encouraged to elect Deanery Synod reps at their annual APCMs and participate as fully as possible in Deanery discussions and events to maximise the free flow

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of information and opinion throughout the church hierarchy. The Deanery Development Group (DDG), an elected subcommittee, organises Synod meetings and discusses matters relating to Deanery resources, sharing ideas and good practice, interparish cooperation, staffing etc with our Archdeacon as do the other Deaneries in our Diocese. The Area Dean and I would like to see every Parish represented on the DDG and contributing to its decisions. Sharing ideas and good practice has been a feature of Deanery Synod in recent years and this has been helped by the friendly cooperation of the Parish Representatives who attend our meetings.

During 2025 Alnwick Deanery Synod met 3 times. On 25th January at Lesbury village hall we had an update on our deanery development plan: we are seeing closer working relationships between our parishes, schools work remains a priority and we are exploring ways to build on the foundations we have; a governance group is looking to streamline processes. Sal Howard from Alnwick parish was elected as a Lay Diocesan Synod member for us. We received a report on 2024's Parish Share contributions. Thanks were given to all parishes who managed to meet their offered amounts. Alnwick Deanery paid 99% of what had been pledged. This Synod took place in the wake of the Makin report on Safeguarding. We await action from General Synod. In Alnwick Deanery we have a great team of PSOs and we noted that the Diocesan team was undergoing major change consequently we were awaiting the new appointments to deal with existing issues including outstanding training sessions.

On 16th September Synod convened at St Mary's Longframlington. We welcomed Roger Styring Chair of the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC). Roger spoke about the work of the DAC and how it can work with parishes to look at work on church buildings and helping with advice and guidance on the faculty process. He strongly encouraged parishes to talk to the DAC Secretary as early as possible, even before any architect is approached. DAC advice is free. Enjoy the value of the free advice available before any money is spent. Our deanery is committed to sustaining our buildings and there is more and more information and advice becoming available from the Diocese and the wider church. This includes information about the availability of and access to grants. Involvement in Deanery events will help to keep you informed and updated and offers obvious opportunities to benefit from the experiences of other churches in our Deanery.

On 8th November Synod met again at St Mary's Longframlington. We discussed "Seeking, Sharing, Sending" and as the year of Sharing is beginning we talked especially about new worshipping communities and nurturing new disciples. We also shared information and ideas about initiatives in our various parishes (some newer than others), including Amble Café Church now in its 10th year, Third Thursday in Chevington and Toddly Play in Felton.

Deanery services

In addition to Synod meetings we have continued with our monthly Deanery Evensong services which have moved around the Deanery. Generally these services have been quite well attended. Hospitality was offered at most venues and our thanks to those choirs who performed for us. These services will continue in 2026.

Deanery Environment Group

It is good to report that this group, convened by rev Gilly Maude continues to promote environmental awareness from global to local level. Meeting largely on Zoom, the group works to encourage initiatives in churches and churchyards, sharing good ideas and good practice, including aspiring to the A Rocha Awards. The group led a Deanery Service which was very well attended, and helps us all keep our minds focussed on the climate crisis, raising awareness and encouraging parishes to do what we can to make local improvements, incorporated into our life together as churches as well as individually.

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Deanery Development Group (DDG)

The Deanery Development Group (DDG) which consists of the deanery clergy and lay representatives from across the deanery met regularly to plan for Synod meetings and to discuss the deanery development plan. Archdeacon Catherine Sourbut - Groves and the Diocesan Mission Adviser attended a meeting at mid-year..

The Diocese also organises a number of DDG catch-up days, meeting twice in Morpeth early and late in the year with a celebration Eucharist at the Cathedral in July. DDG members from every Deanery in the Diocese, our Archdeacons and other members of the Bishop's senior team meet to discuss wider issues covering deanery matters. In 2025 we had meetings looking at youth work and new worshipping communities. It is inspiring and encouraging to have contributions from parishes sharing good news or new developments in mission.

Welcomes and Goodbyes

In July 2025 Amble and Chevington parishes welcomed Rev Rachael Dines as priest in charge. For Amble this came after 18 months of vacancy, Chevington's vacancy was a "little" (considerably) longer, but both parishes are happy to have Rachael with them and are working together even more closely. We also welcomed Rev Fran Bell who is serving her curacy in Alnwick parish.

At the end of 2025 we had to say farewell to Rev Nathanael Hayler as he completed his curacy in the Coastland parishes and moved on to become Rector of parishes in the Diocese of Chichester. We wish him well and pray that he will be blessed in this new phase of his ministry.

We also thanked Jo Chillingworth for her time as our Deanery Finance Officer.

The Upper Coquetdale Parish remains vacant still. Advertisements continue with an improved parish profile.

We are yet to appoint a new Deanery Finance Officer. This is a small but important job. It is largely a liaison role ensuring the transfer of financial information between parishes, deanery and staff at Church House. If you are interested or know of someone who might be suitable for the role please contact me or the Area Dean for an informal chat.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank everybody who has helped to make Deanery events a success this year. It seems harder each year to find people who are prepared and able to take on roles of function and responsibility at parish level and the levels above. Many volunteers are now wearing several hats and consequently have various functions to perform and meetings to attend. Incidentally, if you can't attend a meeting ask someone to attend on your behalf. It's the sensible way to keep the information flowing. Your church and the Church generally cannot function or do the good that it does without you. Your contribution is valued.

SAFEGUARDING – Patty Everitt, Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO)

Introduction

This year we have averaged over 90% compliance on the Parish Dashboard. This excellent result has been due to the responsiveness of both volunteers and the PCC for activities such as updating safeguarding training, reviewing policies and procedures, and reviewing risk assessments for our outreach groups.

Over the May Bank Holiday 2025, there was a breach of data from the DBS Administration Service used by Newcastle Diocese for processing DBS applications. The breach was the illegal access and copying of personal data of people applying for a DBS certificate. People were affected in all the Dioceses that used that Service company. Within the Newcastle Diocese this included people at St Michael's and others in our Deanery. This has been

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deeply distressing for all affected. The national church has paid for a credit monitoring service to cover those affected by the breach.

The House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy

The PCC continues to support our commitment to the House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy and Practice Guidance. You will find a copy of the Policy on the Safeguarding Notice Board at the back of the church.

The Parish Dashboard

As a Parish, we continue to keep up-to-date in our compliance to written safeguarding standards with the help and guidance of the Parish Safeguarding Dashboard. Each year the PCC reviews existing policies and procedures to make sure that these are as effective as possible. I am using the Safeguarding Hub (introduced in 2024). This notifies me when safeguarding training or DBS certificates need to be renewed and therefore helps to keep St Michael's compliant with the standards set by the Church of England.

Safeguarding Training

The safeguarding training requirements for different roles within a church are regularly reviewed by the Church of England. Over 2026 I will be updating volunteers if additional training has been identified for their role.

Safeguarding training is always available online through the Church of England Safeguarding Training Portal. Courses are available to anyone who is interested and on completion of the course, a personal certificate is issued. I have included the link to the Portal at the end of this report.

Training is often a richer and more fun experience when taken as part of a group and I offer this option for those who would prefer it. The Training Officer of the Diocesan Safeguarding Team, John Hulse, is also keen to deliver safeguarding training at churches across the Diocese, because this gives him the opportunity to get to know what's happening with volunteers, Parish Safeguarding Officers, and members of PCCs, amongst others.

Safeguarding Handbooks, Guidance, Policies and Procedures

The Church of England has withdrawn the printed version of the Parish Safeguarding Handbook and replaced it with an electronic version (e-version). The e-version can be accessed by anyone who is interested, from the Church of England Website. Copies of our safeguarding policies and procedures are in the blue folder near the pigeon-holes at the back of the church. I have removed the printed version of the Parish Safeguarding Handbook from the blue folder.

My Thanks

Again, I thank all our volunteers for their steadfast commitment to safeguarding in all they do on our behalf

Questions?

If you have any questions or concerns about what safeguarding is or how to access training or what volunteering in any capacity would mean, please talk to me. I would be delighted to have a chat.

If you would like to find out more about any of the Church Officer roles or about being a Church Officer, again please talk to me.

Any questions you may have do not commit you to taking up a role!

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CHURCH WARDENS REPORT INCLUDING FABRIC – *Sal Howard and Patty Everitt*

Safeguarding Training

Both Sal and Patty are up-to-date with the required safeguarding training and both have attended the Churchwarden training sessions held at St Aidan's in Morpeth.

Altar Frontal Chest

A new Altar Frontal Chest, fashioned in light oak, has been installed in the South Aisle near to the Duke's Door.

The beautiful Chest has been donated by Val Hawker in memory of her husband, William Hedley Callaghan, Reader and long-standing member of this congregation.

General continuing maintenance of Church and Parish Hall buildings

Regular maintenance and testing carried out in 2025:

- Electrical Testing - Church
- Emergency Lighting Testing - Parish Hall
- Fire Extinguisher Testing - Church
- Gas Safe Boiler Testing - Church
- Lightning Conductor Testing – Church
- PAT Testing – Church

Additional surveys and reports completed in 2025:

- Asbestos Survey in the Church and Parish Hall
- Fire Risk Assessments – work is going on to prioritise and then complete remedial work.

Some remedial work to the most uneven parts of the church paths was carried out.

Operations Manager appointment

In November 2025 we appointed Helen Budd as our new Operations Manager in time for the Christmas Tree Festival.

Helen manages our regular maintenance contracts and prioritises and appoints suitable contractors to complete the remedial work identified in the Fire Risk Assessment and Quinquennial Reports. In addition, she is identifying and responding to problems with the fabric of the building as they are discovered.

Parish Hall

"Change of Use" to remove the residential status of the flat in the Parish Hall is being progressed.

Terrier and Log Book

Work on the Terrier and Log Book for the Church has been started, but is not yet complete. The Terrier is a record, including photographs, of church fabric, furnishings, monuments, church plate and vestments, windows and more.

The Log Book is a record of work carried out on the church including regular maintenance and the completion of remedial work identified in Quinquennial Reports.

An audit of the Terrier and Log Book was carried out by the Area Dean in November. It was noted that we are working to complete these documents.

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TOWER – Jim Crowther

BELFRY and RINGING ROOM

Once again, very little to report on this front because there has been no change or deterioration to the internal belfry or ringing room fabric.

The belfry louvres are deliberately sound insulated to facilitate frequent bellringing and tuition with minimal noise impact on the local neighbourhood. The louvres are opened for service ringing and special occasions,

However, a fortunate by-product of the sound control system is that it prevents the ingress of birds, autumn leaves and bad weather, and this, in turn, ensures that the bells, their fittings and the steel framework will remain in good order without the need for any heavy maintenance costs for decades. The bells and their fittings are regularly inspected by the bellringers.

The steps of the spiral staircase leading up the tower, being medieval, are very badly worn and will need to be repaired in the near future.

RINGING FOR SERVICES

Will always be a natural priority. During 2025 bells on Sunday morning and ringing for ad hoc occasions and services has been fully maintained by the local ringers. 2025 has additionally seen an increase in requests for the bells for weddings.

LOCAL RINGERS

The current local band comprises members of the congregation who have been taught how to ring along with a number of "recycled ringers" (ringers who learnt to ring at other towers in the past who have since moved to Alnwick and returned to bellringing).

The band is now a substantial social group of adults supported by a number of experienced ringers who regularly travel Northumberland to support Alnwick ringing.

Equally, many Alnwick ringers regularly support other local towers, namely Rothbury and Bamburgh.

In Victorian times, bells were badly hung on plain bearings and they were hard physical work, consequently bellringing was male dominated. Bells are now much easier to ring and the Alnwick band now comprises more females than males, the youngest now aged 12 and the oldest 86.

There are some 23 churches with a Peal of bells in the Newcastle Diocese. St. Michael's now has the largest band of bellringers within the Diocese.

Our thanks are due to Patty Everitt, who, along with John Hulse has helped with safeguarding / bellringing protocol during 2025.

TUTORS

Good tutors/tuition is key to maintaining high bellringing standards at Alnwick.

We have been very fortunate at St. Michael's and acquired another 2 experienced bellringers who have tutoring skills and moved into Alnwick during 2025. Most towers have 1 or 2 experienced tutors; Alnwick is now blessed with 6.

RINGING TIMES

Unchanged. Ringing after Sunday Morning Service, general practice on Wednesday afternoon and evening, plus Saturday afternoons and other ad hoc times. Members of the congregation, their family/children and friends are particularly encouraged to visit the belfry and see bellringing in action, why not have a look? Just ask Jean Darby.

THE FUTURE

The installation of the 10 bells in 2021 and the subsequent development of a very successful band of local ringers and visitors has not gone unnoticed in other churches in the Diocese. The Alnwick installation has become a Northumbrian Flagship and is now being used to create the same elsewhere, currently at All Saints, Rothbury and St. Gabriel's Heaton.

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A video of the Alnwick project using Alnwick bells/ringers has recently been made for St. Gabriel's and has since been loaded onto their website. It has already attracted 10 bell donors within 2 months of launching.....have a look!

SOUTH AISLE EXHIBITION – Jean Darby, Project coordinator

The final designs for the interpretation of the graffiti were completed and a faculty was approved. Titled 'Leaving Their Mark' the exhibition contains several components sympathetically designed to complement the existing cabinet and the church logo. At Michaelmas an event marking the opening of the exhibition was well received by members of the community and the following day by many visitors on Heritage Open Day. The exhibition has proved popular with visitors, especially the synthetic tiles on the A frame 'roof'. We are grateful to Jo Scott for her guidance regarding the interpretation of the graffiti and to Marcus Byron for his graphic design.

PASTORAL CARE TEAM – Jean Sawyer

The members of the Pastoral Care Team meet regularly (approx quarterly) to discuss the most appropriate ways of enabling members of our church community who are, for a variety of reasons, unable to attend services in person, to receive communion and/or feel that their spiritual needs are fulfilled.

The general pattern of the agenda reflects the nature of the support delivered by team members. This includes -

- An update on those individuals being visited at home or in residential settings and how we might meet the needs of any new referrals.
- Feedback from communion services being offered in care homes or independent/assisted living. We currently visit Hillcrest, Summerhill, Abbeyfield, Percy Court, Castle View and Beechtree House. Numbers attending vary in each establishment but can be between 5 and 20. Not all communicants are connected to St Michael's Church, or indeed Anglican but the policy is "All are welcome".
- A monthly worship service is led at Abbeyfield by the team put together and led by Rev Sue Allen.
- Safeguarding and related issues are always items on the agenda to allow for any concerns to be raised.
- We have established links with those who have similar roles from other denominations in Alnwick so that there is good communication and cooperation with dates etc. In addition to the sharing and development of good practice there is recognition of the work in which we are all engaged.

We are currently stretched with regards to being able to offer this service to more members of our congregation. Should anyone feel this is something in which they feel a calling to be involved please speak with Sue Allen or Jean Sawyer.

MISSION ACTION PLANNING (MAP) WORKING GROUP – Christian Mitchell

Following the establishment of a Mission Action Plan Working Group in 2024, the group met at regular intervals throughout 2025 to develop a vision for the future mission of St Michael's Church. Over the year, the group gradually expanded to include additional members and support from the Diocese. In particular, the involvement of the Diocesan Mission Accompanier, Alice Ward, helped provide structure and focus to the process.

A key stage in this work was the Parish Vision Workshop held on 4th October 2025, led by the Bishop of Berwick. Around 35 members of the church family attended, representing a wide range of ages, backgrounds, and lengths of involvement in the church.

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At the workshop, participants reflected together on three simple questions:

1. How are we already witnessing to God's love?
2. What makes St Michael's distinctive?
3. What might God be calling St Michael's to become?

People shared ideas, hopes, and experiences in small groups. All responses were gathered and carefully reviewed by the Working Party. From this, a number of strong and recurring themes emerged. These were grouped into three key areas as shown in the attached Venn diagram:

- All are welcome
- Reinvigorated worship
- Community – in and out

These three themes were prayerfully explored and developed into a single, coherent vision for the parish:

Rooted in Christ, we seek to be a church where:

Radical Welcome means all can belong and be accepted just as we are;
Inspiring Worship enables our faith to grow and be nurtured with joy;
and **Intentional Service** shapes how we share the hope and love of God within the wider community.

This vision expresses both who we believe we are now and who we sense God is calling us to become.

Each of the three strands was then developed in more detail to form a draft Mission Action Plan, intended to provide a clear and shared sense of direction for the life of the church; a tool for PCC decision-making, helping to prioritise what matters most; and a living document, which will be reviewed and adapted over time. It is not intended to be a fixed or final plan. Rather, it is something we will continue to test, refine, and grow into as we seek to follow God's leading together.

MESSY CHURCH – Jane Brown

Messy Church continues to be well attended with many families choosing to prioritise Messy Church each month. We meet every third Saturday from 11 till 12.30 except for July and August when the team have a break. We have 17 children coming on average (since September 2025) and approximately 13 parents/carers and have a team of 10 who help on the day and 2 volunteers who provide food. We are grateful for the support and help of our volunteers who make our Messy Church an enjoyable session each month.

MINI MICHAEL'S – Pat Tweed

We continue to meet in term time, although because of weather (snow) and temperature (church heating) we had to cancel some of our sessions . This has now been resolved and we are back on track.

Our numbers remain steady and we have over the past few weeks had quite a few new babies which is very exciting for us.

The group is a lovely part of our week and to watch our Minis joining in with songs and activities brings us all great joy. Please continue to pray for the children and the helpers who come along each week to this very special group.

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THE MOTHERS' UNION – Anne Cooke

We are now a group of 14 ladies together with our vicar Mitch. This year we have been trying to make MU more visible at St. Michael's. We have taken an active part in some of the Wednesday morning services and hope to continue this after Easter. At Christmas we had a tree in the Christmas tree festival with decorations made by some of our members. In July we enjoyed a tea party kindly hosted by Sue Wiltshire in her beautiful garden. At this event we donated a lovely collection of items for Baby Basics. This year sees the 150th anniversary of Mothers' Union and we are hoping to attend a celebratory service at the cathedral in July.

ECO CHURCH – Elizabeth Bland

St Michael's Eco Church Group met six times during 2025.

We have continued to gather information for the Silver Eco Church award, which has proved to be complex and time-consuming. Many Anglican churches are engaged in the same process, partly because of the commitment by the national Church of England to achieve Net Zero by 2030; but also out of a sense that Christ came to redeem the whole of God's creation, not just human beings; and that God desires the healing of all creation.

Sue Wiltshire regularly contributes articles to the Parish Magazine and the pew sheet, giving advice, information and suggestions for how people can reduce their carbon footprint and live more sustainably. St Michael's has continued to be represented on the Alnwick Deanery Environmental Group and was involved in planning and leading the Deanery Evening Service at St Mary's Low Newton in September.

All three members of the Eco Church Group attended the Carbon Literacy training course which was led by Revd Tim Mayfield, the Diocesan Environmental Advisor.

We were delighted by the support from the congregation for the "alternative Christmas card" initiative, whereby members of the congregation chose to make a donation to Oxfam rather than giving individual Christmas cards to other members of the congregation. Approximately twenty households took part about £160 was raised for Oxfam. The Oxfam gift cards made a striking and colourful Christmas display.

We were very pleased to receive backing from the PCC to explore the possibility of installing solar panels on the flat roof above the South Aisle. We hope to make significant progress with this during 2026, alongside continuing to work towards the Silver Eco Church Award.

CHRISTIANS TOGETHER IN ALNWICK (CTiA) – Sue Wiltshire

Chair Person Sue Smith (Alnwick Baptist Church)

Vice Chair Gill Lyons (Alnwick Baptist Church)

Secretary Jean Barr (St James's Church)

Treasurer John Knight (St Paul's)

Growth!

Ignite

Under the inspired and enthusiastic hand of Rachel Adkins, the work of Ignite has continued to flourish. ALL the schools who feed into the Duchess's High School are now being visited; workshops, prayer spaces and Bible stories are taking place. In addition, Rachel has created an exhibition to mark the 500th year anniversary of the first complete printing of William Tyndale's New Testament. This has been enthusiastically received by schools. Pupils in their final year of primary level education are supported by an Ignite program as they transition to the High School. The youth group 'Rooted' is also growing in numbers. They meet to learn about God, have fun together and establish relationships with both adults and peers. These real, one to one friendships are so very important at this time of social media causing harm for many young people. Prayers have been answered for both a new

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treasurer and new trustees but a youth leader for the older children is still a current, urgent need.

Working Together

The churches in Alnwick have come together, as in previous years, to organise the 'Good Friday Act of Witness' in the Market Place, Christian Aid Week in May and the 'Service of Remembrance' in November. At Christmas, many businesses in the town were glad to receive a crib scene for their window and the streets were once again blessed with angels and bells, all crafted by folks from our community of worshippers.

St Paul's church held a fund raising event to support St James's church in Shilbottle who have been experiencing problems with their heating system. A joint 'Alpha Course', (St Michael's and ABC), saw a growing faith in those who attended while the 'Week of Christian Unity' and Lent Lunches have provided the opportunity once again to be with friends from other denominations.

The twice monthly coffee mornings at St James's Centre continue to be a popular meeting place for many people, both for folks who routinely go to church and many others who enjoy the company and a 'Thought for the day.'

People of the town and surrounding district find welcome and support through the work of the Food Bank where volunteers from several churches offer their time to help. This same longing to give aid where it is needed is also found in the Ukraine Support Group who continue to meet regularly to provide solutions to difficulties which the Ukrainian people may be encountering. Thankfully most of them are now well settled, have jobs and their children are happy in local schools.

Bob and Mary Bain, working for the charity 'Welcome Network' in Shilbottle, hold events and worship opportunities to bring their local community together.

Ill health resulted in our friends from the Salvation Army, Jim and Alison Anderson leaving the area and taking early retirement; sadly their place has not been filled. The care, teaching and hospitality they offered their congregation, and others, is a huge loss. May God bless and keep them through the years ahead.

It continues to be both a delight and encouragement to meet with Christian friends at various activities and services through the year. Perhaps it is easy to underestimate, or even to be hardly aware of, how affirming and encouraging these connections are. As leaders from all churches are reporting an increase in numbers it does seem likely that this will continue for the foreseeable future.

ST MICHAEL'S SINGERS – *Linden Innes-Hopkins*

The end of 2025 saw our 'in-house' group of singers augmented on two significant occasions by friends from the wider community. Ties between the St Michael's and the town can be strengthened through choral music in that singers who do not attend the church regularly for worship are welcomed here to sing God's praises.

In September, to mark the retirement from his role as a Reader, there was a Choral Evensong at which John Cooke was thanked for his many years of service. On this occasion the choir numbers were swelled by singers from as far away as Stanington and Corbridge as well as several from the Alnwick and District Choral Society. The format of the event was a two hour 'workshop' rehearsal at 2.00pm led by Linden Innes-Hopkins followed by a tea break with tea and cakes wonderfully provided by Pat Taylor and her team. Thank you to them. The service music included the Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis in B flat by Stanford and the anthem was Verleih uns Frieden by Mendelssohn which everyone managed splendidly in the original German! The feedback was that the whole occasion had been enjoyed by the singers and I might tentatively suggest that, at some point, a similar thing might be arranged.

Parochial Church Council of St Michael and St Paul, Alnwick
Annual Report and Financial Statements for year ended 31st December 2025

The biggest service of the year for choirs everywhere, from our great cathedrals to the tiniest village churches, is the Carol Service (Carols by Candlelight). Practices for this at St Michael's were spread over several weeks from mid-November with singers attending as many as they were able to within their individual restrictions: being out of the country, visiting family, pantomime rehearsals, and so on. With a judicious mix of the already-known and new choir carols, the group of 19 singers (again, with much appreciated additions from townsfolk) delivered a marvellous service on 21 December. The repertoire included pieces by R R Terry (born in Ellington, just down the road) and Malcolm Archer. The Junior Choir also took part, joining in with several of the traditional carols as well as singing Star Carol by John Rutter on their own.

I am given to understand that one of the reasons for naming the group 'St Michael's Singers' rather than 'the choir' is, first, that it does not practice regularly, but only gets together for particular services and, furthermore – as referenced above – often includes among its ranks singers from beyond the church community. Enabling a somewhat disparate group to develop and retain some kind of cohesive identity is important.

With much sadness, Colette Boushell decided early in 2026 to step down from her role as Junior Choir Leader due to family pressures. We thank her for the service she offered and thank the children for their participation. It is hoped that, at some point in the future, it will be possible to find a way of involving young singers regularly in our worship at St Michael's, offering them a 'free at the point of delivery' musical education within a professionally led framework.

January also saw the pipe organ develop a significant fault which rendered it unusable. The decision was taken, after considerable discussion of the options, to hire a digital organ for a limited period only, giving the PCC time to explore more fully possible ways forward for securing a viable instrument for the long-term future. Thanks are due to Rev Philip Bourne for helping us to acquire a suitable interim instrument through his connections with Allen Organs. For the moment, the digital organ is being used for Sunday morning services. We continue to be grateful to the team of musicians who, with their skill and dedication, enhance the worship at St Michael's. Philip Bourne, Colin Perkins, Linden Innes-Hopkins and – new to the team and very welcome – Michael Danes. During Lent this year, it has been possible to have an anthem during the distribution of communion on a number of Sundays. It is the singers' willingness to attend practices and to undertake some home-learning that makes this addition to the music possible, and we thank them.

SOCIAL EVENTS – Susan O'Neill

A small group of individuals has been continuing to try to facilitate social gatherings for St Michael's family, at intervals throughout the past year. The primary intention is to have fun together as church family, and cover the costs, but not as a fundraiser for church. This has led to a small current profit providing a kitty, held by our church treasurer, to contribute to funding further events.

The organised events includes some Sunday family walks together.

A family treasure hunt around Alnwick was created in May, where each family or team was given a list of instructions and clues to follow to seek the specific item or information and find each "piece of treasure" about our town. Shared lunch was provided and enjoyed by all participants and a box full of treasures (edible) for the team that solved the most clues in the quickest time was donated.

In the autumn another quiz night to exercise our memories and challenge our brains, for fun, with shared supper to satisfy our appetites, was enjoyed.

Parochial Church Council of St Michael and St Paul, Alnwick
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To celebrate Burns night a supper and Ceilidh was organised in January. Complete with real Scottish haggis piped in to the gathered St Michael's clan and celebrated with a reading and interpretation of Burns own poem, Ode to the Haggis. This was then shared among the clan with neeps and tatties (and a wee nip o' whisky for those who wished) followed by a choice of cranachan, the traditional dessert, and other sweet offerings. Music was provided by a local group of musicians including Northumbrian pipers, and a caller encouraged those with energy to spare to take to the floor and try their feet at various traditional Scottish dances.

A lot of time and effort has been given to provide these social gatherings by a very small group who would warmly encourage and welcome others to join in, with help and ideas, to continue to be able to enjoy more events in the future.

FINANCIAL REVIEW - *Richard Dale, PCC Treasurer*

The 2025 financial position was less eventful than 2024 when we saw some very large legacies come to the church. Our balance sheet is strong as we set plans for the future but day to day finances have been and remain challenging.

The General Fund recorded a deficit of £3,265 in 2025 reducing the balance from £6,923 to £3,658. We had expected a deficit due to additional costs following the very welcome arrival of our Curate and losses in operating the Parish Hall (£2,655) as we started to clear the backlog of maintenance. The result was actually better than we had feared reflecting some strong income growth.

Regular giving increased by 5% in the year which is the first year we have seen an increase for some time following the Week of Renewal in 2024. Collections at services increased by 24% due mainly to increased numbers of weddings. The higher number of funerals and weddings also impacted the fees charged for those services which were up 59% on the previous year.

Fundraising income increased from £10,066 in 2024 to £14,770 in 2025, thanks to the enormously successful Christmas Tree Festival. There was an increase in the associated costs, but the events produced a significant surplus which helped us to address the loss of income in other areas of our activity. Parish Hall income was down 18% on the previous year with a 16% growth in usage more than offset by loss of rental income for the caretaker's flat.

Our Parish Share in 2025 was £81,000, 8% higher than the previous year as the Diocese started to make good the very significant deficits it had experienced in recent years.

General Fund Church running expenses increased by 11% in the year due to increased costs following the arrival of our Curate and higher electricity usage during the year. The impact on the increase in electricity usage will be offset in 2026 by lower prices following our most recent contract renewal. Total Church running expenses also increased significantly due to a number of projects and Fabric Fund financed repairs during the year.

Charitable giving was resumed in 2025 with two specific donations from PCC funds. We donated £3,000 to Hospicecare North Northumberland as a share of the proceeds from the Christmas Tree Festival and £420 to the Children's Society after our Christingle service. There were also some specific collections for adopted charities which are not recorded in these accounts. The previous practice of donating 10% of our regular giving remains suspended in light of the challenges we face on General Fund finances. Our reserves policy allows for us to reinstate this giving if we record surpluses in future years.

Parochial Church Council of St Michael and St Paul, Alnwick
Annual Report and Financial Statements for year ended 31st December 2025

Our balance sheet is strong, following the significant legacies received in 2024. Most of these legacies were added to our development fund for the future (which may in time include a pump priming donation to a potential Friends of St Michael's) although some were retained for shorter term projects. Important though these large legacies are, we need to treat them as one-off income for future development rather than being used to prop up the General Fund, where our day to day giving and fundraising needs to be sufficient to meet our day-to-day operating expenses.

Looking ahead, the financial position remains challenging. Although we have reasonable legacy and restricted funds to allow the church to develop, the general fund position is difficult and we know that substantial expenditure on our organ will be needed sooner rather than later. Our Parish Share offer for 2026 was £81,000, unchanged from 2025 and significantly less than the Diocese would have wished us to offer. The Parish Operations Manager, which has proved to be a critically important appointment, is currently funded from interest on legacy funds but this will start to decline with interest rate reductions and as the legacy funds are used for major developments. We believe that this post can become, at least in part, self-funded as we exploit the opportunity presented by the Parish Hall.

In August 2024, the PCC set a reserves policy for its General Fund to aim for a target reserve of at least:

- Three months budgeted fixed cost liability (excluding the Parish Share which is a "debt of honour") plus
- One month's budgeted variable expenditure

On current trends, this sets a target General Reserve level of £7,700 so, with a year-end balance of £3,658, we are currently £4,042 short of our target position.

As ever, I am grateful to my Standing Committee colleagues and, more recently the Parish Operations Manager, for their support to me through the year. I also want to thank our small band of counters who turn up every Monday morning to count the week's cash and George Clark for his careful examination of the accounts. We are grateful to the many individuals and organisations who have continued to support us through this period. This will be my final year as PCC Treasurer, and I wish all the best to my successor.

Independent Examiner's Report

To the Parochial Church Council (PCC) of St Michael and St Paul, Alnwick

This report on the attached financial statements of the PCC of St Michael and St Paul for the year ended 31st December 2025 is in respect of an examination carried out in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 (the Regulations) and section 43 of the Charities Act 1993 (the Act).

Respective Responsibilities of the PCC and the Examiner

As members of the PCC, you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements: you consider that the audit requirement under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 does not apply and that an independent examination is needed.

Basis of this report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 43(7) of the Act and to be found in the Church guidance, 2006 edition. That examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the PCC and a comparison of the accounts with those records. It also includes considering any unusual items or disclosures in the financial statements and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent Examiners Statement

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

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 41 of the Act, and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Act.

have not been met;

2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

George Clark FCPFA
Independent Examiner

February 2026


27/2/26

Parochial Church Council of St Michael and St Paul, Alnwick
Annual Report and Financial Statements for year ended 31st December 2025

Statement of Financial Activities
For the period 1st January to 31st December 2025

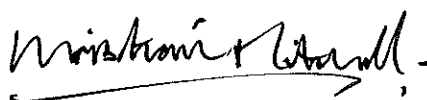
	Note	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	Total Funds	2024
Incoming Resources						
Incoming resources from generated funds						
Voluntary income	2	108,325	10,634	0	118,959	656,105
Fundraising	3	33,081	0	0	33,081	30,840
Income from investments		22,349	3,869	0	26,218	23,414
Incoming resources from charitable activities						
Church activities	4	8,055	0	0	8,055	5,055
Other incoming resources		790	0	0	790	239
Total Incoming Resources		172,600	14,503	0	187,103	714,653
Resources used						
Cost of generating funds						
Cost of generating voluntary income	5	5,049	115	0	5,164	2,948
Fundraising costs	6	18,007	1,244	0	19,251	16,120
Church activities						
Parish Share		81,000	0	0	81,000	75,000
Church running expenses	7	51,831	28,555	0	80,383	55,454
Charitable giving	8	3,420	0	0	3,420	0
Governance costs	9	780	0	0	780	917
Total Resources Used		160,087	29,914	0	190,001	150,439
Transfers between funds		(8,284)	8,284	0	0	0
Net Incoming/Outgoing Resources		4,229	(7,127)	0	(2,898)	565,214
Balances Brought Forward		519,579	183,506	51,350	754,435	189,221
Balances Carried Forward						
General Funds		3,658	0		3,658	6,923
Designated Funds		520,150	0		520,150	512,656
Restricted Funds		0	176,379	51,350	227,729	234,856
Total		523,808	176,379	51,350	751,537	754,435

Parochial Church Council of St Michael and St Paul, Alnwick
Annual Report and Financial Statements for year ended 31st December 2025

Balance Sheet as at 31st December 2025

	Note	2025 £	2024 £
Fixed Assets			
Tangible assets	10	145,981	150,263
Forster Bequest Capital		40,640	40,640
		186,621	190,903
Current Assets			
Barclays Community Account		2,682	1,729
Barclays Business Premium Account		36,233	50,532
Cash in hand		114	0
CBF Fabric Capital account		10,710	10,710
CBF Fabric Income account		543,818	518,201
Accounts receivable (Debtors)	11	11,722	4,288
		605,279	585,460
Accounts payable (Creditors)	12	40,363	21,928
Total assets		751,537	754,435
Represented by			
Balance at 1st January 2025		754,435	189,221
Surplus/(Deficit) for year		(2,898)	565,214
Balance at 31st December 2025		751,537	754,435
Distribution of total equity by funds			
Unrestricted funds			
General Fund	3,658		6,923
Designated Funds	520,150		512,656
		523,808	
Restricted funds			
Fabric Fund	32,269		35,114
Parish Hall Fund	4,348		5,592
Church Tower Fund	139,762		142,800
		176,379	183,506
Endowment funds			
Forster Bequest	40,640		40,640
D E Reavell Fund	10,000		10,000
A Hogg Fund	710		710
		51,350	51,350
		751,537	754,435

Approved by the Parochial Church Council on 24 March 2026 and signed on its behalf by:



Revd Christian Mitchell
Chair



Richard Dale
PCC Treasurer

Notes to the financial statements For the year ended 31st December 2025

1 Accounting policies

1.1 General

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

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention. The financial statements include all transactions, assets and liabilities for which the PCC is responsible in law. They do not include the accounts of church groups that owe their main affiliation to another body (e.g. the Mothers' Union), nor those that are informal gatherings of church members.

1.2 Funds

Endowment funds are funds, the capital of which must be retained either permanently or at the PCC's discretion; the income derived from the endowment is to be used either as restricted or unrestricted funds depending on the purpose for which the endowment was established in the first place.

The parish's endowment funds consist of:

- The Forster Bequest. The capital for this fund is held by The Newcastle Diocesan Society and is invested in The Investment Fund of the Central Board of Finance of the Church of England. The book cost is as shown on the Balance Sheet (£40,640) and its market value at 31st December 2025 was £92,994 (2024: £90,914).
- The Fabric Capital Fund (CBF 625063004D). This consists of the D E Reavell Fund (£10,000) and the Alan Hogg Fund (£710).

The income from all these funds is paid into The Fabric Income Account (CBF 625063003D) which is a **Restricted fund** (see below) and is only available towards the maintenance and repair of the fabric of St Michael's Church, Alnwick as the Vicar and churchwardens in their absolute discretion think fit. This was laid down by those who gave the endowments.

Restricted funds represent (a) income from trusts or endowments which may be expended only on those restricted purposes intended by the donor, and (b) revenue donations or grants for a specific PCC activity intended by the donor. Where these funds have unspent balances, interest on their pooled investment is apportioned to the individual funds on an average balance basis.

Unrestricted funds are income funds which are to be spent on the PCC's general purposes.

Designated Funds are **unrestricted** funds set aside by the PCC for a specific purpose. They may be "undesignated" by the PCC at any time.

Parochial Church Council of St Michael and St Paul, Alnwick
Annual Report and Financial Statements for year ended 31st December 2025

1.3 Receipts

Planned giving, collections and donations are recognised when received. Tax refunds are recognised when the incoming resource to which they relate is received. Grants and legacies are accounted for when the PCC is entitled to the use of the resource, their ultimate receipt is considered reasonably certain and the amounts due are reliably quantifiable.

Dividends are accounted for when declared receivable, and interest as and when accrued by the payer. All incoming resources are accounted for Gross.

1.4 Payments

Grants and donations are accounted for when paid over, or when awarded if that award creates a binding or constructive obligation on the PCC. The diocesan parish share is accounted for as and when (and if) it is paid. All other expenditure is generally recognised when it is incurred and is accounted for gross.

1.5 Fixed assets

Consecrated and benefice property is not included in the accounts in accordance with sections 10(2)(a) and (c) of the Charities Act 2011.

Moveable church furnishings held by the vicar and churchwardens on special trust for the PCC and which require a faculty for disposal are inalienable property listed in the church's inventory which can be inspected at any reasonable time.

Office equipment and similar items used within the church premises are written off when the asset is acquired.

Capitalised assets are stated at cost and depreciated over their expected useful life as follows:

Parish Hall boiler	10 years
Church bells	50 years

Investments are valued at historical cost with a note of the value at 31st December if available.

1.6 Current assets and liabilities

Amounts owed to the PCC on 31st December are shown as "Accounts Receivable" commonly referred to as Debtors. Amounts owed by the PCC on 31st December are shown as "Accounts Payable" and are commonly known as Creditors.

Short term deposits are held either at Barclays or with the Central Board of Finance of the Church of England.

1.7 Staff costs

During the year the PCC employed an Operations Manager and paid fees and expenses to two organists. None of these persons are members of the PCC.

Fees were also paid to organists and vergers in respect of Occasional Offices (funerals, weddings etc) but these amounts do not form part of these financial statements.

Parochial Church Council of St Michael and St Paul, Alnwick
Annual Report and Financial Statements for year ended 31st December 2025

2 Voluntary income

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	2024
Regular giving				
Gift Aid	34,212	0	34,212	41,970
Non Gift Aid	400	0	400	1,955
Parish Giving Scheme	32,488	0	32,488	19,808
Income tax recovered	21,343	0	21,343	20,106
Sub-total	88,443	0	88,443	83,839
Collections				
Regular services	3,440	0	3,440	3,425
Occasional services	2,413	0	2,413	1,306
Sub-total	5,853	0	5,853	4,731
Legacies	0	0	0	560,000
Donations and grants	14,029	10,634	24,663	7,535
Total	108,325	10,634	118,959	656,105

3 Fundraising

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	2024
Fundraising activities				
Christmas Tree Festival	12,574	0	12,574	7,527
Winter Market	658	0	658	1,083
Organ recital	0	0	0	661
Ceilidh	0	0	0	287
Other events	1,538	0	1,538	508
Sub-total	14,770	0	14,770	10,066
Parish Hall	14,850	0	14,850	18,119
Magazine	860	0	860	1,052
Catering income	366	0	366	272
Other	2,035	0	2,035	1,331
Total	33,081	0	33,081	30,840

4 Church activities

This income relates to PCC fees relating to weddings and funerals. During 2025, we collected £3,270 for weddings (2024: £913) and £4,785 (2024: £4,142) for funerals. Fees for clergy, vergers, streaming operators and organists and third-party collections at funerals are handled by the PCC on an agency basis and are excluded from these accounts.

Parochial Church Council of St Michael and St Paul, Alnwick
Annual Report and Financial Statements for year ended 31st December 2025

5 Cost of generating voluntary income

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	2024
Fundraising expenses	4,921	115	5,036	3,172
Planned giving expenses	128	0	128	130
Total	5,049	115	5,164	3,302

6 Fundraising costs

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	2024
Parish Hall				
Gas, electricity and water	6,648	0	6,648	7,750
Maintenance	3,205	0	3,205	879
Staff costs	1,215	0	1,215	3,500
Depreciation	0	1,244	1,244	1,244
Other expenses	6,437	0	6,437	1,941
Sub-total	17,505	1,244	18,749	15,314
Other	502	0	502	806
Total	18,007	1,244	19,251	16,120

7 Church running expenses

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	2024
Church				
Gas, electricity and water	12,265	0	12,265	11,774
Insurance	7,685	0	7,685	7,516
Repairs and maintenance	5,618	3,587	9,205	5,174
Refurbishment	851	21,920	22,771	7,586
Wine, wafers and candles	1,092	0	1,092	788
Organists	2,895	0	2,895	3,080
Organ maintenance	2,160	0	2,160	1,943
Worship	3,932	0	3,932	2,082
Depreciation	0	3,035	3,035	3,038
Other costs	627	0	627	276
Sub-total	37,125	28,542	65,667	43,257
Clergy				
Council Tax	5,518	0	5,518	4,105
Expenses and other costs	2,661	0	2,661	2,323
Sub-total	8,179	0	8,179	6,428
Administration				
Photocopier	3,141	0	3,141	2,996
Office supplies etc	2,451	10	2,461	1,815
Telephone and internet	935	0	935	958
Sub-total	6,527	10	6,537	5,769
Total	51,831	28,552	80,383	55,454

Parochial Church Council of St Michael and St Paul, Alnwick
Annual Report and Financial Statements for year ended 31st December 2025

8 Charitable giving

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Giving	2024 from PCC Funds
Hospicecare	3,000	0	3,000	0
Children's Society	420	0	420	0
Total	3,420	0	3,420	0

Special collections, donations and fundraising events which are specifically on behalf of another charity are not included in the accounts.

9 Governance costs

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	2024
Bank charges	415	0	415	505
Independent examination	200	0	200	200
PCC officer expenses	165	0	165	212
Total	780	0	780	917

10 Tangible fixed assets

	Church Bells	Parish Hall Boiler	Total Assets
Cost			
Balance at 1 st January 2025	151,915	12,438	164,353
Additions	0	0	0
Balance at 31 st December 2025	151,915	12,438	164,353
Depreciation			
Balance at 1 st January 2025	9,115	4,975	14,090
Charge for year	3,035	1,244	4,279
Balance at 31 st December 2025	12,150	6,219	18,369
Net Book Value at 31st December 2025	139,765	6,219	145,984

11 Accounts receivable

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	2024
Income tax recoverable	651	0	651	2,788
Electricity refund	443	0	443	550
Parish Hall rental income	1,712	0	1,712	396
Alnwick Educational Charity	7,364	0	7,364	7,364
Other	1,552	0	1,562	554
Total	11,722	0	11,722	4,288

Parochial Church Council of St Michael and St Paul, Alnwick
Annual Report and Financial Statements for year ended 31st December 2025

12 Accounts payable

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	2024
Parish share	21,000	0	21,000	0
Utilities	1,413	0	1,413	1,447
Charitable giving	0	17,950	17,950	17,950
Other	0	0	0	2,531
Total	22,413	17,950	40,363	21,928

Accounts

**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL
of
ST MICHAEL and ST PAUL
ALNWICK**

**Annual Report and
Financial Statements**

**for the year ended
31st December 2024**

**Incumbent
Revd Christian Mitchell**

**St Michael's Vicarage
Howling Lane
Alnwick, NE66 1DH**

**Bank
Barclays Bank plc
Alnwick**

**Independent Examiner
Mr George Clark FCPFA**

Registered Charity Number 1131297

Annual Report of the Parish of St Michael and St Paul, Alnwick 2024

Parochial Church Council 2024

The PCC is the governing body of the parish of St Michael and St Paul Alnwick. The PCC is a team made up of members of clergy and lay members of the church. Together they are responsible for the overall wellbeing, practical as well as spiritual, of their church, the church members, and the church buildings. The PCC also has a duty to promote the mission of the church within the wider community.

The PCC is also responsible for the internal maintenance and running of the Parish Hall. The Hall is leased from the Northumberland Estate which is responsible for the external fabric.

Ex officio members:

Chairman: Revd Christian Mitchell

Churchwardens: Vacant

Deanery Synod Members: (elected in 2024 for 3 years)

Mrs Annette Playle Mrs Jean Darby
Ms Sal Howard

Elected Members:

Mrs Rosie Buxton	(re-elected in 2022 for 3 years)
Mr John Cooke	(re-elected in 2024 for 3 years)
Mr Richard Dale	(re-elected in 2023 for 3 years)
Dr Patty Everitt	(elected in 2024 for 3 years)
Mrs Pat Tweed	(elected in 2024 for 1 year)
Mrs Judy Jobson	(elected in 2022 for 3 years)
Mrs Susan O'Neill	(re-elected in 2023 for 3 years)
Mr Henry Playle	(re-elected in 2023 for 3 years)
Mrs Susan Trafford	(elected in 2023 for 3 years)

PCC Officers:

Vice Chairman:	Mrs Jean Darby
PCC Secretary:	Mrs Rosie Buxton
PCC Treasurer:	Mr Richard Dale

Assistant Church Wardens:

Mrs Pat Tweed
One vacancy

PCC Committees and other groups:

The Standing Committee is the only committee required by law. It has the power to transact the business of the PCC between meetings (subject to any directions given by the Council). Its members are Revd Christian Mitchell, Mrs Jean Darby, Mr Richard Dale and Mr Henry Playle.

Clergy with permission to Officiate:

Revd Canon Sue Allen, Revd Canon Philip Bourne

Readers:

Mr John Cooke, Mrs Annette Playle, Ms Sal Howard

Parochial Church Council of St Michael and St Paul, Alnwick
Annual Report and Financial Statements for year ended 31st December 2024

Safeguarding Officer
Dr Patty Everitt

Church attendance:

Statistics as reported to the Diocese for 2024 (2023 figures in brackets)

Baptisms	11 (15)
Confirmation	1 (0)
Weddings	2 (6)
Funerals	14 (25) in Church, and 9 (4) at the crematorium or cemetery only.

Average attendance: 99 adults and 20 children (95 adults and 7 children)

Christmas: 131 communicants, 437 attendees (126 communicants, 486 attendees)

Easter: 91 communicants, 131 attendees (84 communicants, 99 attendees)

People in our "worshipping community" at the end of 2024:

Total	Children (Age 0-15)	Adults (Age 16+)
125	13	112

Review of the Year 2024

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

Volunteers:

We would like to thank all the volunteers who work so tirelessly to make our church the lively, welcoming and vibrant community that it is. There are many committees carrying out work in a variety of areas and many parishioners are members of more than one group. Without everybody's contribution we would not be able to keep the church running.

Church and School Links:

The links between the Church and NCEA Harry Hotspur C of E Primary School remain strong. The Vicar is an ex-officio governor of the school.

Communication:

The Church website is currently suspended while we build a new one. In the meantime, we are making good use of our 'A Church Near You' site which is regularly updated with all the details of our events and services, including copies of the weekly pew sheets and posters for upcoming events. The parish magazine, 'Gateway', is normally published every month.

DEANERY SYNOD – *Revd Canon Alison Hardy, Area Dean of Alnwick*

During 2024 Alnwick Deanery Synod met four times:

24th February – St James URC, Alnwick

The focus was on children's work in the deanery and presentations were given on

- Experience Easter (Amble), Schools Ministry (Chevington), Mini Michaels (Alnwick), Messy Church (Warkworth), Bags of Faith (Shilbottle), Baptism Preparation (Felton)

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6th June – St Mary's Longframlington

The meeting welcomed Revd Stephen Tranter, the Diocesan Director of Ordinands and Vocations who spoke about his role in the Diocese.

4th September – St Mary's Longframlington

We welcomed Izzy McDonald-Booth, a Diocesan representative on General Synod, who spoke about the work of General Synod and its most recent meeting. Izzy emphasised the need for good governance at all levels in the Church of England. As a result of Izzy's input one of our lay vacancies on Diocesan Synod was filled. See below.

2nd November – St Michael's Alnwick

Guest speaker Revd Robert Warren

The morning consisted of workshops on

- Leading Intercessions, Reading in church, Preparing the altar, Welcoming worshippers

Synod also elected Mary Elizabeth McIlroy-Hipwell to represent our deanery at Diocesan Synod

Throughout the year groups established by the Deanery Development Group have continued to work on strands of our Deanery development plan which focuses on how we can support each across the deanery by learning from each other, sharing experience and resources in 5 main areas:

- Leadership & Governance
- Mission & Pastoral Care
- Sustainable Buildings and churchyards
- Development of Lay Ministry
- Generous Giving

Synod members attended three Deanery development "check in" events during the year including a celebratory event at the cathedral.

Our monthly Deanery service has been held on the first Sunday of each month and has moved around the deanery visiting difference parishes each month. The Deanery Environment group continues to meet regularly convened by Rev Gilly Maude.

At year end our two vacancies in Upper Coquetdale and Amble & Chevington remain unfilled. The Area Dean is very grateful to the many people in these parishes have sustained ministry with grace and good will, to clergy and readers who have provided cover for services and to those who continue to pray for the people God is calling to these parishes.

In 2024 the Deanery offered £364,530 in parish share. At year end only one parish did not manage to pay in full. Because of some overpayments (and some parishes making additional payments after year end) the overall return was slightly more than 100%. For 2025 the deanery overall has not managed to achieve the Diocesan request for an extra 8%.

The Area Dean is grateful for the support of Synod, for Hugh, our Lay Chair, Sheila our Secretary and Jo our Treasurer all of whom work hard to ensure that deanery synod is focussed, informative and supportive of the Diocesan vision.

SAFEGUARDING – Patty Everitt, Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO)

The PCC believes that it has complied with its duty to have 'due regard' to the House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy and Practice Guidance.

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Introduction

In the latter part of 2024 and early part of 2025, we were presented with disturbing information concerning the safeguarding conduct of some of the Church of England's most senior clergy and the consequences of that behaviour on vulnerable people. One lesson that I have taken from this is that it is important that we do what we say we will do. In that way we know we are doing our absolute best to be a people safely doing Gospel work.

Sadly, in 2024 our Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor stepped down from her post. Our DSA had willingly given me helpful advice, support and encouragement. The DSA is a crucial role for PSOs. In the interim, until a new DSA is recruited, the Archdeacons of Lindisfarne and Northumberland are acting as Diocesan Safeguarding Contacts.

I continue to give thanks for all our volunteers and their commitment and dedication to providing a safe and welcoming environment in all our community and church-based work.

The House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy

The PCC continues to support our commitment to the House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy and Practice Guidance.

You will find a copy of the Policy on the Safeguarding Notice Board at the back of the church.

The Parish Dashboard

As a Parish, we continue to keep up-to-date in our compliance to written safeguarding standards with the help and guidance of the Parish Safeguarding Dashboard. Each year the PCC reviews existing policies and procedures to make sure that these are as effective as possible.

In 2024 a new part of the Dashboard was launched, the Safeguarding Hub. The Hub is a great help at keeping track of the training carried out by all our volunteers and reminding me when renewal of training is due.

Safeguarding Training

Safeguarding training is always available online through the Church of England Safeguarding Training Portal. Courses are available to anyone who is interested and on completion of the course, a personal certificate is issued. I have included the link to the Portal at the end of this report.

Training is often a richer and more fun experience when taken as part of a group. In 2024-2025 I facilitated several in-person safeguarding training sessions and have learned so much from our group discussions and the wealth of experience that each volunteer brings to their role. Thank you to all of you who continue to educate me!

Safeguarding Handbooks, Guidance, Policies and Procedures

Copies of these documents are in the blue folder near the pigeon-holes at the back of the church.

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My Thanks

Again, I thank all our volunteers for their steadfast commitment to safeguarding in all they do.

Questions?

If you have any questions or concerns about what safeguarding is or how to access training or what volunteering in any capacity would mean, please talk to me. I would be delighted to have a chat.

If you would like to find out more about any of the Church Officer roles or about being a Church Officer, again please talk to me.

Any questions you may have do not commit you to taking up a role!

Helpful Links

Church of England Safeguarding Training Portal <https://safeguardingtraining.cofeportal.org/>

FABRIC – *Jean Darby and Henry Playle*

Altar Frontal Chest

The Altar Frontal Chest which was situated just inside the Duke's door in the south aisle, had to be removed.

Initially some fungus at the bottom exterior of the chest was removed and washed down but at later date a large amount of damp and fungus at the rear interior was discovered. Three altar frontals which were no longer used, and another which was folded up on the floor of the cabinet, were badly affected with damp and fungi, were removed. Fortunately, none of the frontals regularly used were affected. Once the chest was emptied it was discovered that, because of the extent of the fungi, the back of the chest was rotten. The cause of the damage were three sheets of hardboard, stacked behind the chest and touching the wall, had drawn the damp and meant there was no air flow. Once the chest was removed the area was brushed and washed. A replacement chest is planned

The Tower

A memorial plaque acknowledging the considerable generosity of the late Richard Allsop which enabled the completion of the Tower Restoration Project, was placed facing the tower door at the bottom of the staircase.

Although the tower is now sound and waterproof, there continues to be concern regarding the uneven stairs, particularly in the area beyond the ringing room.

Due to the unexpected and unprecedented popularity of the bells, the ropes which had been expected to last for about 5 years were showing signs of wear and one did break. All 10 ropes have now been replaced from donations from local and visiting ringers. These new ropes have terylene "tops" as opposed to conventional hemp, consequently they will last for years longer. The original ropes will be retained as "spares".

The Graffiti Cabinet

There had been concern that the cabinet which houses the lead graffiti had no locking device. This has now been rectified and the graffiti is now safely stored.

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Church Path Lamps

A while before the Christmas Tree Festival it was considered that the lighting on the approach path to the church was inadequate. The glass globes were removed and given a soak and clean. Before they were replaced new led bulbs with a higher wattage were inserted, giving the pathway a brighter light.

Church Tower Clock

The clock, having finally been re-gilded due to the gilding fading after its refurbishment, then stopped. This was corrected but there are still issues and the rectifying is continuing. Our thanks to Dick Taylor who has been regulating the clock in the meantime.

General continuing maintenance

Gutters and down pipes were cleared in May. PAT (Testing of electrical goods) was carried out in August. Fire extinguishers were checked in October.

TOWER – Jim Crowther

Bell Fabric

There is very little to report on this front because there has been no change or deterioration to the internal belfry or ringing room fabric. The bells, bellframe and bell fittings are regularly inspected/maintained by the ringers and continue to be in excellent condition.

Bellringing Visitors

Bellringing at Alnwick continues to attract a significant number of bellringing visitors. The excellent tonal quality of these instruments along with a friendly local band have ensured a high number of ringing visitors. The bellringing standard at Alnwick is much higher than the national average, consequently the ringing attracts many return visitors. Bellringing at St. Michaels has achieved an excellent reputation in a relatively short space of time.

Ringling for Services

Always a main priority. Bells on Sunday morning and ringing for ad hoc occasions and services has been fully maintained by mainly local ringers. This, along with the further development of individual ringing skills will continue to be the objectives during 2025.

Local Ringers

The current band comprises members of the congregation who have been taught how to ring along with a number of "recycled ringers" (ringers who learnt to ring at other towers in the past who have since moved to Alnwick and returned to bellringing). The band is supported by a number of experienced ringers who regularly travel Northumberland to support the local ringers. These people have bonded well and become a very strong local group who help each other. The band is an even mix of males/females, the youngest aged 11 and oldest 85. A pleasure to teach/mentor.

Tutors

The 4 principal tutors remain unchanged, they travel from Shilbottle and Slaley, they have over 200 years of bellringing and tutoring between them. Teaching the art of Campanology safely and to a high standard is their skill and priority.

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Local ringers continue to improve their ringing ability and “striking” accuracy.

Ringling Times

Unchanged. Ringing after Sunday Morning Service, general practice on Wednesday afternoon and evening, occasionally on Saturday afternoons and other ad hoc times. Members of the congregation, their family/children and friends are encouraged to visit the belfry and see bellringing in action.....simply ask Jean Darby.

SOUTH AISLE EXHIBITION – Jean Darby, Project coordinator

The display of graffiti in the south aisle continued to attract attention but there were concerns relating to the fact that the cabinet was unlocked. This was eventually achieved sympathetically and all the graffiti is now held securely in the cabinet.

While new branding including a church logo were being finalised, work on the final designs for the interpretation were put on hold. These are now in the final stages and a faculty will be sought. We are pleased that individuals from interested organisations in the town have agreed to join in making this a true community project. Despite the necessary delays we now look forward to a celebratory launch in September 2025.

HARRY HOTSPUR CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL - Jackie Chevaugeron,
Chair of Governors

Good News - our roll has increased since the start of the academic year by ten children!

It has been another positive year for the school community centred on our children within our very special ethos and learning environment. We continue to value each of our children, providing the challenge, opportunity and support they need to grow and flourish as individuals, both academically and personally. Our focus on **Spirituality** with support from **Paul Rusby of the Diocese** has helped us all to “look in, look out and look up”.

In the last few years our governing board lost several experienced members, however we have recruited new members with a wide range of skills and are planning for the future sustainability of the board. We have two new parents represented, who having moved from out of the area and visited all of the Alnwick schools felt **Harry Hotspur** provided the most nurturing culture for their children.

It was a difficult decision to change the name of our school, but our families embraced the discussion and the children became very excited by the challenge of finding a new name which would best represent the school values within the **Northumberland Church of England Academy Trust**. The children are always keen to talk about the school's Christian values - they recently grilled the applicants for Headteacher post about them - in particular courage, perseverance, trust, respect, friendship and love. At the renaming ceremony ‘**His Grace the Duke of Northumberland**’ talked of his ancestor, acknowledging that while he was not perfect, Harry Hotspur had always “done his best”. As one of the children said afterwards, “at our school we are always helped to do our best”. Opportunities for the children to do just that are implicit in our very challenging curriculum and in the day to day.

Our curriculum allows each subject to shine with subject specific knowledge to the fore. Previous learning is built upon, with challenge explicit in every lesson. One of the outcomes of this has been the award of the **Silver Primary History Quality Mark**. One of only two primary schools in Northumberland to have the award, the report highlighted the quality of leadership and enrichment offered to children, as well as the standards achieved. Later this year, the children are to be invited to London for the awards ceremony.

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Researching the history of our school, through school log books and the interviewing of past pupils and staff became the catalyst for a wonderful afternoon in school when the children presented their findings to the gathered audience. The children helped us all to reflect on times past and to look forward optimistically! In geography, staff have engaged in fieldwork training - along the length of the River Aln - so our children regularly experience fieldwork and develop skills. Every child is included in school educational visits regardless of the ability to contribute financially. In particular the residential experiences such as Ford Castle, would not be possible without the support of our friends at St Michael's Church. As highlighted by the staff these situations promote independence and allow all of the children to shine, however it is often most transformative for our least confident and / or most disadvantaged pupils. The significance of this is not lost to us as governors when we refer back to the original Trust Deed from the setting up of the school.

This year, visits have included:

- Our town and castle
- Investigating Harry Hotspur
- Lilidorei World Book Day
- Alnwick Garden - going to work
- Hadrian's Wall
- York (by train - Viking Centre and DIG - archaeologists for the day)
- Residential; to Ford Castle Y3/4

One of our governor roles is to monitor the impact of improvement priorities. Pupils attend meetings and report back on their perspective, sharing views, ideas and samples of their work. The developing confidence of the young people - an ongoing focus across school - is admirable. They present, respond to questions and explain with enthusiasm, clarity and patience. A group of six pupils from Y3, 4, 5 and 6 formed a panel for the Headteacher interviews, asked their own well thought out questions and made recommendations.

We continue to provide whole class and small group violin tuition for every child in Y3/4 and as a result our Ceilidh Band is developing quite a reputation. Several of our past pupils played for the recent DCHS school production. We also host the area Ceilidh Band which includes Swansfield Park and Hipsburn schools.

We have this academic year welcomed to our school, Teddi Redpath as Assistant Headteacher, and more recently we have appointed a new Headteacher John Macfarlane and will welcome him to his new post at the beginning of the summer term. Mr Johnston is leaving us after many years of dedicated service to lead a large primary school in Newcastle. We thank Gavin for his constant commitment to developing and improving our school and of course wish him every success in his new post.

PASTORAL CARE TEAM – *Rev'd Sue Allen*

Church at Home

'Church at Home' is concerned with two different types of activity which provide worship and support to those who are unable to attend church in person.

Pastoral Care Team

This was set up in November 2023, and has met approximately every two months for mutual support and oversight, and to share good practice. Much appreciated help from Patty Everitt ensures that the requirements for Safeguarding are being met.

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A major focus is to co-ordinate Holy Communion services in Care Homes and to individuals. Three new Lay Communion Ministers were Commissioned in June 2024 to add to the existing Readers active in this ministry, and Communion is now taken every month to five local Care Homes, as well as to a number of individuals. A small team takes a more informal service bimonthly in one Care Home, as part of a rota set up by Christians Together in Alnwick, and other visiting is also undertaken in the name of St Michael's.

Online Worship and Fellowship.

As well as serving local people who are unable to attend church in person, St Michael's online community involves people who live geographically distant. This community enables them all to feel connected, and an ongoing part of the life of St Michael's. Three strands of this online presence are reported below.

Livestreamed Sunday Worship

A small team of operators ensures that the 10am Parish Communion is available online. During 2024 the purchase of new equipment and the improvement of the technology meant that the livestream is now more versatile and more reliable. The service is normally watched live by around a dozen people, and with those who watch later it is seen by at least 20 people each week. A recorded version is also taken into one of the local Care Homes and watched by up to 20 people in the Lounge there.

Zoom Compline on Thursday evenings.

Around nine people attend regularly for this more interactive service which includes intercessions and lasts about half an hour.

Sunday Zoom Cuppa and Chat

During 2024 this gathering was held monthly, usually on the first Sunday. It gathers those who are housebound, as well as those out and about locally, and includes contributions from USA. Each person is invited to catch up on their news and to share ideas, normally around a theme. The session finishes with a short prayer which all can join in. It has become increasingly clear that this group is very much appreciated as a way of keeping in touch and belonging.

MISSION ACTION PLANNING (MAP) GROUP – *Christian Mitchell*

In August of 2024, the PCC commissioned a small working party to develop a Mission Action Plan for the church. The Working Party is led by the Vicar and is made up of a further six people from across the life of St Michael's Church. The objectives of the Working Party were agreed as follows:

- To prepare a Parish Mission Statement, designed to underpin and guide the future mission of the Parish, and to seek approval for its adoption from the PCC.
- To develop a Mission Action Plan that sets out the future missional activities of the Parish in the short-term (6-12 months); medium-term (1-4 years); and long-term (5-10 years).

The Working Party met informally for the first time in December 2024 and has since met several times in early 2025. The discussions are developing well, and plans are being made for a parish workshop later in 2025 facilitated by Bishop Mark Wroe with a view to developing a MAP for the parish.

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MESSY CHURCH – Jane Brown

Messy Church continues monthly within our church building. We have a regular cohort of families who come most months to Messy Church. The average monthly attendance is 21 children and 25 adults including the team. We start with tea/coffee for the adults, then have our bible story and Christian songs together. The children spend 30 minutes doing crafts at various stations. We have introduced having the choice of a game this year too. Then we have soup, rolls, sandwiches, snacks and cake together. Many thanks to our volunteers who make food, create crafts and games, tell the bible story, and set it all up.

MINI MICHAEL'S – Pat Tweed

We continue to meet in term time and use the holidays to recover!!

Numbers attending our Thursday sessions are reasonably consistent and although we have said goodbye to children going either to nursery or school, we have several babies coming up into the more planned activity group. However, we are always aware of the need to encourage more to come and join us in our friendly, very child-based Thursday mornings. Refreshments are always provided so please spread the word.

Mini Michaels is a joyous part of our week, and we would welcome any new members who would like to come to help in any way. The team is a strong one, but MORE people would make it even stronger.

We would also like to congratulate Revd Mitch on how well he has learnt his nursery rhymes, he's practically a professional now!!!

THE MOTHERS' UNION – Anne Cooke

We have continued to meet in church on the second Wednesday of the month, with no meetings in January and August. In December we held our Advent service and on this occasion we admitted our vicar Mitch to Mothers' Union.

We now have nine members and one indoor member. Some rural branches have had to close recently through lack of numbers so please come along and give us a try.

ECO CHURCH – Elizabeth Bland

St Michael's Eco Church group met several times during 2024.

They organised an Eco Church Coffee Morning, held in October 2024, which was very much enjoyed by all who attended. Beautiful, sustainably-sourced goods were acquired on a 'sale or return' basis from World of Difference (Alnwick) and Gallery 45 (Felton). Some great refreshments were supplied by the church congregation. Over £100 was raised which was sent to the charity Cool Earth, which works with local communities in the rainforests and helps them to protect themselves and their land (www.coolearth.org).

At their final meeting of the year, in early November 2024, it was agreed that having achieved the Bronze Eco Church Award in August 2024, it was time to explore what St Michael's needs to do to achieve its Silver Eco Church Award. Members of the group are now working their way through the lengthy survey on the Eco Church UK website and are also completing the Carbon 360 section of the Climate Stewards website. Thanks to Revd Mitch, Richard Dale and Jean Darby for their assistance in helping us answer the questions; and also to Gilly Maude from the Alnwick Deanery Environmental Group for her help and advice and for putting us in touch with Tim Mayfield, the Diocesan Environmental Officer.

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Members of the group have continued to attend online meetings of Alnwick Deanery Environmental Group over the course of the year.

We are grateful to Annette Playle for all she has contributed in terms of time, work and enthusiasm to St Michael's Eco Church group.

CHRISTIANS TOGETHER IN ALNWICK (CTiA) – Sue Wiltshire

Chairperson	Sue Smith (Alnwick Baptist Church)
Vice Chair	Gill Lyons
Secretary	Jear Barr (St James's Church)
Treasurer	John Knight (St Paul's)

Hello and Goodbye

This year has seen important changes in our Alnwick church family. Joan Grindrod-Helm retired from St James's church in April last year after 22 years of service. In the due course of time, her place will be filled by a minister who will work with six other parishes in the area. In the meantime, St James's own worship group continues to work hard organizing services and welcoming visiting preachers. Kim Hurst from the Methodist church was relocated creating a vacancy into which Tim Moore and his wife Hazel have stepped. At Alnwick Baptist church Karen Smith was inducted as a new leader while Caroline Friend stepped back from heading up Alnwick Messy Church.

The Year in General

As we have said both goodbye and hello through the seasons, the rhythm of our churches' year has gently continued. The Week Of Prayer for Christian Unity took place in January and in the Spring Gill Lyons and June Etterley hosted an ecumenical Lent course. The Good Friday service of witness took place in the Market Place led by Bob Bain, and moving into May, the 24hours of prayer in May was well supported.

May also brought a wonderful new addition to our fund raising for Christian Aid week. St James's church held a Domino Drive which was great fun, well supported and very successful in the monetary sense, as was the Plant Sale and Refreshments hosted by Michelle and Andrew Duff. Despite the difficult financial climate bringing so many problems for so many people it was marvellous that this year saw no decline in the overall money raised when compared with the last year or so. Sue Wiltshire has stepped down from her role as Christian Aid coordinator for the local churches. This position has been filled by Stanley Trafford.

In November the Remembrance Day Service was led this year by Padre David Haslam and the prayers at the War Memorial were led by Mitch. A rota for the next few years has been organised.

During the Christmas season angels were knitted and distributed around the town and, as always, delighted children and adults alike. About 30 businesses were pleased to receive a crib scene for their window. It was fabulous to see the effort which some shops made to display the figures in the best possible way. Information about Christmas service was collated and made available to the public in several different places.

Throughout the year Bob and Mary Bain from Welcome Network have continued to host 'Stories of Hope' in the Costello Centre, and from October to June the open door of the CtiA coffee mornings has welcomed many visitors.

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Other events were also planned and enjoyed. In September St James' Shilbottle held a flower festival in memory of their long-serving organist Lillian Hume raising three thousand pounds for charity. November saw St Paul's church full of nearly 100 nativity scenes from all around the world while December of course, saw St Michael's full of beautifully decorated and lit Christmas Trees.

Food Bank

People locally and as far North as Belford continue to be supported by Alnwick and District Food Bank, which is run entirely by volunteers. Unfortunately there is also a need to help individuals who are actually homeless and without any cooking facilities. Donations are collected from supermarkets, churches and businesses and are, of course, always gratefully received, as are monetary gifts which allow the organisers to supplement package and tinned food with fresh produce. Current needs are regularly updated on the Facebook page and there is also a website - www.alnwickdistrictfoodbank.com. Here you can learn that 'Our rooms are kitted out like a corner shop so that instead of being handed a parcel, people choose for themselves, accompanied by a Food Bank Volunteer'

Anna Chaplaincy

Across the country there is a growing Anna Chaplaincy network of trained chaplains and volunteers offering spiritual support to elderly people, their carers and supporters. Annette Playle has received training. Locally this work is supported by Welcome Network.

LOUDfence

An ecumenical safeguarding organization. An important event is taking place in St Paul's Church on the 1st May. On this day there will be a special service led by Bishop Steven Wright during which crafted items made earlier in the year will be displayed to show solidarity and support to those people who have been abused in a faith-based setting.

Finances

John Knight, a member of St Paul's congregation, continues in the role as treasurer for CtiA. Outgoings during the year are largely to do with publicity while incoming funds are from the 'subs' each church pays and money collected at Lent Lunches. As in previous years, we have been able to make a charitable donation, this year to Ignite.

Our churches are, separately and together, a lively community of people, each serving God according to their own particular calling. Coming together to meet throughout the year allows for shared activities, awareness of each other's events and is, I think, a source of great encouragement to all.

The CtiA group is now a member of n.e.c.a.t. (north east churches acting together)

SOCIAL EVENTS

There were two main social events in 2024; the ceilidh for Burns Night and the strawberry tea at the vicarage in September. More events are planned for 2025 and all ideas and help (however small) are very much appreciated. Please contact Susan O'Neill.

Grateful thanks go to Pat Taylor who has been a driving force in organizing many of the church events over the years.

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FINANCIAL REVIEW - *Richard Dale, PCC Treasurer*

2024 saw some quite remarkable generosity to the church which transformed our financial position and enabled us to start to plan for the long-term future of our wonderful building and the church community.

In January we very sadly learned of the death of Richard Allsop. Under the terms of his £120,000 loan to the church, which was used to fund repairs to the tower, this loan was converted to a restricted donation to the Tower Fund on his death which means that the Tower project is now fully funded.

We received a second and final very large donation of £318,000 from the Bill Hugonin Trust in January. During the year, we also received legacies of £101,948 from the estate of Robin Black, £10,052 from the estate of Eileen Pringle and an interim payment of £10,000 from the estate of Annie Houseman Middleton. Most of these legacies were added to our development fund for the future (which may in time include a pump priming donation to a potential Friends of St Michael's) although some were retained for shorter term projects.

These amazing examples of generosity have had a very significant impact on our financial position. We no longer have the liability of a loan to repay on our balance sheet and we now have a development fund totalling some £510,000 which we can use to invest for the future of our church. We have much to be thankful for. Important though these large legacies are, we need to treat them as one-off income for future development rather than being used to prop up the General Fund, where our day to day giving and fundraising needs to be sufficient to meet our day-to-day operating expenses.

The General Fund recorded a surplus of £2,981 in 2024 increasing the balance from £3,941 to £6,922. In August 2024, the PCC set a reserves policy for its General Fund to aim for a target reserve of at least:

- Three months budgeted fixed cost liability (excluding the Parish Share which is a "debt of honour") plus
- One month's budgeted variable expenditure

On current trends, this sets a target General Reserve level of £7,700 so our position at the end of the year was close to, but not quite meeting, our target position.

Looking to the future, we along with all other parishes in the Diocese, need to significantly increase our Parish Share offer if the Diocese is to maintain the current size and shape of paid clergy. For 2025, this means an increase in our Parish Share from £75,000 to £81,000 which will be a challenge. Our Week of Renewal in October 2024 saw pledges by members of the church to increase regular giving by 20% which was a fantastic act of commitment. However, it should be remembered that this increase is then offset by the loss of regular givers through death or moving away from the area. The exciting news that we will have a Curate from summer 2025 will also increase our costs.

Regular giving declined by 3% in the year reflecting loss of members of the community and some one-off backdated Gift Aid claims in 2023, partly offset by the immediate benefits of the Week of Renewal. Collections at services declined by 14% due mainly to fewer funerals in 2024. The lower number of funerals and weddings also impacted the fees charged for those services which were down 37% on the previous year.

Fundraising income increased from £3,271 in 2023 to £10,066 in 2024, thanks to the enormously successful Christmas Tree Festival. There was an increase in the associated costs but the events produced a significant surplus which helped us to address the loss of

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Annual Report and Financial Statements for year ended 31st December 2024

income in other areas of our activity. Parish Hall income was largely unchanged year on year but with a significantly higher contribution (after expenses) of £4,049 (compared to £962 in 2023) due mainly to lower energy costs.

Church running expenses increased by 2½% in the year with increases in Council Tax and clergy expenses (due to the Vicar having been in post for the full year in 2024) offset by lower gas prices and the full year impact of our latest photocopier lease (which is much cheaper than the previous machine).

Charitable giving was suspended in 2024, reflecting the challenges we face on General Fund finances. Our reserves policy allows for us to reinstate this giving if we record surpluses in future years and we will continue to encourage specific dedicated fundraising activity and special collections for a small number of charitable causes.

As ever, I am grateful to my Standing Committee colleagues for their support to me through the year. I also want to thank our small band of counters who turn up every Monday morning to count the week's cash. We are grateful to the many individuals and organisations who have continued to support us through this period.

Independent Examiner's Report

To the Parochial Church Council (PCC) of St Michael and St Paul, Alnwick

This report on the attached financial statements of the PCC of St Michael and St Paul for the year ended 31st December 2024 is in respect of an examination carried out in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 (the Regulations) and section 43 of the Charities Act 1993 (the Act).

Respective Responsibilities of the PCC and the Examiner

As members of the PCC you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements: you consider that the audit requirement under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 does not apply and that an independent examination is needed.

Basis of this report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 43(7) of the Act and to be found in the Church guidance, 2006 edition. That examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the PCC and a comparison of the accounts with those records. It also includes considering any unusual items or disclosures in the financial statements and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent Examiners Statement

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

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 41 of the Act, and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Act.

have not been met;
2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



George Clark FCPFA
Independent Examiner

February 2025

Parochial Church Council of St Michael and St Paul, Alnwick
Annual Report and Financial Statements for year ended 31st December 2024

Statement of Financial Activities
For the period 1st January to 31st December 2024

	Note	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	Total Funds	2023
Incoming Resources						
Incoming resources from generated funds						
Voluntary income	2	534,105	122,000	0	656,105	195,121
Fundraising	3	30,840	0	0	30,840	24,471
Income from investments		14,797	8,617	0	23,414	4,087
Incoming resources from charitable activities						
Church activities	4	5,055	0	0	5,055	8,022
Other incoming resources		239	0	0	239	184
Total Incoming Resources		585,036	130,617	0	714,653	231,729
Resources used						
Cost of generating funds						
Cost of generating voluntary income	5	2,948	0	0	2,948	1,188
Fundraising costs	6	14,876	1,244	0	16,120	17,427
Church activities						
Parish Share		75,000	0	0	75,000	67,700
Church running expenses	7	50,416	5,038	0	55,454	54,078
Charitable giving	8	0	0	0	0	5,666
Governance costs	9	917	0	0	917	902
Total Resources Used		144,157	6,282	0	150,439	146,961
Transfers between funds		(311)	311	0	0	0
Net Incoming/Outgoing Resources		440,568	124,646	0	565,214	84,768
Balances Brought Forward		79,011	58,860	51,350	189,221	104,453
Balances Carried Forward						
General Funds		6,923	0	0	6,923	3,941
Designated Funds		512,656	0	0	512,656	75,070
Restricted Funds		0	183,506	51,350	234,856	110,210
Total		519,779	183,506	51,350	754,435	189,221

Parochial Church Council of St Michael and St Paul, Alnwick
Annual Report and Financial Statements for year ended 31st December 2024

Balance Sheet as at 31st December 2024

	Note	2024 £	2023 £
Fixed Assets			
Tangible assets	10	150,263	154,546
Forster Bequest Capital		40,640	40,640
		190,903	195,186
Current Assets			
Barclays Community Account		1,729	(60)
Barclays Business Premium Account		50,532	98,798
Cash in hand		0	0
CBF Fabric Capital account		10,710	10,710
CBF Fabric Income account		518,201	28,035
Accounts receivable (Debtors)	11	4,288	4,471
		585,460	141,954
Accounts payable (Creditors)	12	21,928	27,919
Loans		0	120,000
Total assets		754,435	189,221
Represented by			
Balance at 1st January 2024		189,221	104,453
Surplus/(Deficit) for year		565,214	84,768
Balance at 31st December 2024		754,435	189,221
Distribution of total equity by funds			
Unrestricted funds			
General Fund		6,923	3,941
Designated Funds		512,656	75,070
Restricted funds			
Fabric Fund	35,114		26,497
Parish Hall Fund	5,592		6,524
Church Tower Fund	142,800		25,839
Endowment funds		183,506	58,860
Forster Bequest	40,640		40,640
D E Reavell Fund	10,000		10,000
A Hogg Fund	710		710
		51,350	51,350
		754,435	189,221

Approved by the Parochial Church Council on 25th March 2025 and signed on its behalf by:



Revd Christian Mitchell
Chair

Richard Dale
PCC Treasurer

Notes to the financial statements For the year ended 31st December 2024

1 Accounting policies

1.1 General

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

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention. The financial statements include all transactions, assets and liabilities for which the PCC is responsible in law. They do not include the accounts of church groups that owe their main affiliation to another body (e.g. the Mothers' Union), nor those that are informal gatherings of church members.

1.2 Funds

Endowment funds are funds, the capital of which must be retained either permanently or at the PCC's discretion; the income derived from the endowment is to be used either as restricted or unrestricted funds depending on the purpose for which the endowment was established in the first place.

The parish's endowment funds consist of:

- The Forster Bequest. The capital for this fund is held by The Newcastle Diocesan Society and is invested in The Investment Fund of the Central Board of Finance of the Church of England. The book cost is as shown on the Balance Sheet (£40,640) and its market value at 31st December 2024 was £92,994 (2023: £90,914).
- The Fabric Capital Fund (CBF 625063004D). This consists of the D E Reavell Fund (£10,000) and the Alan Hogg Fund (£710).

The income from all these funds is paid into The Fabric Income Account (CBF 625063003D) which is a **Restricted fund** (see below) and is only available towards the maintenance and repair of the fabric of St Michael's Church, Alnwick as the Vicar and churchwardens in their absolute discretion think fit. This was laid down by those who gave the endowments.

Restricted funds represent (a) income from trusts or endowments which may be expended only on those restricted purposes intended by the donor, and (b) revenue donations or grants for a specific PCC activity intended by the donor. Where these funds have unspent balances, interest on their pooled investment is apportioned to the individual funds on an average balance basis.

Unrestricted funds are income funds which are to be spent on the PCC's general purposes.

Designated Funds are **unrestricted** funds set aside by the PCC for a specific purpose. They may be "undesignated" by the PCC at any time.

Parochial Church Council of St Michael and St Paul, Alnwick
Annual Report and Financial Statements for year ended 31st December 2024

1.3 Receipts

Planned giving, collections and donations are recognised when received. Tax refunds are recognised when the incoming resource to which they relate is received. Grants and legacies are accounted for when the PCC is entitled to the use of the resource, their ultimate receipt is considered reasonably certain and the amounts due are reliably quantifiable.

Dividends are accounted for when declared receivable, and interest as and when accrued by the payer. All incoming resources are accounted for Gross.

1.4 Payments

Grants and donations are accounted for when paid over, or when awarded if that award creates a binding or constructive obligation on the PCC. The diocesan parish share is accounted for as and when (and if) it is paid. All other expenditure is generally recognised when it is incurred and is accounted for gross.

1.5 Fixed assets

Consecrated and benefice property is not included in the accounts in accordance with sections 10(2)(a) and (c) of the Charities Act 2011.

Moveable church furnishings held by the vicar and churchwardens on special trust for the PCC and which require a faculty for disposal are inalienable property listed in the church's inventory which can be inspected at any reasonable time.

Office equipment and similar items used within the church premises are written off when the asset is acquired.

Capitalised assets are stated at cost and depreciated over their expected useful life as follows:

Parish Hall boiler	10 years
Church bells	50 years

Investments are valued at historical cost with a note of the value at 31st December if available.

1.6 Current assets and liabilities

Amounts owed to the PCC on 31st December are shown as "Accounts Receivable" commonly referred to as Debtors. Amounts owed by the PCC on 31st December are shown as "Accounts Payable" and are commonly known as Creditors.

Short term deposits are held either at Barclays or with the Central Board of Finance of the Church of England.

1.7 Staff costs

During the year the PCC paid an honorarium to a parish hall caretaker and fees and expenses to two organists. None of these persons are members of the PCC.

Fees were also paid to organists and vergers in respect of Occasional Offices (funerals, weddings etc) but these amounts do not form part of these financial statements.

Parochial Church Council of St Michael and St Paul, Alnwick
Annual Report and Financial Statements for year ended 31st December 2024

2 Voluntary income

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	2023
Regular giving				
Gift Aid	41,970	0	41,970	42,306
Non Gift Aid	1,955	0	1,955	3,281
Parish Giving Scheme	19,808	0	19,808	17,409
Income tax recovered	20,106	0	20,106	23,766
Sub-total	83,839	0	83,839	86,762
Collections				
Regular services	3,425	0	3,425	3,125
Occasional services	1,306	0	1,306	2,350
Sub-total	4,731	0	4,731	5,475
Legacies	440,000	120,000	560,000	85,600
Donations and grants	5,535	2,000	7,535	17,284
Total	534,105	122,000	656,105	195,121

3 Fundraising

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	2023
Fundraising activities				
Christmas Tree Festival	7,527	0	7,527	0
Winter Market	1,083	0	1,083	2,435
Organ recital	661	0	661	0
Celidh	287	0	287	0
Other events	508	0	508	836
Sub-total	10,066	0	10,066	3,271
Parish Hall	18,119	0	18,119	18,189
Magazine	1,052	0	1,052	1,073
Catering income	272	0	272	286
Other	1,331	0	1,331	1,652
Total	30,840	0	30,840	24,471

4 Church activities

This income relates to PCC fees relating to weddings and funerals. During 2024, we collected £913 for weddings (2023: £2,108) and £4,142 (2023: £5,914) for funerals. Fees for clergy, vergers and organists and third party collections at funerals are handled by the PCC on an agency basis and are excluded from these accounts.

Parochial Church Council of St Michael and St Paul, Alnwick
Annual Report and Financial Statements for year ended 31st December 2024

5 Cost of generating voluntary income

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	2023
Fundraising expenses	3,172	0	3,172	1,058
Planned giving expenses	130	0	130	130
Total	3,302	0	3,302	1,188

6 Fundraising costs

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	2023
Parish Hall				
Gas, electricity and water	7,750	0	7,750	9,533
Maintenance	879	0	879	832
Caretaker	3,500	0	3,500	4,200
Depreciation	0	1,244	1,244	1,244
Other expenses	1,941	0	1,941	1,418
Sub-total	14,070	1,244	15,314	17,227
Other	806	0	806	200
Total	14,876	1,244	16,120	17,427

7 Church running expenses

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	2023
Church				
Gas, electricity and water	11,774	0	11,774	12,819
Insurance	7,516	0	7,516	6,740
Repairs and maintenance	4,910	264	5,174	1,657
Refurbishment	5,850	1,736	7,586	12,910
Wine, wafers and candles	788	0	788	682
Organists	3,080	0	3,080	1,905
Organ maintenance	1,943	0	1,943	2,438
Worship	2,082	0	2,082	1,957
Depreciation	0	3,038	3,038	3,038
Other costs	276	0	276	976
Sub-total	38,219	5,038	43,257	45,122
Clergy				
Council Tax	4,105	0	4,105	2,369
Expenses and other costs	2,323	0	2,323	1,247
Sub-total	6,428	0	6,428	3,616
Administration				
Photocopier	2,996	0	2,996	3,397
Office supplies etc	1,815	0	1,815	1,199
Telephone and internet	958	0	958	723
Sub-total	5,769	0	5,769	5,340
Total	50,416	5,038	55,454	54,078

Parochial Church Council of St Michael and St Paul, Alnwick
Annual Report and Financial Statements for year ended 31st December 2024

8 Charitable giving

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Giving	2023 from PCC Funds
St Michael's School	0	0	0	2,500
Alnwick Foodbank	0	0	0	1,000
Gallery Youth	0	0	0	1,000
Contagious	0	0	0	785
Children's Society	0	0	0	381
Total	0	0	0	5,666

Special collections, donations and fundraising events which are specifically on behalf of another charity are not included in the accounts.

9 Governance costs

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	2023
Bank charges	505	0	505	582
Independent examination	200	0	200	180
PCC officer expenses	212	0	212	140
Total	917	0	917	902

10 Tangible fixed assets

	Church Bells	Parish Hall Boiler	Total Assets
Cost			
Balance at 1 st January 2024	151,915	12,438	164,353
Additions	0	0	0
Balance at 31 st December 2024	151,915	12,438	164,353
Depreciation			
Balance at 1 st January 2024	6,076	3,731	9,807
Charge for year	3,039	1,244	4,283
Balance at 31 st December 2024	9,115	4,975	14,090
Net Book Value at 31st December 2024	142,800	7,463	150,363

Parochial Church Council of St Michael and St Paul, Alnwick
Annual Report and Financial Statements for year ended 31st December 2024

11 Accounts receivable

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	2023
Income tax recoverable	2,788	0	2,788	3,386
Electricity refund	550	0	550	492
Parish Hall rental income	396	0	396	59
Other	554	0	554	534
Total	4,288	0	4,288	4,471

12 Accounts payable

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	2023
Parish share	0	0	0	0
Gas	1,447	0	1,447	1,312
Charitable giving	17,950	0	17,950	25,235
Other	2,531	0	2,531	1,355
Total	21,928	0	21,928	27,902

Accounts

**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL
of
ST MICHAEL and ST PAUL
ALNWICK**

**Annual Report and
Financial Statements**

**for the year ended
31st December 2023**

**Incumbent
Revd Christian Mitchell**

**St Michael's Vicarage
Howling Lane
Alnwick, NE66 1DH**

**Bank
Barclays Bank plc
Alnwick**

**Independent Examiner
Mr George Clark FCPFA**

Registered Charity Number 1131297

Annual Report of the Parish of St Michael and St Paul, Alnwick 2023

Parochial Church Council 2023

The PCC is the governing body of the parish of St Michael and St Paul Alnwick. The PCC is a team made up of members of clergy and lay members of the church. Together they are responsible for the overall wellbeing, practical as well as spiritual, of their church, the church members, and the church buildings. The PCC also has a duty to promote the mission of the church within the wider community.

The PCC is also responsible for the internal maintenance and running of the Parish Hall. The Hall is leased from the Northumberland Estate which is responsible for the external fabric.

Ex officio members:

Chairman: Mrs Jean Darby (to 12th May 2023)
Revd Christian Mitchell (from 13th May 2023)

Churchwardens: Mrs Pat Taylor and Mrs Anne Blades (to 20th March 2023)
Vacant since 20th March 2023

Deanery Synod Members: (elected in 2023 for 3 years)

Mrs Annette Playle	Mrs Jean Darby
Mrs Patricia Tweed	Mrs Pat Taylor (to 20 th March 2023)

Elected Members:

Mrs Rosie Buxton	(re-elected in 2022 for 3 years)
Mr Richard Allsop	(re-elected in 2023 for 3 years)
Mr John Cooke	(re-elected in 2021 for 3 years)
Mr Richard Dale	(re-elected in 2023 for 3 years)
Mrs Judy Jobson	(elected in 2022 for 3 years)
Mrs Susan O'Neill	(re-elected in 2023 for 3 years)
Mr Henry Playle	(re-elected in 2023 for 3 years)
Mrs Susan Trafford	(elected in 2023 for 3 years)

PCC Officers:

Vice Chairman:	Mrs Jean Darby
PCC Secretary:	Mrs Rosie Buxton
PCC Treasurer:	Mr Richard Dale

Assistant Church Wardens:

Mrs Pat Tweed
One vacancy

PCC Committees and other groups:

The Standing Committee is the only committee required by law. It has the power to transact the business of the PCC between meetings (subject to any directions given by the Council). Its members are Revd Christian Mitchell (from 13th May 2023), Mrs Jean Darby, Mr Richard Dale, Mr Henry Playle (from 20th March 2023), Mrs Pat Taylor (to 20th March 2023) and Mrs Anne Blades (to 20th March 2023).

Parochial Church Council of St Michael and St Paul, Alnwick
Annual Report and Financial Statements for year ended 31st December 2023

Clergy with permission to Officiate:

Revd Canon Sue Allen, Revd Canon Philip Bourne, Revd Robert Chavner, Revd Martin Roff

Readers:

Mr John Cooke, Mrs Annette Playle, Ms Sal Howard

Safeguarding Officer

Dr Patty Everitt

Church attendance:

Statistics as reported to the Diocese for 2023 (2022 figures in brackets where available)

Baptisms	15 (15)
Confirmation	0 (0)
Weddings	6 (4)
Funerals	25 (26) in Church, and 4 (6) at the crematorium or cemetery only.

Average attendance: 95 adults and 7 child (93 adults and 1 child)

Christmas: 126 communicants, 486 attendees (76 communicants, 81 attendees)

Easter: 84 communicants, 99 attendees (85 communicants, 97 attendees)

People in our "worshipping community" at the end of 2023:

Total	Children (Age 0-15)	Adults (Age 16+)
84	3	81

Review of the Year 2023

The Parochial Church Council

Volunteers:

We would like to thank all the volunteers who work so tirelessly to make our church the lively, welcoming and vibrant community that it is. There are many committees carrying out work in a variety of areas and many parishioners are members of more than one group. Without everybody's contribution we would not be able to keep the church running.

Church and School Links:

The links between the Church and St Michael's C of E Primary School remain strong. The foundation governors are John Cooke, Victoria Molnar-Brown and Katja Purvis.

Communication:

The Church Web Site is www.alnwickanglican.com. It contains information about service times, church location, activities accessibility, and contact details. There are also details about the history of St Michael's and information about Denwick Chapel and the parish hall. In addition, there are weekly pew sheets, photographs and details of events. The parish magazine, 'Gateway', is normally published every month.

Parochial Church Council of St Michael and St Paul, Alnwick
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Deanery Synod – Annette Playle

We last met on 24th February 2024 and there was a further update on the Deanery Development Plan which is focusing on Building, Growing younger, Governance, Generous Giving and Lay training.

To enable these groups to work successfully Synod are still looking for volunteers to join these teams, if you think this is something you would like to get involved in and are on the Electoral Role, then please speak to Mitch, Annette Playle, Jean Darby or Pat Tweed.

As a Deanery Synod we have been focusing on sharing talents, ideas and resources. The February meeting concentrated on how we engage children. Mitch spoke about Mini Michaels which takes place each Thursday morning during term-time and representatives of Amble church spoke about 'Experience Easter' which is now in its 10th year. School children visit the church which is set in stations and learn in a fun, interactive way the importance of Easter as they watch the story being acted out. Representatives from Chevington parish described their visits to the schools there with workshops at Easter and Christmas; this is a growing ministry which feeds into Messy mornings in their church.

Safeguarding – Patty Everitt

The PCC believes that it has complied with its duty to have 'due regard' to the House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy and Practice Guidance.

Introduction:

As a church we want to welcome all those who come through our church doors. We want to make sure, in the best way we can, that we are a people who create a safe and respectful place for all who come to us and all those with whom we come into contact.

Our commitment to safeguarding is demonstrated by and led through the church leadership and the church officers: the Incumbent, Retired Clergy and Readers certainly, but mainly through the leadership shown by the PCC.

The Parish Dashboard:

The PCC continues to support our commitment to the House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy and Practice Guidance. Through the dedication of our volunteers who take seriously their safeguarding training and take steps to provide a safe physical environment too, we have reached Level 3 on the Parish Dashboard. This is a significant achievement to be celebrated!

At Level 3 we know we have in place the policies and procedures and, importantly, the ways of working that help us to keep on being the safe and welcoming place we already are and support us as we continue, confidently, to build our presence in the local community. Our work this year will be to make sure we maintain our position at Level 3 and build on our achievements.

Safeguarding Training:

Safeguarding training is available online, but it is often a richer and more fun experience to train with someone else or together as a group.

**Parochial Church Council of St Michael and St Paul, Alnwick
Annual Report and Financial Statements for year ended 31st December 2023**

This year some of our volunteers have chosen to work through the safeguarding training material with me rather than completing it online. It really is a pleasure to do this, and I will continue to offer this training option this year.

In 2024 there will be organised group safeguarding training events for new volunteers or those who are refreshing part of their training. Training dates will be included in the Pew Sheet when they have been decided.

Of course, online training remains an option when this is more convenient.

Parish Incidents:

There have been no safeguarding incidents reported during the year.

Thanks:

We are grateful to all our volunteers who commit themselves, their time and effort to understanding what safeguarding is, and maintaining an environment where the vulnerable, particularly children, can experience the love and presence of God with those they meet.

Questions?

If you have any questions or concerns about what safeguarding is or how to access training or what volunteering in any capacity would mean, please talk to Patty Everitt!

If you would like to find out more about what a Parish Safeguarding Officer does or about being a Parish Safeguarding Officer, again please talk to Patty Everitt!

Fabric – *Jean Darby and Henry Playle*

There were three highlights of 2023 regarding the fabric of the church:

- A legacy from Margaret McFarlane provided a new Laudian for the high altar in purple silk and contributions from her family and the congregation added a matching pulpit fall, an aumbry curtain and a Bible marker ribbon. These were blessed at the Parish Eucharist on Advent Sunday in the presence of Lorraine McFarlane, Margaret's daughter.
- Carved oak candle holders for the nave altar, designed by George Ives and made by Andrew Beckwith were gifted by Sue Porteous in memory of her husband Trevor. They were blessed during Parish Eucharist with Sue and close friends of Trevor's present.
- The long-awaited arrival of the oak cabinet to house the lead graffiti. The soft glow of the interior lighting draws people to the exhibits. We look forward to a sensitive locking system which will allow sufficient security to publicise the graffiti and widen the possibilities of interpretation.

There have been significant changes to lighting both in the church and in the churchyard. All the interior light bulbs have been exchanged for greater brightness and reduced expense. A timer has been installed to allow the lights to be lit to allow greater safety on the uneven drives to the church.

A fault with the electric blower for the organ was repaired although major work will be required to restore the instrument fully. We were fortunate in being able to hire at very short notice an electronic organ from Allen Organs which proved invaluable over the Christmas

Parochial Church Council of St Michael and St Paul, Alnwick
Annual Report and Financial Statements for year ended 31st December 2023

season. Costs were covered by an organ recital by Linden Innes-Hopkins and donations from the congregation.

Capping stones which had fallen off the wall to the rear of the north side of the church into the grounds of the Parish Hall below have been retrieved and replaced.

The electrical devices and the fire extinguishers have been tested and the boiler has been serviced.

Tower – *Jim Crowther*

Bell Fabric:

Time flies, the bells and their framework/fittings are 2 years old. Thanks to a new tower roof and heavy sound control on the inside of all 4 louvres the belfry is weather tight which means no ingress of bird mess, autumn leaves or rain/snow. This, in turn, protects the bell frame, fittings and the bells. Consequently, no major bell maintenance or restoration costs should be anticipated for at least 50 years, other than nominal running costs e.g. bell ropes which are easily covered by donations from local and visiting ringers.

Bellringing Visitors:

Although there are over 5,000 church towers in England with a peal of bells, only 15 of them are in Northumberland. This statistic, coupled with Alnwick being a popular holiday destination, has created a significant number of ringing visitors throughout the year, this high level of ringing visitors was never anticipated. The good tonal quality of the St. Michael's bells along with the friendly welcome given by the local ringers have also been major factors, these combinations have quickly given the tower a national reputation! During 2023, apart from numerous holiday bellringers, St. Michael's tower had visits from the ringers of Sheffield, Durham and Exeter Cathedrals as well as St. Paul's, London.

Service Ringing:

This has always been a priority and was largely achieved during 2023 by the local band and visiting ringers. Other services and occasions have also been rung for, e.g. the coronation of H.M. King Charles III.

The Local Ringers:

The local ringers have become a strong social group without divisions. For example, Alnwick bells are perfectly "hung" and require minimal physical strength, consequently the band has an equal mix of females/males, ages range from 10 years to 80 years plus.

Tutors:

Four principal tutors travel from Shilbottle and Slaley, they have, between them, some 200 years of "bellringing know how" to ensure that pupils are taught properly and safely.

Ringling Times:

Apart from ringing after Sunday Morning Service, generally practice on Wednesday afternoon and evening, occasionally on Saturdays and other ad hoc times. Members of the congregation, their families and friends are encouraged to visit the belfry by contacting Jean Darby.

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South Aisle Exhibition – Jean Darby, Project coordinator

The bespoke cabinet to house the graffiti brought down from the roof is now in place alongside the two medieval bells and the Flemish chest. Because the cabinet is sensitively lit it is drawing more people to look at the exhibits. The display in the top of the cabinet is changed regularly and there is information and some basic activities available. We recognize that promoting interpretation of the graffiti could be the catalyst for a wider interpretation of the church as a whole. For this reason, we have engaged Jo Scott, an interpretive expert, and Katherine Williams, a fundraiser, to help us proceed professionally. As the result of detailed consultation with Jo, the aims for the interpretation of the graffiti and its associated stories are to:-

- Help make visitors and local people feel welcome, whatever their reason for visiting
- Encourage and engage target audiences with the graffiti and the stories it tells about local people, the church and town
- Convey the key messages about the graffiti: its significance and its relevance and connections to people past, present and future
- Ensure that this interpretation fits within a wider strategic vision for the church as a whole

We anticipate that exciting developments to encourage this will be in place in time for the summer visitors 2024.

Foundation Governor – John Cooke

Our school formally joined the Northumberland Church of England Academy Trust (NCEA) on 1st July 2023.

Celebrating the successful outcomes from our OFSTED and SIAMS inspections in 2022 which gave the school a Good rating, our staff are now working on the improvements highlighted in the report. The results of the July 2023 Key Stage 2 SATS were the best the school has ever achieved with at least 65% of the cohort achieving the standard in Reading, Writing and Maths. Our disadvantaged learners achieved particularly well which was a credit to the children and the staff supporting them.

The number of SEND pupils and pupils with English as an additional language within the school is increasing, and we have had valuable additional support from the Academy to help our children towards achieving their potential. The school is now working very closely with the families using the Family Hub to increase the number of children in early years.

Mission Group – Annette Playle

A small sub-group met and made recommendations to the PCC for distribution of our missing giving budget for 2023. The monies were divided between the following after approval from the PCC:

Gallery Youth	£1,000
Alnwick Food Bank	£1,000
*A particular need for St Michael's School	£2,500
Ignite	£ 785
Total	£5,285

*St. Michael's school are receiving the largest portion of our giving because the school is desperate for Early Years imaginative play resources for their two to five year old pupils to support development of early language skills.

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Messy Church – Jane Brown

Messy Church has continued to run monthly throughout the year except for July and August. We do not run Messy Church in July and August because our number of families attending drops over the summer term and it gives time for the team to have a break.

We have had two new volunteers - Sal Howard and Susan O'Neill who have helped our Messy team. Sue Wiltshire, Eve Jarvis and Carol Roth along with the team, provide food each month. Our numbers each month vary from 18 to 32 children (plus accompanying adults) since September. Our sessions include welcoming hot drink for adults, storytime, songs, crafts, and sharing a meal together.

It would be great to continue to see regular families come each month.

Mini Michael's – Pat Tweed

Mini Michaels goes on every week during term time in church every Thursday at 9.30am for 1 hour 30mins as it has done now for ten years.

We had our tenth birthday celebration in October and invited former leaders and members of the church who had helped in any way with the group over the years. It was a super morning with lots of fun and laughter and some very silly photographs.

We also had to allow Alan to step down as our leader at Christmas but have persuaded him to come along as a 'helper'. He has now been taught how to serve tea and coffee!! Seriously though he has done sterling work with the group since it started and we are very grateful for everything he has achieved. I know he will say that it's not just him and I know that's true but we, the rest of the helpers, have relied on him and we would like him to know how much he has been (and still is) appreciated.

Our numbers have stalled a little over this winter but we still have a good number each week and it continues to give joy to mums, grandparents and of course our lovely little ones. They give us great Thursday mornings and we always leave with a smile on our faces.

Our annual plea for more helpers still stands!

St Michael's on-line - Revd Sue Allen

First Sunday Eucharist:

The First Sunday service was suspended in May 2023 and work is ongoing to introduce a replacement in 2024.

Livestreamed Sunday Worship:

A small team works the Sound and Camera to ensure that the 10am Parish Communion is available online. It is very much appreciated by those who are unable to attend church in person, as it enables them to continue to feel part of the St Michael's community. The service is normally watched live by around a dozen people, and with those who watch later it is seen by around 20 people each week. A recorded version is also taken into one of the local Care Homes and watched in the Lounge there.

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Zoom Compline on Thursday evenings:

Around 9 people attend regularly for this more interactive service which includes intercessions, and lasts about half an hour.

Sunday Zoom Cuppa and Chat:

This monthly gathering is usually held on the first Sunday. It gathers those who are housebound, as well as those out and about locally, and includes contributions from USA. Each person is invited to catch up on their news and to share ideas, normally around a theme. The session finishes with a short prayer which all can join in.

Sidespersons

There is a group of parishioners who willingly give of their time and energy to be sidespersons, readers and intercessors. Those who have volunteered are on a rota which is put together every three months. If you would like to be on this rota please speak to Sal Howard.

The Mothers' Union – *Anne Cooke*

The Mothers' Union meets on the second Wednesday of the month at 2pm in church. Our year finishes in December with the Deanery Advent service which is open to members and non-members alike. We do not meet in the months of January and February.

Our meetings start with a short service to include a Bible reading and occasionally a hymn. The business part of the meeting comes next when we discuss anything that needs to be done within our branch and we hear of any news from the Deanery or Diocese.

This year we have admitted two new members and have had some important birthdays. We had a most enjoyable visit in November from Ann Cairns the Vice President who talked to us about her nursing career and her journey through Mothers' Union. We remain a small friendly group at a time when MU branches are having to close and so would welcome any new members. You don't have to be a mother or indeed a female to join MU, so don't be shy, come along and give us a try.

Eco Church – *Annette Playle*

As mentioned in last years' APCM we are now the proud holders of Eco Church bronze status for St. Michael's church. With PCC approval, we are hoping to get a plaque to put in church so that we have a visual acknowledgement in order that people become more aware of the work being undertaken to make our church and the surrounding churchyard eco-friendly. The next target is to reach the silver award. We are always happy for people to join the Eco team and if this is of interest to you, please do speak to either Mitch, Annette or Sue Wiltshire. After meeting with Mitch on 5th March, we have put some ideas together to bring the environment issues more to the fore beginning with a coffee morning in June.

As part of the Alnwick Deanery Environmental Group (ADEG), our last meeting was held in February, where part of the discussion was to hold on the first Sunday Deanery Evensong service an environmental themed service, which is being held on Sunday 2nd June at Whittingham church. I am also attending a workshop on Saturday 27th April entitled "Inspired by Creation" which I hope will be beneficial to our church

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Churchyard Project – Sue Allen

The group received a gift of wildflower seeds from Alnwick in Bloom, and these were sown by Messy Church. Apart from ongoing maintenance and continuing efforts from Ant Allen to subdue the nettles, there is little else to report from 2023. There are plans for the Churchyard project to be integrated into the ongoing Eco Church project.

Social events – Pat Taylor

We have held two ceilidhs in the church hall during the past year. The first one was the night before our Harvest Thanksgiving. Gavin brought a ceilidh band from school and Catherine from Rothbury was an excellent caller. Supper, consisting of sausages in buns, was provided and enjoyed!

The second ceilidh was held around Burns night and poetry from Robbie Burns was enjoyed. Both social events were well attended and very enjoyable.

The annual Winter Market was held in November in church. It was an excellent community event as well as a good fund raiser. Two of our younger members are interested in planning and organising social events so hopefully we can get back to holding more events this year.

Financial review – Richard Dale, PCC Treasurer

Financially, this was a very unusual year for the Parish and for the reasons set out below 2024 will be a similarly unusual year.

Two very large donations have been received from the Bill Hugonin Trust: £85,000 in December 2023 (reported in the 2023 accounts) and £318,000 in January 2024 (which will be reported in the 2024 accounts). Last year's donation was used to complete funding for the South Aisle project; reduce the loan balance funding the Tower project, provide funding for a lasting tribute to Daphne and Bill and work to develop the church's branding and website; and to start a development fund for the future (which may in time include a pump priming donation to a potential Friends of St Michael's). This year's donation will be added to this development fund.

Very sadly, we learned of the death in January 2024 of Richard Allsop. Under the terms of his £120,000 loan to the church, which was used to fund repairs to the tower, this loan was converted to a restricted donation to the Tower Fund on his death which means that the Tower project is now fully funded.

These two amazing examples of generosity have had a very significant impact on our financial position. We no longer have the liability of a loan to repay on our balance sheet (although as you will see from the balance sheet, the loan was still in place at 31st December 2023) and we now have a development fund totalling some £390,000 which we can use to invest for the future of our church. We have much to be thankful for.

Against this backdrop, it is important to draw out that the General Fund recorded a deficit of £2,534 in 2023 reducing the balance from £6,475 to £3,941. This was in turn distorted by a couple of offsetting one-off items – a back dated claim from the Governments Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme (£4,658) and a transfer of £4,000 from the General Fund to the Tower Fund to start to repay the loan balance during 2023.

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Adjusting for these two items, the underlying General Fund deficit was £3,192.

Reported General Fund deficit	£2,534
Less: Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme	- £4,658
Add: Tower Fund transfer	£4,000
Underlying General Fund deficit	£3,192

The underlying deficit is caused by a progressive loss of regular giving, as people have died or moved away from the parish, which has not been offset by increased giving or new arrivals. For several reasons we have not had a focused generous giving campaign for some years, but we will need to address this during 2024. The impact of this lower income has been mitigated by lower Parish Share payments to the Diocese (in turn funded by the Diocese selling off surplus property) but we now need to significantly increase our Parish Share payments if the Diocese is to be able to maintain current levels of stipendiary clergy and mission activity. Our parish is not alone in this challenge.

As you will be aware, energy prices have stabilised from the very high levels seen early last year and our new photocopier is distinctly cheaper than its predecessor.

I am grateful to my Standing Committee colleagues for their support to me through the year. I want to thank our small band of counters who turn up every Monday morning to count the week's cash. We are also grateful to the many individuals and organisations who have continued to support us through this period.

Independent Examiner's Report

To the Parochial Church Council (PCC) of St Michael and St Paul, Alnwick

This report on the attached financial statements of the PCC of St Michael and St Paul for the year ended 31st December 2023 is in respect of an examination carried out in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 (the Regulations) and section 43 of the Charities Act 1993 (the Act).

Respective Responsibilities of the PCC and the Examiner

As members of the PCC you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements: you consider that the audit requirement under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 does not apply and that an independent examination is needed.

Basis of this report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 43(7) of the Act and to be found in the Church guidance, 2006 edition. That examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the PCC and a comparison of the accounts with those records. It also includes considering any unusual items or disclosures in the financial statements and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent Examiners Statement

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

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 41 of the Act, and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Act.

have not been met;

2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

George Clark FCPFA
Independent Examiner

March 2024

g. Clark
15/3/2024

Parochial Church Council of St Michael and St Paul, Alnwick
Annual Report and Financial Statements for year ended 31st December 2023

Statement of Financial Activities
For the period 1st January to 31st December 2023

	Note	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	Total Funds	2022
Incoming Resources						
Incoming resources from generated funds						
Voluntary income	2	171,409	23,712	0	195,121	119,431
Fundraising	3	24,471	0	0	24,471	26,530
Income from investments		448	3,639	0	4,087	2,983
Incoming resources from charitable activities						
Church activities	4	8,022	0	0	8,022	8,078
Other incoming resources		28	0	0	28	184
Total Incoming Resources		204,378	27,351	0	231,729	157,206
Resources used						
Cost of generating funds						
Cost of generating voluntary income	5	738	450	0	1,188	164
Fundraising costs	6	16,183	1,244	0	17,427	10,932
Church activities						
Parish Share		67,700	0	0	67,700	72,300
Church running expenses	7	39,345	14,733	0	54,078	283,024
Charitable giving	8	5,666	0	0	5,666	6,900
Governance costs	9	902	0	0	902	952
Total Resources Used		130,534	16,427	0	146,961	149,292
Transfers between funds		(4,000)	4,000	0	0	0
Net Incoming/Outgoing Resources		69,844	14,924	0	84,768	7,915
Balances Brought Forward		9,167	43,936	51,350	104,453	96,538
Balances Carried Forward						
General Funds		3,941	0	0	3,941	6,475
Designated Funds		75,070	0	0	75,070	2,692
Restricted Funds		0	58,860	51,350	110,210	95,286
Total		79,011	58,860	51,350	189,221	104,453

Parochial Church Council of St Michael and St Paul, Alnwick
Annual Report and Financial Statements for year ended 31st December 2023

Balance Sheet as at 31st December 2023

	Note	2023 £	2022 £
Fixed Assets			
Tangible assets	10	154,546	158,828
Forster Bequest Capital		40,640	40,640
		195,186	199,468
Current Assets			
Barclays Community Account		(60)	6,544
Barclays Business Premium Account		98,798	33,550
Cash in hand		0	0
CBF Fabric Capital account		10,710	10,710
CBF Fabric Income account		28,035	24,396
Accounts receivable (Debtors)	11	4,471	13,103
		141,954	88,303
Accounts payable (Creditors)	12	27,919	33,318
Loans		120,000	150,000
Total assets		189,221	104,453
Represented by			
Balance at 1st January 2023		104,453	96,538
Surplus/(Deficit) for year		84,768	7,915
Balance at 31st December 2023		189,221	104,453
Distribution of total equity by funds			
Unrestricted funds			
General Fund		3,941	6,475
Designated Funds		75,070	2,693
Restricted funds			
Fabric Fund	26,497		32,616
Parish Hall Fund	6,524		5,097
Church Tower Fund	25,839		6,222
Endowment funds		58,860	43,935
Forster Bequest	40,640		40,640
D E Reavell Fund	10,000		10,000
A Hogg Fund	710		710
		51,350	51,350
		189,221	104,453

Approved by the Parochial Church Council on 12th March 2024 and signed on its behalf by:

Christian Mitchell

Revd Christian Mitchell
Chair

R Dale

Richard Dale
PCC Treasurer

Notes to the financial statements For the year ended 31st December 2023

1 Accounting policies

1.1 General

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

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention. The financial statements include all transactions, assets and liabilities for which the PCC is responsible in law. They do not include the accounts of church groups that owe their main affiliation to another body (e.g. the Mothers' Union), nor those that are informal gatherings of church members.

1.2 Funds

Endowment funds are funds, the capital of which must be retained either permanently or at the PCC's discretion; the income derived from the endowment is to be used either as restricted or unrestricted funds depending on the purpose for which the endowment was established in the first place.

The parish's endowment funds consist of:

- The Forster Bequest. The capital for this fund is held by The Newcastle Diocesan Society and is invested in The Investment Fund of the Central Board of Finance of the Church of England. The book cost is as shown on the Balance Sheet (£40,640) and its market value at 31st December 2023 was £90,914 (2022: £83,096).
- The Fabric Capital Fund (CBF 625063004D). This consists of the D E Reavell Fund (£10,000) and the Alan Hogg Fund (£710).

The income from all these funds is paid into The Fabric Income Account (CBF 625063003D) which is a **Restricted fund** (see below) and is only available towards the maintenance and repair of the fabric of St Michael's Church, Alnwick as the Vicar and churchwardens in their absolute discretion think fit. This was laid down by those who gave the endowments.

Restricted funds represent (a) income from trusts or endowments which may be expended only on those restricted purposes intended by the donor, and (b) revenue donations or grants for a specific PCC activity intended by the donor. Where these funds have unspent balances, interest on their pooled investment is apportioned to the individual funds on an average balance basis.

Unrestricted funds are income funds which are to be spent on the PCC's general purposes.

Designated Funds are **unrestricted** funds set aside by the PCC for a specific purpose. They may be "undesignated" by the PCC at any time.

Parochial Church Council of St Michael and St Paul, Alnwick
Annual Report and Financial Statements for year ended 31st December 2023

1.3 Receipts

Planned giving, collections and donations are recognised when received. Tax refunds are recognised when the incoming resource to which they relate is received. Grants and legacies are accounted for when the PCC is entitled to the use of the resource, their ultimate receipt is considered reasonably certain and the amounts due are reliably quantifiable.

Dividends are accounted for when declared receivable, and interest as and when accrued by the payer. All incoming resources are accounted for Gross.

1.4 Payments

Grants and donations are accounted for when paid over, or when awarded if that award creates a binding or constructive obligation on the PCC. The diocesan parish share is accounted for as and when (and if) it is paid. All other expenditure is generally recognised when it is incurred and is accounted for gross.

1.5 Fixed assets

Consecrated and benefice property is not included in the accounts in accordance with sections 10(2)(a) and (c) of the Charities Act 2011.

Moveable church furnishings held by the vicar and churchwardens on special trust for the PCC and which require a faculty for disposal are inalienable property listed in the church's inventory which can be inspected at any reasonable time.

Office equipment and similar items used within the church premises are written off when the asset is acquired.

Capitalised assets are stated at cost and depreciated over their expected useful life as follows:

Parish Hall boiler	10 years
Church bells	50 years

Investments are valued at historical cost with a note of the value at 31st December if available.

1.6 Current assets and liabilities

Amounts owed to the PCC on 31st December are shown as "Accounts Receivable" commonly referred to as Debtors. Amounts owed by the PCC on 31st December are shown as "Accounts Payable" and are commonly known as Creditors.

Short term deposits are held either at Barclays or with the Central Board of Finance of the Church of England.

1.7 Staff costs

During the year the PCC paid an honorarium to a parish hall caretaker and fees and expenses to two organists. None of these persons are members of the PCC.

Fees were also paid to organists and vergers in respect of Occasional Offices (funerals, weddings etc) but these amounts do not form part of these financial statements.

Parochial Church Council of St Michael and St Paul, Alnwick
Annual Report and Financial Statements for year ended 31st December 2023

2 Voluntary income

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	2022
Regular giving				
Gift Aid	42,306	0	42,306	45,192
Non Gift Aid	3,281	0	3,281	3,229
Parish Giving Scheme	17,409	0	17,409	15,859
Income tax recovered	23,766	0	23,766	16,157
Sub-total	86,762	0	86,762	80,437
Collections				
Regular services	3,125	0	3,125	2,443
Occasional services	2,350	0	2,350	3,820
Sub-total	5,475	0	5,475	6,263
Legacies	72,145	13,455	85,600	1,000
Donations and grants	7,027	10,257	17,284	31,731
Total	171,409	23,712	195,121	119,431

3 Fundraising

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	2022
Fundraising activities				
Winter Market	2,435	0	2,435	2,084
Market stalls	0	0	0	1,119
Flower Festival	0	0	0	941
Other events	836	0	836	840
Sub-total	3,271	0	3,271	4,984
Parish Hall	18,189	0	18,189	18,480
Magazine	1,073	0	1,073	1,256
Catering income	286	0	286	240
Other	1,652	0	1,652	1,570
Total	24,471	0	24,471	26,530

4 Church activities

This income relates to PCC fees relating to weddings and funerals. During 2023, we collected £2,108 for weddings (2022: £1,524) and £5,914 (2022: £6,554) for funerals. Fees for clergy, vergers and organists are handled by the PCC on an agency basis and are excluded from these accounts.

Parochial Church Council of St Michael and St Paul, Alnwick
Annual Report and Financial Statements for year ended 31st December 2023

5 Cost of generating voluntary income

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	2022
Fundraising expenses	608	450	1,058	727
Planned giving expenses	130	0	130	116
Total	738	450	1,188	843

6 Fundraising costs

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	2022
Parish Hall				
Gas, electricity and water	9,533	0	9,533	6,429
Maintenance	832	0	832	2,554
Caretaker	4,200	0	4,200	4,200
Depreciation	0	1,244	1,244	1,244
Other expenses	1,418	0	1,418	1,097
Sub-total	15,983	1,244	17,227	15,524
Other	200	0	200	439
Total	16,183	1,244	17,427	15,963

7 Church running expenses

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	2022
Church				
Gas, electricity and water	12,819	0	12,819	13,794
Insurance	6,740	0	6,740	6,181
Repairs and maintenance	1,425	232	1,657	3,201
Refurbishment	1,447	11,463	12,910	19,056
Wine, wafers and candles	682	0	682	489
Organists	1,905	0	1,905	920
Organ maintenance	2,438	0	2,438	1,392
Worship	1,957	0	1,957	1,396
Depreciation	0	3,038	3,038	3,038
Other costs	976	0	976	123
Sub-total	30,389	14,733	45,122	49,590
Clergy				
Council Tax	2,369	0	2,369	(91)
Expenses and other costs	1,247	0	1,247	60
Sub-total	3,616	0	3,616	(31)
Administration				
Photocopier	3,418	0	3,397	4,731
Office supplies etc	1,199	0	1,199	1,101
Telephone and internet	723	0	723	694
Sub-total	5,340	0	5,340	6,526
Total	39,345	14,733	54,078	56,085

Parochial Church Council of St Michael and St Paul, Alnwick
Annual Report and Financial Statements for year ended 31st December 2023

8 Charitable giving

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Giving	2022 from PCC Funds
St Michael's School	2,500	0	2,500	2,000
Alnwick Foodbank	1,000	0	1,000	1,000
Gallery Youth	1,000	0	1,000	0
Contagious	785	0	785	1,000
Children's Society	381	0	381	0
Alnwick Community Centre	0	0	0	1,000
Crisis Newcastle	0	0	0	500
West End Refugee Service	0	0	0	500
Ukrainian Refugees	0	0	0	450
Total	5,666	0	5,666	6,450

Special collections, donations and fundraising events which are specifically on behalf of another charity are not included in the accounts.

9 Governance costs

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	2022
Bank charges	582	0	582	622
Independent examination	180	0	180	180
Treasurer's expenses	140	0	140	150
Total	902	0	902	952

10 Tangible fixed assets

	Church Bells	Parish Hall Boiler	Total Assets
Cost			
Balance at 1 st January 2023	151,915	12,438	164,353
Additions	0	0	0
Balance at 31 st December 2023	151,915	12,438	164,353
Depreciation			
Balance at 1 st January 2023	3,038	2,487	5,526
Charge for year	3,038	1,244	4,281
Balance at 31 st December 2023	6,076	3,731	9,807
Net Book Value at 31st December 2023	145,839	8,707	154,546

Parochial Church Council of St Michael and St Paul, Alnwick
Annual Report and Financial Statements for year ended 31st December 2023

11 Accounts receivable

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	2022
Income tax recoverable	3,386	0	3,386	12,244
Electricity refund	492	0	492	174
Parish Hall rental income	59	0	59	626
Other	534	0	534	50
Total	4,471	0	4,471	13,094

12 Accounts payable

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	2022
Parish share	0	0	0	7,300
Gas	1,312	0	1,312	3,258
Charitable giving	25,235	0	25,235	22,620
Other	1,355	0	1,355	140
Total	27,902	0	27,902	33,318

13 Events after the reporting period

In January 2024, the PCC received a final payment of £318,000 from the Trustees of the Hugonin Trust. This was credited to the Legacy Fund, an unrestricted but designated fund.

In January 2024, the loan of £120,000 on the balance sheet as at 31st December 2023 was converted to a restricted donation to the Tower Fund.

Both of these events were unknown at the end of the financial year and are therefore treated as non-adjusting post balance sheet events.

Accounts

**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL
of
ST MICHAEL and ST PAUL
ALNWICK**

**Annual Report and
Financial Statements**

**for the year ended
31st December 2022**

**Incumbent
Vacancy**

**St Michael's Vicarage
Howling Lane
Alnwick, NE66 1DH**

**Bank
Barclays Bank plc
Alnwick**

**Independent Examiner
Mr George Clark FCPFA**

Registered Charity Number 1131297

Annual Report of the Parish of St Michael and St Paul, Alnwick 2022

Parochial Church Council 2022

The PCC is the governing body of the parish of St Michael and St Paul Alnwick. The PCC is a team made up of members of clergy and lay members of the church. Together they are responsible for the overall wellbeing, practical as well as spiritual, of their church, the church members, and the church buildings. The PCC also has a duty to promote the mission of the church within the wider community.

The PCC is also responsible for the internal maintenance and running of the Parish Hall. The Hall is leased from the Northumberland Estate which is responsible for the external fabric.

Ex officio members:

Chairman: Revd Canon Paul Scott (until 31st January 2022)
 Mrs Jean Darby (from 1st February 2022)

Churchwardens: Mrs Pat Taylor Mrs Anne Blades

Deanery Synod Members: (elected in 2021 for 3 years)
 Mrs Annette Playle Mrs Jean Darby
 Mrs Patricia Tweed Mrs Pat Taylor

Elected Members:

Mrs Frances Allsop	(elected in 2022 for 3 years)
Mrs Rosie Buxton	(re-elected in 2022 for 3 years)
Mr Richard Allsop	(re-elected in 2020 for 3 years)
Mr Michael Carter	(elected in 2022 for 3 years)
Mr John Cooke	(re-elected in 2021 for 3 years)
Mr Richard Dale	(re-elected in 2020 for 3 years)
Mr George Ives	(elected in 2022, resigned 6 th December 2022)
Mrs Judy Jobson	(elected in 2022 for 3 years)
Mrs Lindsay Johnston	(elected in 2020 for 3 years)
Mrs Susan O'Neill	(elected in 2020 for 3 years)
Mr Henry Playle	(re-elected in 2020 for 3 years)

PCC Officers:

Vice Chairman:	Mrs Jean Darby
PCC Secretary:	Mrs Rosie Buxton
PCC Treasurer:	Mr Richard Dale

Assistant Church Wardens:

Mrs Pat Tweed
One vacancy

Attendance at PCC meetings:

Ten regular PCC meetings were held in 2022. The overall attendance was 72%.

PCC Committees and other groups:

The Standing Committee is the only committee required by law. It has the power to transact the business of the PCC between meetings (subject to any directions given by the Council). Its members are Revd Canon Paul Scott (until 31st January 2022), Mrs Pat Taylor, Mrs Anne Blades, Mrs Jean Darby and Mr Richard Dale.

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Clergy with permission to Officiate:

Revd Canon Sue Allen, Revd Canon Philip Bourne, Revd Robert Chavner, Revd Colin Perkins, Revd Martin Turner, Revd Martin Roff

Readers:

Mr John Cooke, Mrs Annette Playle

Safeguarding Officer

Dr Patty Everitt (until 7th December 2022)

The Area Dean is currently overseeing safeguarding issues in the Parish

Church attendance:

Statistics as reported to the Diocese for 2022 (2021 figures in brackets where available)

Baptisms	15 (13)
Confirmation	0 (5)
Weddings	4 (2)
Funerals	26 (22) in Church, and 6 (19) at the crematorium or cemetery only.

Average attendance: 93 adults and 1 child (123 adults and 5 children)

Christmas: 76 communicants, 81 attendees (85 communicants, 98 attendees)

Easter: 85 communicants, 97 attendees (76 communicants, 80 attendees)

People in our "worshipping community" at the end of 2022:

Total	Children (Age 0-10)	Young people (Age 11-17)	Adults (Age 18-69)	Adults (Age 70+)
110	0	3	29	78

Review of the Year 2022

Introduction

It has been another busy year for the St Michael's community with the key themes being living through our vacancy, getting back to normal after Covid and marking several key national and regional events.

Our former Vicar, Revd Paul Scott, retired at the end of January and we wish him and Jane well for the future. Our new Vicar Revd Christian Mitchell (Mitch) and his family will join us from East Sussex in May. The intervening 16 months have not been without challenge, but we have largely maintained our normal pattern of worship. We need to thank our retired clergy, our readers, our Area Dean and a number of visiting clergy who have supported us through that period. We have been particularly pleased to welcome friends from across the Deanery to a joint evensong on the first Sunday of each month.

Inevitably, a period of vacancy places increased pressures on the lay members of the community. The PCC wants to thank everyone who has helped us through that period and in particular our wonderful churchwardens Pat Taylor and Anne Blades. Some of the issues they have had to deal with have been very evident, but others are less so – Pat and Anne have given freely of their time and talent to ensure they were all handled sensitively and well.

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Despite continued public health concerns across the nation, we have continued to recover from the very real disruption to our church life caused by the Covid pandemic. Our services are much closer to the pattern seen before the pandemic including sung responses, clergy processions and normal coffee/tea after services. We continue to intinct wafers as we feel some way off being ready to return to the common cup and are still not using the High Altar. Our arrangements continue to be reviewed by the PCC and will no doubt change again after the arrival of our new Vicar.

The bellringers have made a particularly joyful contribution to our worship, and it has been good to see them develop through the year. We were pleased to see Messy Church and Mini Michael's both have a strong year – a vital part of our outreach to younger people. Parish Hall usage has recovered from the fall seen in the previous two years although it is still not back to 2019 levels. We saw a large number of occasional services - baptisms, wedding and funerals - during the year, the church was well filled for some of our major festivals, notably at Christmas, and our Denwick Chapel carol service was well attended. We held a very moving service for All Souls Day, greatly appreciated by all who attended. Our fundraising and social activities continued to resume, and we were particularly pleased to welcome back the Royal Northern Symphonia in December. The church was open during the summer afternoons and we were able to welcome a large number of visitors to our lovely building.

2022 was a momentous year for our country and the wider world. The political upheavals could only be a matter for our continued prayers but we played a more active role in some of the other landmark events of the year. The church was full for a special service to commemorate the late Queen's Platinum Jubilee and, sadly, only a few weeks later, it was open again for people to mourn her passing. Ukrainian refugees were rarely far from our minds and we are thankful for the generous welcome given to those who settled in Alnwick. The cost of living crisis, exacerbated by huge increases in energy prices, has been a huge challenge and we have continued to support our local foodbanks and warm hubs. We were pleased to welcome our new Bishop Helen-Ann to St Michael's on her first official visit to the diocese and we look forward to seeing her again for Mitch's installation in May.

The financial picture is challenging – we are starting to feel the impact of the loss of members of our community who have died or moved away in the last couple of years and are mindful of the extent to which we can ask others to make up the shortfall in the current climate. A number of recent legacies will provide breathing space for us but are not a sustainable way to fund the church for the future. This is a matter which will need our prayerful attention in the coming year.

Once again, the PCC wants to thank everyone for their help and support during the past year. Mitch's arrival in May will be a great opportunity for renewal and we pray that the Holy Spirit will continue to guide our work during 2023.

The Parochial Church Council

Volunteers:

We would like to thank all the volunteers who work so tirelessly to make our church the lively, welcoming and vibrant community that it is. There are many committees carrying out work in a variety of areas and many parishioners are members of more than one group. Without everybody's contribution we would not be able to keep the church running.

Church and School Links:

The links between the Church and St Michael's C of E Primary School remain strong. The foundation governors are John Cooke, Rosie Buxton, Victoria Molnar-Brown and Katja Purvis.

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Communication:

The Church Web Site is www.alnwickanglican.com. It contains information about service times, church location, activities accessibility, and contact details. There are also details about the history of St Michael's and information about Denwick Chapel and the parish hall. In addition, there are weekly pew sheets, photographs and details of events. The parish magazine, 'Gateway', is normally published every month.

Safeguarding

Newcastle Diocese is committed to safeguarding children, young people and adults and creating protective and supportive environments where all people, and especially those who may be vulnerable, are able to worship and pursue their faith journey in safety. It follows the national legal and procedural framework for safeguarding children and adults, and Church of England policy and practice. The PCC fully supports these aims.

The PCC is grateful to Patty Everitt, our former Safeguarding Advisor, for her dedicated attention to this role for an extended period of time. This involved supporting the PCC and others putting in place appropriate procedures and training and dealing with some complicated and, at times, quite stressful, individual cases which have also impacted other church officers. Patty stood down from this role on 7th December and the Area Dean is leading on safeguarding issues with day to day support from Henry Playle until we are able to appoint a successor. Safeguarding is a standing agenda item at each PCC meeting. We have agreed role descriptions for all the key positions within the church which will be the basis for future recruitment of volunteers and DBS checks are carried out on all relevant volunteers.

The PCC believes that it has complied with its duty to have 'due regard' to the House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy and Practice Guidance, although we recognise we still have more work to do in terms of completion of the required training for all impacted volunteers and to fully achieve Level 3 of the Church of England Safeguarding Dashboard.

Fabric – Anne Blades and Pat Taylor, Churchwardens

The Church Quinquennial Inspection took place on Wednesday 16th March 2022. No major problems were identified and smaller items mentioned in the report are in hand. We were advised not to use the two heaters in the parish room and parish office and these have been turned off. A new heater has been provided in the parish office.

PAT testing took place on 5th September 2022. Fire extinguishers in the church and Parish Hall were serviced on 26th October 2022.

The organ was tuned twice in the year - 26th April and 11th October. An old piano has been disposed of and our remaining piano has been tuned and fitted with castors.

Big Cleans were held in church on 9th April and 1st October. A weekly Cleaning Rota has been established for the toilet and Parish Room.

Tower – Jean Darby

It is now over a year since work finished on the installation of the bells and the restoration work on the tower.

In September the final inspection of the work on the tower was undertaken by the contractor and the architect and passed as being in good order.

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Unfortunately, it has been noticed that there is rusting on the face of the clock. This was reported to Cumbria Clocks in July but to date, despite being made aware of the situation more than once, they have not sent a rope engineer to look at the dial more closely to assess the damage. Hopefully this will be rectified when the weather improves in the spring.

The amount of ringing has surpassed all expectation. There is now a competent band of local ringers who are capable of ringing out the 10am service every Sunday. This has been achieved with much help from experienced ringers teaching novices and encouraging local ringers who had previous but not recent experience. There have been several visiting bands who have rung full peals or quarters. During the period between the Queen's death and her funeral 33 people rang in her memory. Quarter peals have been rung for the late Bill Hugonin and for the late Margaret Mc Farlane for which both families were very appreciative. Almost every week visitors from all parts of the country and indeed from further afield have attended the weekly practices. This new aspect of church life has certainly put St Michael's on the national map.

South aisle exhibition – Jean Darby, Project coordinator

Two of the larger pieces of graffiti are framed and mounted on the south wall and the two medieval bells brought down from the tower are also on display. These have all been of interest to the people of St Michael's and visitors alike.

Throughout the stewarding open season an outline of the project with explanations and illustrations was demonstrated through a slide show. This aroused the interest of many visitors.

In July there was an open drop-in day. All the graffiti which has been identified as essential to keep was displayed. Children from St Michael's school spent the morning in a range of activities devised by Katherine Williams. They were fascinated by what they saw, made some interesting suggestions, and asked probing questions. These were carried forward to the afternoon session when visitors from many diverse organisations in the town and from further afield dropped in to see this unique sample of the town's history. Many suggestions were made as to how the graffiti might be used as inspiration for community projects. Our thanks to Katherine and to Lorna Gilroy for all their help on the day. Later in the year an interview on Radio Newcastle and information on their website brought in further interest from around the county and another morning of viewing was made available.

We look forward in 2023 to having the cabinet to house the graffiti completed and to working on some of the many suggestions that have been made for interesting community projects. The exhibits of previously hidden items from St Michael's history are certainly beginning to bring the wider community to an awareness of the church in the town.

Foundation Governors' Report - Rosie Buxton, Secretary

A major development in 2021 was that of the proposal for St Michael's School to join the Northumberland Church of England Academy Trust (NCEAT) which offers support to schools by becoming part of a trust. A decision for this is expected within the next few weeks.

Throughout 2022 evidence of the school's aims have been always apparent; **Respect, Persevere and Achieve**. Every member of the school (both teacher and pupil) has worked tirelessly to improve every area of teaching and learning especially in the wake of Covid and the inherent problems to education. The School Improvement Plan is a tremendous example of what has been achieved this year.

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In the Autumn term an Ofsted inspection was followed two weeks later by a SIAMS inspection. They were deep robust inspections which were really challenging. Both came out strongly as GOOD with lots to be proud of. Both also offered some suggestions for areas that may benefit from improvement and these will be developed in the coming months.

The school vision inspires the curriculum development and the children demonstrate the end product.

Misslon Group

A small sub-group met and made recommendations to the PCC for distribution of our missing giving budget for 2022:

St. Michael's School	£2,000
Community Centre NE66	£1,000
Ignite (formerly Contagious)	£1,000
Alnwick Food Bank	£1,000
Ukrainian Refugees	£450
Crisis Newcastle	£500
West End Refuge Service	£500

Messy Church – Jane Brown

Messy Church occurs on the third Saturday every month (except August) from 11am to 12.30pm in church. There are eight regular volunteers who run Messy Church and we have three volunteers who have just started to help when they can. We also have two volunteers that help before Messy church with the preparation of cakes and soup. Children attend with an adult. Messy church has a regular routine – play with toys at the beginning, song time and bible story followed by crafts and a meal together.

Between March and June, the number of children attending averaged 10. Since October (we had no messy church for July, August and September) the number of children varied between 16 and 28. We are very pleased with this increase in numbers and hope that families continue to come regularly and feel that they are part of the church family.

Mini Michael's – Pat Tweed

As we approach our tenth year, Mini Michaels continues to flourish, with numbers still averaging around 25 children each week along with mums, grandparents and sometimes a dad or two.

Our helpers come along every week and do anything that needs to be done, serving tea and coffee, helping at the craft table if it gets too busy (the amazing craft ideas from Judy and Pam never fail to amaze us), generally chatting to mums and the setting up/clearing up at each session.

We have just bought a set of screens on which we are going to display the children's crafts and photographs, so anyone coming into church can see what the group is all about. We all get much joy from the group, the children never fail to brighten any day and if anyone wants to join us as a helper please do come along, you would be very welcome.

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First Sunday Eucharist - Revd Sue Allen

This service was initiated by Revds Paul Scott, Gerard Rundell and Sue Allen in July 2021, when morning services at St Michael's were reorganised after Lockdown. The intention was to provide worship that is more accessible to those unfamiliar with church, and especially to welcome families.

Since the departures of Paul and Gerard, Sue has taken responsibility for the organisation and delivery of First Sundays. Although it is sadly now unusual for children to be present, the greater informality and flexibility of the service is much appreciated by a significant number of those who attend, including those who would not otherwise be part of St Michael's. And it provides a wonderful opportunity to celebrate people's gifts, for example in music, art, craft, drama and cookery, as well as the more usual opportunities to read and lead prayers. Thanks to all concerned.

St Michaels's on-line events - Revd Sue Allen

Livestreaming.

The Sunday 10am services have continued to be livestreamed each week and are very much valued by those who are unable to attend worship in person. The technical hitches which were such a feature to begin with are now largely a thing of the past, thanks to all concerned and especially to Ant Allen. Our ability to livestream depends on a small group of faithful volunteers, and if anyone else would be willing to join they would be extremely welcome. Please contact Sue Allen via pineapple.sue@gmail.com

Compline

A weekly service of Compline has continued via zoom since the beginning of lockdown. It meets every Thursday evening, currently at 7pm. If anyone else would like to join please contact Annette via rene.p@btinternet.com

Zoom Cuppa

This happens once a month, normally on the first Sunday at 4pm, for a catch-up and a chat on zoom. It is a varied group of people, some housebound, and some out and about, and includes 2 regulars from USA. For more details please contact Sue Allen via pineapple.sue@gmail.com

Sidespersons – Pat Taylor

During the last year we have had nine people on the rota for sides people at the 10am Eucharist on Sunday mornings. Thank you to these reliable friends who carry out their duties carefully and diligently and welcome parishioners and friends to this service.

Since the pandemic and during the vacancy it has fallen to the Churchwardens to carry out this job for the other three services during the week: 8.30am and 6pm on Sunday and 10.15am on Wednesday. The congregations at these services are not huge and it would be very helpful if we could find someone to pick up the sidesperson's duties. It is good to have someone to make attendees feel welcome.

The Mothers' Union

Mothers Union meets on the second Wednesday of the month in the afternoon.

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We start our meeting with a short service, bible reading and very occasionally a hymn. The business part of the meeting comes next, usually discussing anything that needs to be done for the church or the members.

The social side comes next and we try to have something different each month. During the last year we have had some interesting meetings and one of the most enjoyable was the tea party we had for Queen Elizabeth's Jubilee. We decorated the church with red, white and blue, had rousing traditional music and a delicious feast of sandwiches, savouries and cake.

Our meetings are informal and friendly. We are a small group but find our time together very enjoyable.

We would welcome new members and contrary to popular belief you don't have to be a mother to join, you don't even have to be female!

Do think about joining us, we would love to see you.

Eco Church – Bronze Award – Annette Playle

Around two years ago, an Eco Church incentive was encouraged across the country. This was to make congregations aware of ways in which we can help to reduce waste, and to be more environmentally friendly. The incentive took off in St. Michaels under the guidance of our curate at the time, Gerard Rundall and Gilly Maude a retired priest. Once both Gerard and Gilly moved on to pastures new, the baton was handed to myself along with some willing helpers. I am happy to announce that we have now reached Bronze level.

The scheme is divided into five categories, which are:

1. Worship and Teaching
2. Building
3. Land
4. Community and Global Engagement
5. Lifestyle

In each category there are targets to attain, for instance, in the first heading Worship and Teaching, one is Special Sundays relating to caring for God's earth, another is the lighting in our church premises, under the buildings heading, we also offer eco tips in the pew sheet. We are using environmentally friendly products in our kitchen and toilet, and we have planted shrubs and bulbs at the north side of the church.

To attain bronze, we have had to address each area, and the aim is that we continue to work towards silver then gold, in each respectively. There is also a notice board at the back of church to see the progress we are all making.

Thank you for your support as we look forward to our continuing journey to a greener St. Michaels.

The Churchyard Project – Sue Allen

Results of earlier planting

The hedge saplings planted in autumn 2021 are doing well, with almost all of them showing good growth. The protective covers will remain on them to prevent rabbit damage. The bulbs planted in 2021 are coming up well again, with snowdrops in profusion and other bulbs showing signs of growth.

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Bird boxes

In April 2022 we hosted a very successful morning with children and leaders from the Community Centre @ NE66, assembling bird boxes from the kits painstakingly created by George Ives. Unfortunately, it was so successful that the children insisted on taking them all home! However more bird boxes have since been assembled from the left-overs, and should be up and ready for occupation in 2023.

Strategy for future plans

The Churchyard Group's proposal to zone the churchyard was accepted by the PCC. The south side will focus on welcoming people, with pretty flowers, seats, tubs etc. The north side will focus on being more welcoming for wildlife, with natural planting to attract insects and birds etc.

Cherry Trees

After gaining permissions from the Diocese and other bodies, members of the Churchyard Group were able to plant 8 Japanese flowering cherry trees on the south side of the church. These had been among a large number gifted to the Council. The assistance and advice from Janet Pibworth of the Town Council was much appreciated.

Nettles and wildflower seeds

An amazing number of nettles have been cleared, and wildflower seeds planted on the north side of the church by Ant Allen. This should allow for further planting this year.

Community Picnic

It had been hoped to host children from the Community Centre for a picnic in the churchyard during the school summer holidays, but unfortunately due to their staffing issues this was unable to take place. We hope to have another opportunity.

Future Plans

Key people involved in the Churchyard have also been covering extra duties during the Vacancy, and / or involved with Ukrainian refugees. It is hoped that later this year the momentum for progress in the churchyard will increase again.

Financial review - Richard Dale, PCC Treasurer

The financial results for 2021 were significantly impacted by the project to repair the church tower and to install the new peal of bells which used nearly all the Church Tower Fund built up in previous years to complete the building work.

By comparison 2022 was a more normal year. The Statement of Financial Activities shows net incoming resources for the year of £7,915 comprising:

General Fund	£1,242
Designated Funds	£2,693
Restricted Funds	£3,980

The increase in designated funds was due to legacies received during the year and donations from bellringers which are held in a fund to pay for future bell rope replacement.

The increase in restricted funds was due to interest income for our Fabric Fund and some additional fundraising for the Tower project. The income received for the Tower project allowed us to pay back £10,000 of the loan generously made to fund the project. However, there is still £150,000 of the loan to be repaid and this is a continuing matter which we need to focus on.

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Cash balances were boosted by receipt of historic Gift Aid claims from HMRC and we ended the year in sound shape with just over £40,000 in our two Barclays Bank accounts.

General Fund voluntary income declined by 15% year on year from £105,739 to £89,752. Most of this reduction was due to some very significant donations by supporters of the church in the prior year. Regular giving declined by 8% in the year, reflecting the loss of members of the congregation and pointing the need for a stewardship campaign later this year. However, this was offset by a healthy increase in collections at both regular and occasional services as lockdown restrictions were lifted during 2022.

General Fund fundraising income grew by 43% from £18,490 to £26,479. Fundraising was £1,829 better compared to 2021, reflecting the welcome returns of the flower festival and the Royal Northern Symphonia in December. Parish Hall income grew by 39% as usage recovered following Covid-19 lockdown closure but was still 15% lower than pre-Covid levels. Stall sales and magazine income also grew in the year as we returned to normality.

We were asked to contribute a minimum parish share of £65,000 in 2022 with a target to contribute £76,257. In the end, we were able to contribute £69,000, just over 90% of the target amount. In line with previous policy, our budget for charitable giving was reduced by a similar proportion with total giving in the year of £6,450, the allocation of which is listed in the Mission Group report.

There was a very sharp increase in utility costs in 2022 with church costs 38% higher and parish hall costs 61% higher. Some of this was driven by higher consumption due to higher levels of activity and a very cold December but, in common with others, we also saw a significant increase in charges for both gas and electricity. This is being partly mitigated at the moment by the Government's Business Energy Support Scheme and a grant from the Church Commissioners but the position from April 2023 onwards is highly uncertain. In the short term, we will benefit from being out of "heating season" but we have no understanding yet of the picture for next winter.

Repairs and maintenance costs for the church were 46% lower than 2021 due to the timing of repairs and a reasonably benign quinquennial inspection outcome but this was partly offset by higher maintenance costs for the parish hall.

Clergy expenses and Council Tax payments were negligible in the year due to the vacancy. Not surprisingly, we saw a significant increase in worship costs (including wine, wafers and candles) as activity returned to a normal level.

Looking ahead, 2023 should be reasonable due to some expected one off benefits from VAT refunds and legacies but the position for future years is more worrying. We have lost a number of members of our congregation which is impacting regular giving, we have seen a very significant increase in gas and electricity costs in recent months and we will see higher clergy related costs when our new Vicar arrives in May.

I am grateful to my Standing Committee colleagues for their support to me through another difficult year. We are also grateful to the many individuals and organisations who have continued to support us through this period – without their generosity the PCC's financial position would be far worse than we are able to report.

Independent Examiner's Report

To the Parochial Church Council (PCC) of St Michael and St Paul, Alnwick

This report on the attached financial statements of the PCC of St Michael and St Paul for the year ended 31st December 2022 is in respect of an examination carried out in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 (the Regulations) and section 43 of the Charities Act 1993 (the Act).

Respective Responsibilities of the PCC and the Examiner

As members of the PCC you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements: you consider that the audit requirement under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 does not apply and that an independent examination is needed.

Basis of this report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 43(7) of the Act and to be found in the Church guidance, 2006 edition. That examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the PCC and a comparison of the accounts with those records. It also includes considering any unusual items or disclosures in the financial statements and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent Examiners Statement

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

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 41 of the Act, and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Act.

have not been met;

2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



George Clark FCPFA
Independent Examiner

15th February 2023

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Statement of Financial Activities
For the period 1st January to 31st December 2022

	Note	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	Total Funds	2021
Incoming Resources						
Incoming resources from generated funds						
Voluntary income	2	92,574	26,857	0	119,431	299,029
Fundraising	3	26,530	0	0	26,530	19,534
Income from investments		5	2,978	0	2,983	2,418
Incoming resources from charitable activities						
Church activities	4	8,078	0	0	8,078	4,112
Other incoming resources		184	0	0	184	7
Total Incoming Resources		127,371	29,835	0	157,206	325,096
Resources used						
Cost of generating funds						
Cost of generating voluntary income	5	220	622	0	842	164
Fundraising costs	6	14,719	1,244	0	15,963	10,932
Church activities						
Parish Share		69,000	0	0	69,000	72,300
Church running expenses	7	33,070	24,015	0	56,085	283,024
Charitable giving	8	6,450	0	0	6,450	6,900
Governance costs	9	952	0	0	952	861
Total Resources Used		123,411	25,881	0	149,292	374,181
Transfers between funds		(26)	26	0	0	0
Net Incoming/Outgoing Resources		3,935	3,780	0	7,915	(49,085)
Balances Brought Forward		5,233	39,955	51,350	96,538	145,623
Balances Carried Forward		9,166	43,935	51,350	104,453	96,538

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Balance Sheet as at 31st December 2022

	Note	2022 £	2021 £
Fixed Assets			
Tangible assets	10	158,828	162,689
Forster Bequest Capital		40,640	40,640
		199,468	203,329
Current Assets			
Barclays Community Account		6,544	13,761
Barclays Business Premium Account		33,550	1,665
Cash in hand		0	0
CBF Fabric Capital account		10,710	10,710
CBF Fabric Income account		24,396	31,418
Accounts receivable (Debtors)	11	13,103	89,937
		88,303	147,491
Accounts payable (Creditors)	12	33,318	94,282
Loans		150,000	160,000
Total assets		104,453	96,538
Represented by			
Balance at 1st January 2022		96,538	145,623
Surplus/(Deficit) for year		7,681	(49,085)
Balance at 31st December 2022		104,219	96,538
Distribution of total equity by funds			
Unrestricted funds			
General Fund		6,475	5,233
Designated Funds		2,693	0
Restricted funds			
Fabric Fund	32,616		31,383
Parish Hall Fund	5,097		6,341
Church Tower Fund	6,222		2,055
Young People Activities Fund	0		176
		43,935	39,955
Endowment funds			
Forster Bequest	40,640		40,640
D E Reavell Fund	10,000		10,000
A Hogg Fund	710		710
		51,350	51,350
		104,453	96,538

Approved by the Parochial Church Council on 7th February 2023 and signed on its behalf by:

Jean Darby
Chair

R Dale

Richard Dale
PCC Treasurer

J. Darby

Notes to the financial statements For the year ended 31st December 2022

1 Accounting policies

1.1 General

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

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention. The financial statements include all transactions, assets and liabilities for which the PCC is responsible in law. They do not include the accounts of church groups that owe their main affiliation to another body (e.g. the Mothers' Union), nor those that are informal gatherings of church members.

1.2 Funds

Endowment funds are funds, the capital of which must be retained either permanently or at the PCC's discretion; the income derived from the endowment is to be used either as restricted or unrestricted funds depending on the purpose for which the endowment was established in the first place.

The parish's endowment funds consist of:

- The Forster Bequest. The capital for this fund is held by The Newcastle Diocesan Society and is invested in The Investment Fund of the Central Board of Finance of the Church of England. The book cost is as shown on the Balance Sheet (£40,640) and its market value at 31st December 2022 was £83,096 (2021: £94,182).
- The Fabric Capital Fund (CBF 625063004D). This consists of the D E Reavell Fund (£10,000) and the Alan Hogg Fund (£710).

The income from all these funds is paid into The Fabric Income Account (CBF 625063003D) which is a **Restricted fund** (see below) and is only available towards the maintenance and repair of the fabric of St Michael's Church, Alnwick as the Vicar and churchwardens in their absolute discretion think fit. This was laid down by those who gave the endowments.

Restricted funds represent (a) income from trusts or endowments which may be expended only on those restricted purposes intended by the donor, and (b) revenue donations or grants for a specific PCC activity intended by the donor. Where these funds have unspent balances, interest on their pooled investment is apportioned to the individual funds on an average balance basis.

Unrestricted funds are income funds which are to be spent on the PCC's general purposes.

Designated Funds are **unrestricted** funds set aside by the PCC for a specific purpose. They may be "undesigned" by the PCC at any time.

Parochial Church Council of St Michael and St Paul, Alnwick
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1.3 Receipts

Planned giving, collections and donations are recognised when received. Tax refunds are recognised when the incoming resource to which they relate is received. Grants and legacies are accounted for when the PCC is entitled to the use of the resource, their ultimate receipt is considered reasonably certain and the amounts due are reliably quantifiable.

Dividends are accounted for when declared receivable, and interest as and when accrued by the payer. All incoming resources are accounted for Gross.

1.4 Payments

Grants and donations are accounted for when paid over, or when awarded if that award creates a binding or constructive obligation on the PCC. The diocesan parish share is accounted for as and when (and if) it is paid. All other expenditure is generally recognised when it is incurred and is accounted for gross.

1.5 Fixed assets

Consecrated and benefice property is not included in the accounts in accordance with sections 10(2)(a) and (c) of the Charities Act 2011.

Moveable church furnishings held by the vicar and churchwardens on special trust for the PCC and which require a faculty for disposal are inalienable property listed in the church's inventory which can be inspected at any reasonable time.

Office equipment and similar items used within the church premises are written off when the asset is acquired.

Capitalised assets are stated at cost and depreciated over their expected useful life as follows:

Parish Hall boiler	10 years
Church bells	50 years from 1st January 2023

Investments are valued at historical cost with a note of the value at 31st December if available.

1.6 Current assets and liabilities

Amounts owed to the PCC on 31st December are shown as "Accounts Receivable" commonly referred to as Debtors. Amounts owed by the PCC on 31st December are shown as "Accounts Payable" and are commonly known as Creditors.

Short term deposits are held either at Barclays or with the Central Board of Finance of the Church of England.

1.7 Staff costs

During the year the PCC paid an honorarium to a parish hall caretaker and fees and expenses to an organist. Neither of these persons are members of the PCC.

Fees were also paid to organists and vergers in respect of Occasional Offices (funerals, weddings etc) but these amounts do not form part of these financial statements.

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2 Voluntary income

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	2021
Regular giving				
Gift Aid	45,100	92	45,192	47,669
Non Gift Aid	3,229	0	3,229	4,845
Parish Giving Scheme	15,859	0	15,859	18,998
Income tax recovered	16,138	19	16,157	19,792
Sub-total	80,326	111	80,437	91,304
Collections				
Regular services	2,443	0	2,443	2,046
Occasional services	3,820	0	3,820	2,329
Sub-total	6,263	0	6,263	4,375
Legacies	1,000	0	1,000	2,000
Donations and grants	4,985	26,746	31,731	201,350
Total	92,574	26,857	119,431	299,029

3 Fundraising

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	2021
Fundraising activities				
Winter Market	2,084	0	2,084	2,476
Market stalls	1,119	0	1,119	1,204
Flower Festival	941	0	941	0
Bells preview evening	0	0	0	457
Other events	840	0	840	0
Sub-total	4,984	0	4,984	4,137
Parish Hall	18,480	0	18,480	13,275
Magazine	1,256	0	1,256	1,143
Catering income	240	0	240	172
Other	1,570	0	1,570	807
Total	26,530	0	26,530	19,534

4 Church activities

This income relates to PCC fees relating to weddings and funerals. During 2022, we collected £1,524 for weddings (2021: £344) and £6,554 (2021: £3,768) for funerals. Fees for clergy, vergers and organists are handled by the PCC on an agency basis and are excluded from these accounts.

Parochial Church Council of St Michael and St Paul, Alnwick
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5 Cost of generating voluntary income

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	2021
Fundraising expenses	104	623	727	0
Planned giving expenses	116	0	116	164
Total	220	623	843	164

6 Fundraising costs

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	2021
Parish Hall				
Gas, electricity and water	6,429	0	6,429	3,994
Maintenance	2,554	0	2,554	490
Caretaker	4,200	0	4,200	4,200
Depreciation	0	1,244	1,244	1,244
Other expenses	1,097	0	1,097	1,004
Sub-total	14,280	1,244	15,524	10,932
Other	439	0	439	0
Total	14,719	1,244	15,963	10,932

7 Church running expenses

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	2021
Church				
Gas, electricity and water	13,794	0	13,794	10,030
Insurance	6,181	0	6,181	7,228
Repairs and maintenance	1,456	1,745	3,201	2,927
Refurbishment	0	19,056	19,056	247,668
Wine, wafers and candles	489	0	489	271
Organists	920	0	920	800
Organ maintenance	1,392	0	1,392	1,320
Worship	1,220	176	1,396	864
Depreciation	0	3,038	3,038	3,038
Other costs	123	0	123	166
Sub-total	25,575	24,015	49,590	271,294
Clergy				
Council Tax	(91)	0	(91)	4,539
Expenses and other costs	60	0	60	1,090
Sub-total	(31)	0	(31)	5,629
Administration				
Photocopier	4,731	0	4,731	4,443
Office supplies etc	1,101	0	1,101	640
Telephone and internet	694	0	694	820
Sub-total	6,526	0	6,526	5,903
Total	32,070	24,015	56,085	283,024

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8 Charitable giving

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Giving	2021 from PCC Funds
Alnwick Community Centre	1,000	0	1,000	2,300
Contagious	1,000	0	1,000	2,300
St Michael's School	2,000	0	2,000	2,300
Alnwick Foodbank	1,000	0	1,000	0
Ukrainian Refugees	450	0	450	0
Crisis Newcastle	500	0	500	0
West End Refugee Service	500	0	500	0
Total	6,450	0	6,450	6,900

Special collections, donations and fundraising events which are specifically on behalf of another charity are not included in the accounts.

9 Governance costs

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	2021
Bank charges	622	0	622	581
Independent examination	180	0	180	150
Treasurer's expenses	150	0	150	130
Total	952	0	952	861

10 Tangible fixed assets

	Church Bells	Parish Hall Boiler	Total Assets
Cost			
Balance at 1 st January 2022	151,495	12,438	163,933
Additions	420	0	420
Balance at 31 st December 2022	151,915	12,438	164,353
Depreciation			
Balance at 1 st January 2022	0	1,244	1,244
Charge for year	3,038	1,243	4,282
Balance at 31 st December 2022	3,038	2,487	5,526
Net Book Value at 31st December 2022	148,847	9,951	158,828

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11 Accounts receivable

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	2021
Income tax recoverable	12,244	0	12,244	88,135
Electricity refund	174	0	174	0
Parish Hall rental income	626	0	626	468
Other	50	0	50	67
Total	13,094	0	13,094	89,937

12 Accounts payable

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	2021
Parish share	7,300	0	7,300	52,300
Gas	3,258	0	3,258	0
Electricity	0	0	0	3,435
Charitable giving	22,620	0	22,620	22,620
Agency balances	0	0	0	15,239
Other	140	0	140	688
Total	33,318	0	33,318	94,282

Accounts

**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL
of
ST MICHAEL and ST PAUL
ALNWICK**

**Annual Report and
Financial Statements**

**for the year ended
31st December 2021**

**Incumbent
Vacancy**

**St Michael's Vicarage
Howling Lane
Alnwick, NE66 1DH**

**Bank
Barclays Bank plc
Alnwick**

**Independent Examiner
Mr George Clark FCPFA**

Registered Charity Number 1131297

Annual Report of the Parish of St Michael and St Paul, Alnwick 2021

Parochial Church Council 2021

The PCC is the governing body of the parish of St Michael and St Paul Alnwick. The PCC is a team made up of members of clergy and lay members of the church. Together they are responsible for the overall wellbeing, practical as well as spiritual, of their church, the church members, and the church buildings. The PCC also has a duty to promote the mission of the church within the wider community.

The PCC is also responsible for the internal maintenance and running of the Parish Hall. The Hall is leased from the Northumberland Estate who is responsible for the external fabric.

Ex officio members:

Chairman: Revd Canon Paul Scott (until 31st January 2022)
Mrs Jean Darby (from 1st February 2022)
Curate: Revd Gerard Rundell (until 31st July 2021)

Churchwardens: Mrs Pat Taylor Mrs Anne Blades

Deanery Synod Members: (elected in 2021 for 3 years)
Mrs Annette Playle Mrs Jean Darby
Mrs Patricia Tweed Mrs Pat Taylor

Elected Members:

Mrs Frances Allsop (elected in 2019 for 3 years)
Mrs Rosie Buxton (elected in 2019 for 3 years)
Mr Richard Allsop (re-elected in 2020 for 3 years)
Mr John Cooke (re-elected in 2021 for 3 years)
Mr Richard Dale (re-elected in 2020 for 3 years)
Mrs Lindsay Johnston (elected in 2020 for 3 years)
Mrs Susan O'Neill (elected in 2020 for 3 years)
Mr Henry Playle (re-elected in 2020 for 3 years)

PCC Officers:

Vice Chairman: Mrs Jean Darby
PCC Secretary: Mrs Rosie Buxton
PCC Treasurer: Mr Richard Dale

Assistant Church Wardens:

Mrs Pat Tweed
One vacancy

Attendance at PCC meetings:

Seven regular and one extraordinary PCC meetings were held in 2021 (five on Zoom). The overall attendance was 83%.

PCC Committees and other groups:

The Standing Committee is the only committee required by law. It has the power to transact the business of the PCC between meetings (subject to any directions given by the Council). Its members are Revd Canon Paul Scott (until 31st January 2022), Mrs Pat Taylor, Mrs Anne Blades, Mrs Jean Darby and Mr Richard Dale.

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Clergy with permission to Officiate:

Revd Canon Sue Allen, Revd Canon Philip Bourne, Revd Robert Chavner, Revd Colin Perkins, Revd Natasha Shemanoff, Revd Martin Turner, Revd Canon Denis Winter, Revd Martin Roff, Revd Gilly Maude

Readers:

Mr John Cooke, Mrs Annette Playle

Safeguarding Officer

Dr Patty Everitt

Church attendance:

For much of the year the church was closed for public worship and Occasional Offices because of Coronavirus. During this time services were streamed on YouTube and restricted to one service each Sunday. It is difficult to estimate accurate numbers. The number of viewings could be traced but not the number participating in each 'hit'. On the two occasions lockdown was eased there was an average of 50 people worshipping in church on a Sunday morning and the YouTube viewings reduced accordingly.

Statistics as reported to the Diocese for 2021 (2020 figures in brackets where available)

Baptisms	13 (1)
Confirmation	5 (0)
Weddings	2 (2)
Funerals	22 (38) in Church, and 19 (27) at the crematorium or cemetery only.

Average attendance: 123 adults and 5 children (80 adults and 2 children)

Christmas: 85 communicants, 98 attendees (53 communicants, 55 attendees)

Easter: 76 communicants, 80 attendees (No public worship because of lockdown)

People in our "worshipping community" at the end of 2021:

Total	Children (Age 0-10)	Young people (Age 11-17)	Adults (Age 18-69)	Adults (Age 70+)
99	0	4	20	75

Electoral Roll Officer's Report 2021 - *Susan Trafford, Electoral Roll Officer*

On revision of the Electoral Roll this year, 2021, there are **156** names on the roll. We have lost **9** members of St Michael's congregation either through death (**6**) or moving away (**3**). However, there have been **2** new names added to the roll for this year to date.

As required, the revised roll has been displayed in church and any further names can only be entered after the APCM.

Review of the Year 2021

Introduction

If 2020 was a year like no other because of Covid-19 then 2021 was equally memorable for a series of landmark events.

The highlight of the year was undoubtedly completion of the restoration of the tower and the installation of a peal of ten bells. The work is described more fully later in the Review of the Year but it is wonderful to hear the peal of bells to welcome us to worship and mark special events in the life of the church and the town. We are immensely grateful to all who donated to the costs of the project, to all the tradesmen who made our plans a reality and to Jean Darby and Jim Crowther for their vision and energy managing the project.

We had a number of arrivals and departures in the year. In July 2021, Revd Gerard Rundell and his family left Alnwick as Gerard took on a new role as Team Rector and Priest in charge at St. Aidan's, Brunton Park. Gerard served us well during his three years as Curate and we are grateful for his mastery of technology for worship during the Covid lockdowns and for his wonderful work to develop youth work in the town and beyond. We wish him well for the future.

In January 2022, Revd Paul Scott retired as our Vicar after almost ten years with us. Paul has overseen some great changes to the church, the Parish Hall and our worship and outreach. He will be greatly missed and we wish Jane and Paul a long and happy retirement. We are now in a period of vacancy and pray that we will be able to find an equally strong new Vicar.

The Bishop of Newcastle, Rt Revd Christine Hardman, retired at the end of the year with the Bishop of Berwick, Rt Revd Mark Wroe taking on the role of acting Bishop while the vacancy is filled. We were pleased to be able to welcome Mark to St Michael's three times during the year – once on-line during lockdown and twice in person to celebrate the Tower project.

We were pleased to welcome Revd Canon Philip Bourne and Revd Robert Chavner to the area as retired clergy with Permission to Officiate and they are already having an impact on our services and music.

Covid inevitably had a lasting impact on our worship throughout the year. The first three months of 2021 saw another suspension of in person worship and a return to our on-line services using YouTube. We were able to record the services in church which allowed greater involvement of our retired clergy, lay readers and other church members in preparation of our worship. The last few weeks of the year were also disrupted by the spread of the Omicron variant but we continued to meet in person, albeit with tighter social distancing arrangements. However our worship is now back to something much nearer to normal. We have restarted early morning communion and evening worship on a Sunday, we have started singing again and recently it has been agreed to allow worshippers, who wish to do so, to remove face coverings.

The PCC agreed to a trial period for a new pattern of worship. The 8.00am and 9.30am services have been put back by half an hour to 8.30am and 10.00am respectively. Sung evensong has been limited to the first Sunday in the month and, during the vacancy at least, will be a Deanery evensong. On other Sundays, there will be alternative patterns of worship including compline and Taize and Iona style worship. It was agreed to suspend the 11.15am service for a trial period and to adjust the 10.00am service on the first Sunday of the month to provide a more informal style of worship.

Parochial Church Council of St Michael and St Paul, Alnwick

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Life elsewhere in the Parish has started to return to greater normality. The Parish Hall is open for business again (and is well used), church groups are reforming and we were able hold our Winter Market, our main fundraising event of the year, for the first time since 2019. There is still much to do, the pace of which will depend on Covid infection rates and government and diocesan guidance. We know that some of us will remain nervous for some time to come and we want to be inclusive for all who regard this place as their spiritual home, regardless of whether or not they come in person and whether or not they wish to retain social distancing and face coverings.

Financially the position was much better than we might have feared. We didn't manage to pay our full Parish Share for the year but managed significantly more than the minimum contribution we were asked to make. Our balances are healthy, thanks in no small part to some significant donations from well-wishers, both in the Parish and beyond. We also need to acknowledge that our costs are increasing at the same time as we are losing members of our community so another stewardship campaign will be needed during 2022.

2022 will inevitably be a challenging year as we continue to rebuild our community life and as we navigate through our vacancy. Our churchwardens, retired clergy, readers, PCC and many other members of the church are doing much to ensure that we continue to thrive and we will hope to look back on 2022 in next year's report as another year to remember.

The Parochial Church Council

Volunteers:

We would like to thank all the volunteers who work so tirelessly to make our church the lively, welcoming and vibrant community that it is. There are many committees carrying out work in a variety of areas and many parishioners are members of more than one group. Without everybody's contribution we would not be able to keep the church running.

Church and School Links:

The links between the Church and St Michael's C of E Primary School remain strong. The foundation governors are John Cooke, Rosie Buxton, Alison Burden and Mike Samuels.

Communication:

The Church Web Site is www.alnwickanglican.com. It contains information about service times, church location, activities accessibility, and contact details. There are also details about the history of St Michael's and information about Denwick Chapel and the parish hall. In addition, there are weekly pew sheets, photographs and details of events. The parish magazine, 'Gateway', is normally published every month.

Fabric - *Pat Taylor, Churchwarden*

A huge part of the Fabric report is contained in the tower and south aisle exhibition report.

Other highlights during the year were:

- The sound system has now its own permanent cabinet.
- The camera is now in place and after "teething troubles" is working effectively and we are able to livestream our weekly 10am Parish Eucharist service.
- The blessing of the cholera memorial eventually took place on August 31st.
- The lamps on the Churchyard have been painted and cleaned.
- The floodlighting has been serviced and is now functioning well.

The Churchyard suffered greatly during storm Arwen in November. We lost three large trees and part of a large holly tree. The Northumberland Estates and Northumberland County

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Council were prompt and efficient in their clearing. Special thanks must go to John Onions for his sterling work in clearing up after the contractors had finished.

The Church Hall is now welcoming groups. Mariana continues to manage and organise the Hall to a high standard.

Tower restoration and south aisle exhibition – Jean Darby, Project coordinator

Paul spoke in his annual report last year of the excitement building as the work on the tower was beginning. Once the scaffolding was erected in February work started in earnest. Masonry and the louvre in the south of the belfry were removed in order to allow access for the bells and the steel frame. In March the medieval bells were removed and taken to Whites of Appleton. The rotten frame and wheels were also removed and we are very grateful to the team of volunteers who helped the professionals from Whites, thus allowing for a substantial reduction in the cost.

Inspection of the roof found over 400 pieces of graffiti dating from 1764 to 2008. This was catalogued and brought down to a safe place in the church by expert archaeologist, John Buglass. This will eventually form the centre of an exhibition space in the south aisle. Unfortunately, at the opening up of the roof it was discovered that the timbers which had been thought to be rotten only at the edges were in fact rotten right through and in need of complete replacement. It was also found that the masonry on the south parapet was leaning dangerously over the main entrance to the church and was in need of immediate repair. Consequently, costs soared and despite deciding to delay the improvement of the tower stairs there was still going to be a substantial shortfall in funding. We are therefore very much indebted to the anonymous benefactor who, at the beginning of the project, had so generously given us a loan on extremely beneficial terms, who at this point increased that loan in order that the project could be completed.

Much masonry which was worn and eroded was restored with impressive skill by Andy Hudspeth. The lead on the roof was completely renewed and guttering renewed and improved. These renovations will keep the tower in good repair for many generations to come.

As work continued four new bells were sponsored and cast by Taylor's of Loughborough. 6 bells removed from St. James Newton Hall were donated by the Keltek Trust, sponsored and taken to White's where they were cleaned, engraved and tuned to ring with the 4 new bells. In the belfry a new steel frame and wheels of traditional hard wood were installed. To allow ringing practice without disturbing neighbours excellent sound control was inserted behind new louvres with the facility provided to ring out fully for services and special occasions. A ringing room was created by lowering the ceiling of the clock room and moving the clock, which had its dial regilded, into a deafening chamber above. Dado panelling in oak, opening windows to afford ventilation and carpet tiles were fitted. The sallies are in the Northumberland colours. Andrew Beckwith, a third generation wood carver, skillfully restored an original wheel, which had been scrapped, into very attractive frames for coat hooks. On August 9th the two listed medieval bells, which had been cleaned, were brought back into church for honourable retirement. The ten new bells were brought into the chancel, viewed for one day only and blessed in a service that evening by Mark Wroe, Bishop of Berwick. All ten bells were then lifted into the restored belfry ready for a successful test ringing the next day. Again, we are very grateful to the team of volunteers who helped the professionals from White's.

On target, at Michaelmas, September 29th 2021, a service of dedication for the ten bells and the restoration was led by the Bishop of Berwick, who handed over the bell ropes to the

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Vicar, Canon Paul Scott. There was a full congregation and in celebration the bells rang a quarter peal.

We will always be grateful to David Beaumont the architect, David Ferguson, the contractor, Alan Coulson, the indefatigable site manager, Andy Hudspeth, the stone mason, Taylor's of Loughborough, White's of Appleton and all those whose skills glorified St. Michael's. Most grateful thanks go to all the individuals and trusts whose contributions made possible this project, which will prove a lasting asset for generations to come. However, we must be aware that we are morally bound to continue fund raising in order to make contributions towards repaying the loan made by our generous benefactor.

Deanery Synod – Annette Playle, Deanery Synod member

Over the past year the Deanery Synod has been meeting via Zoom. Our last meeting was on Tuesday 30th November 2021 and was led by the Area Dean, Alison Hardy.

A welcome was made to two people from Transforming Communities Together Tyne to Tweed who gave an interesting and informative talk about growing social action and discipleship in the Church of England, reaching out in different ways to the local community. They spoke about different ways in engaging with the community which may be implemented as and when restrictions and manpower allow.

Our next meeting again will be via Zoom and is on 22nd March 2022.

Safeguarding - Patty Everitt, PCC Safeguarding Advisor

Introduction:

As a church we want to welcome all those who come through our church doors. We want to make sure, in the best way we can, that we are a people who create a safe and respectful place for all who come to us and all those with whom we come into contact.

Our commitment to safeguarding is demonstrated by and led through the church leadership and the church officers: the vicar and Readers certainly, but mainly through the leadership of our churchwardens and members of the PCC.

Through the training that many of us have taken over this last year, we have become aware that being a safe place and safe people may also mean having the courage to say something if we notice something is not right and someone may be at risk. I think the tag line used on the trains is apt here "See it, Say it, Sorted". We do not take responsibility for investigating or sorting out the situation. The Parish Safeguarding Officer and Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor are responsible for responding to the concern.

How do we "do" safeguarding?

We "do" safeguarding by:

- having processes which tell us how to act in certain situations and how to report a concern we have;
- selecting appropriate people to lead and represent us;
- providing training for our leaders and volunteers to keep both themselves and the vulnerable safe.

We are now using a tool provided to each parish by the Diocese of Newcastle, the Parish Dashboard. In fact, the Parish Dashboard tool has been created by the national church and Newcastle Diocese has completely endorsed and embraced the tool.

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The Dashboard has been an excellent tool for me to understand what processes we need to have, who needs to be trained, and the training pathway each role should follow. The national church defines the training pathways and provides the training which is of excellent quality.

Activities and action over the past year:

During the past year my attention has been on:

1. Making sure that safeguarding information is posted within the church so that you have access to the Parish Safeguarding Handbook and anyone who visits the church knows that we are committed to providing a safe and respectful place.
2. Making sure the processes we need are in place and approved by our PCC.
These processes are now in place.
 - Responding to Concerns or Allegations of Abuse – this tells us how to report a concern and who to report it to.
 - Policy for Recruitment of Ex-Offenders – not all offences will bar a candidate for applying for a role in the church. Legally we must treat ex-offenders fairly.
3. Making sure that I am up-to-date with the requirements and training in the role of Parish Safeguarding Officer.
 - To obtain a DBS certificate
 - To keep up-to-date with the safeguarding training provided by the Church of England:
 - Basic Safeguarding
 - Foundation Safeguarding
 - Raising Awareness of Domestic Abuse
 - Leadership safeguarding training.
 - Safer Recruitment Procedure training
 - Learning about the Parish Dashboard and how to use it.
4. Working with the members of the PCC to help them fulfil their requirements and legal obligations as approvers and overseers of the groups and the volunteers who work with children on our behalf. These requirements and obligations are:
 - To obtain a DBS certificate
 - To keep up-to-date with the safeguarding awareness training provided by the national church:
 - Basic Safeguarding
 - Foundation Safeguarding
 - Raising Awareness of Domestic Abuse
5. Working with the churchwardens to help them meet the requirements and obligations of their roles, including:
 - To obtain a DBS certificate
 - To keep up-to-date with the safeguarding training provided by the Church of England:
 - Basic Safeguarding
 - Foundation Safeguarding
 - Raising Awareness of Domestic Abuse
 - Leadership safeguarding training.
6. Working with church officers: the Sacristan, church Secretary and church hall manager to take the Basic safeguarding training.

As you may imagine this is difficult material to address and can feel uncomfortable. On behalf of all of us I would like to thank our churchwardens, the members of the PCC and our church officers, for their commitment to the training for the roles they undertake.

Safeguarding concerns raised:

Over this past year four safeguarding concerns have been raised and managed by me, in the role of Parish Safeguarding Officer, and the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor.

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Activities and actions for the next year:

For this coming year my attention will be on working with the volunteer groups that run within and on behalf of our church.

One of the things I am intending to do is to provide some group training to our volunteers for those who would prefer this, rather than working on the internet through the Church of England Safeguarding Platform. My next action is to find out how I can do this.

The training will be open to all, not just to our volunteers. If you would like to attend any training then I would be delighted. Just let me know.

I know that we are all grateful for the time and effort that our volunteers commit on behalf of St Michael's Church to make life richer for those whose lives we touch.

Foundation Governors' Report - Rosie Buxton, Secretary

Following the extreme challenges that arose in 2020 due to Covid this has been another very difficult year for staff and pupils alike. All have risen to the task of doing their best to maintain the continuity of teaching and learning and St Michael's Primary School has developed their whole curriculum aims around three key words: **Respect, Persevere and Achieve**.

These are words that sum up their hopes as the children learn to respect each other and the world around them, persevere and try hard without giving up, and achieve highly in all areas.

A major development in 2021 for the school is the proposal to join the Northumberland Church of England Academy Trust (NCEAT) which offers support to schools. The school will become part of a trust. The academy trust looks at all areas of the school to see which areas would benefit most, thereby improving strategic direction as well as supporting teaching and learning.

The Diocese of Newcastle is strongly encouraging all Church of England schools to form sustainable local partnerships and welcomes the proposal.

What are the benefits of joining the Northumberland Church of England Academy Trust?

- Opportunities to access wider facilities such as specialist design and technology rooms, drama studios and additional sporting provision.
- Access shared services and funding which will be bespoke to the school and that will take into account the challenges faced as a small school. Shared services can help small schools save costs so that more funding can be spent directly on education.
- The Trust has a very strong track record of transforming former first schools into highly successful primary schools.
- It will offer further training opportunities for all staff and access to support from a network of C of E schools who are part of the same Trust, including opportunities that they are currently unable to access as a small school.
- Joining a Church of England trust will continue to protect the distinctively Anglican ethos.
- To continue to develop extracurricular areas such as mental health and wellbeing, growth mindset and supporting the whole child. These are areas that the leaders and staff at Northumberland Church of England Academy feel very strongly about too.

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NCEAT has already helped with professional development, advice and training within the school and their guidance has definitely inspired all.

Mission Group

As with everything this year, the mission group's activities continued to be affected by the pandemic.

Mission giving in 2021 was £6,900 which the PCC agreed to split equally between St Michael's School, Alnwick Community Centre and Contagious.

Messy Church – Jane Brown

Messy Church meets in church once a month usually the 3rd Saturday in the month from 11am – 12.30. We invite families with children from 0-10 years old to come to our church to listen to/take part in a bible story, make crafts to do with the bible story and then we eat a light lunch together. We have a regular team of 8 who prepare the food and crafts and tell the story. The number of families coming to Messy Church varies from month to month. Last summer we had about 20 children and their parents. The last 2 months have been much quieter (9 children in February). Our aim is to create a family church where children and adults feel relaxed. It enables people to encounter Jesus in a relaxed space. The people who attend do not normally attend any Sunday services.

Mini Michael's – Pat Tweed

Mini Michaels continues to flourish although numbers are slightly less than before. Having said that we still average about 25 children each week and along with mums, dads, grandparents and carers we make a good and probably more manageable group.

Our intrepid helpers keep coming each week; welcome group, craft ladies (who continue to amaze us with their ideas) refreshment team, storytellers and general setters-up and chatters with mums.

We have been fortunate to get two new members to our team but if ever anyone feels moved to join us we would be very happy to have you.

This is a happy group and gives us much to smile about each week, as you can imagine dealing with little ones, from our youngest ever at three days old when she came with mum and big sister, to the three years olds when they "graduate" and move on to nursery school.

St Michaels's on-line events - Revd Sue Allen - Chair of Mission Group.

Livestreamed Worship:

Since the first Lockdown in March 2020, worship has been streamed regularly via YouTube. Since then the 10am Sunday worship, and initially also the midweek Wednesday Communion, has continued to be streamed. The initial technical difficulties have been overcome, and with Ant Allen's back-up a small group of volunteers is now running it more successfully. It would be very helpful to have more people involved; with the holiday season approaching it may not be possible to cover all Sundays. This would be a significant loss to the faithful online congregation, who value greatly the opportunity to participate in worship. Sunday Plus provided an opportunity for informal and creative worship at 4pm during the main Lockdown. It was much appreciated, drawing a significant congregation locally, as well as further afield. As restrictions eased, we experimented with combining zoom and in person

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worship. Sadly this was not viable long term as restrictions eased, and it ceased in September 2021.

Zoom Cuppa and Chat:

This began as a substitute for coffee in person after the 10am service, and especially during lockdown provided a much needed opportunity to catch up. The group has continued, and now meets at 4pm, usually on the First Sunday of the month. Though numerically smaller now, the mix of those who are housebound with those out and about (including 2 joining from USA) provides an excellent opportunity for informal fellowship. If you would like to join in, please contact Sue Allen for details.

Sidespersons – Pat Taylor

As worship has continued to come out of lockdown conditions have begun to use sidespeople at the Parish Eucharist. We have 12 names on the rota. The Churchwardens continue to act as sidespeople at the other services.

The Mothers' Union – Val Hawker

Due to the continuing trials surrounding Covid the meetings had to be halted for the majority of the year. However meetings began again in the autumn and we were delighted to host the deanery service at St Michael's. This was a lovely service taken by Rev Gilly Maude.

I would like to thank all volunteers for their support and look forward to another year of fellowship.

The Churchyard Project – Sue Allen

With the Climate Emergency upon us, we aim to help St Michael's to 'strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth'¹, working with the active encouragement of Diocese and Deanery. The group was set up as a separate entity in September 2021, to report back both directly to the PCC and to the Mission Group.

After much discussion it was decided to focus initially on the area on the North side of the church, extending downwards to the boundary wall adjacent to the current building site of Northumberland Estates. We have been much helped by professional advice from various quarters, especially from Paul Stenhouse, and June Drage (via Michelle Duff). The aim is to plant native species to encourage a greater diversity of wildlife (insects, including bees, birds and mammals).

The first step was to make the area safe. To protect the drop below the low wall, a hedge has been planted. During the October Half Term a group of 10 young volunteers from Community@NE66, accompanied by their leaders (who were responsible for Safeguarding) came to plant approximately 100 hedge saplings, donated by the Duchess High School, surplus to their needs. The protective guards and canes were also donated by the High School.

We planned that the young volunteers would return to plant wildflower bulbs (snowdrops, wild daffodils, aconites and English bluebells) on the flat area to the east of the hedge. Unfortunately this was twice cancelled because of bad weather, and the bulbs were planted, a little late, by members of the churchyard group. Thanks to the congregation, donations almost exactly covered the cost of these bulbs (approx. £100), and to Paul Stenhouse for obtaining the bulbs.

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Most of the nettles on the slope have been cleared by Ant Allen for future planting of wildflower seeds or bulbs.

Annette Playle has produced an ongoing display of progress, currently on a board at the back of the church.

Future Plans already approved by the PCC.

To make the south side of the church more welcoming we hope to obtain further seats to place for example on the south side of the church (without obstructing parking).

To obtain some barrels, and plant them with flowers to be enjoyed by those on the seats.

These to be positioned so that they don't obstruct parking or vehicles.

To improve the signage around the churchyard, so that people know what is available.

We hope to obtain external funding for these projects.

Financial review - Richard Dale, PCC Treasurer

The financial statements for 2021 are significantly impacted by the project to repair the church tower and to install the new peal of bells. The Statement of Financial Activities shows net outgoing resources for the year of £49,085, almost all of which is due to use of the Church Tower Fund built up in previous years to complete the building work.

The project was the most significant undertaking by the Parish for many years. Although there were some bumps along the way, it was completed on time and broadly on budget for which we are grateful to Jean Darby and the various contractors who worked hard to overcome the challenges which we faced during the repair work. Much of the work was funded by a substantial loan and, although there is no legal obligation to repay, we will need to continue fundraising for some time to come to satisfy our moral obligation to repay. The cost of the bells and associated works is shown as a fixed asset on the balance sheet and the other costs incurred have been charged directly to the Statement of Financial Activities.

During the year, we also replaced the boiler in the Parish Hall and completed the reordering of the back pews in the church to enable better access. The former is also shown as a fixed asset on the balance sheet with the latter being charged directly to the Fabric Fund in the Statement of Financial Activities.

By comparison, the General Fund position was rather more stable despite the challenges of Covid-19. We recorded a net surplus of £1,876 in the year, compared to a net deficit of £1,415 in 2020.

General Fund voluntary income increased by 12% from £94,782 to £105,739. Most of this increase was due to some very significant donations by supporters of the church, both within and outside the parish for which we were immensely grateful. Regular giving declined by 2% in the year, reflecting the loss of members of the congregation and pointing the need for a stewardship campaign later this year. However, this was offset by a significant increase in collections at occasional services as we returned to holding funerals in church as lockdown restrictions abated during 2021.

General Fund fundraising income fell by 27% from £25,348 to £18,462. However this was distorted by a one-off receipt of £10,000 in Covid-19 support grants in relation to the Parish Hall in 2020. Excluding this distortion, fundraising was £3,114 better compared to 2020, mainly due to being able to restart the Winter Market (which raised £2,476) and running a number of market stalls during the summer in place of our usual efforts at the Alnwick International Music Festival.

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We were asked to contribute a minimum parish share of £65,000 in 2021 with a target to contribute £76,257. In the end, we were able to contribute £72,300, almost 95% of the requested amount. In line with previous policy, our budget for charitable giving was reduced by a similar proportion with total giving in the year of £6,900 which is split equally between St Michael's School, Alnwick Community Centre and Contagious.

Parish Secretary costs were significantly lower in 2021, following the retirement of Joan Dunn at the end of 2020 and clergy expenses and Council Tax costs were also lower, reflecting Gerard leaving the parish for his new role during the summer. Church gas and electricity costs increase during the year reflecting less time when the church was closed due to lockdown and price rises – the latter will significantly impact our finances during 2022.

Looking ahead, 2022 is highly uncertain. We have lost a number of members of our congregation which is impacting regular giving and we will see a very significant increase in gas and electricity costs in the coming months. These losses will be mitigated to some extent by lower clergy costs during the vacancy.

I am grateful to the Churchwardens for their support to me through another difficult year when I have had to rely on their good services more than I would normally need to. We are also grateful to the many individuals and organisations who have continued to support us through this period – without their generosity the PCC's financial position would be far worse than we are able to report.

Independent Examiner's Report

To the Parochial Church Council (PCC) of St Michael and St Paul, Alnwick

This report on the attached financial statements of the PCC of St Michael and St Paul for the year ended 31st December 2021 is in respect of an examination carried out in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 (the Regulations) and section 43 of the Charities Act 1993 (the Act).

Respective Responsibilities of the PCC and the Examiner

As members of the PCC you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements: you consider that the audit requirement under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 does not apply and that an independent examination is needed.

Basis of this report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 43(7) of the Act and to be found in the Church guidance, 2006 edition. That examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the PCC and a comparison of the accounts with those records. It also includes considering any unusual items or disclosures in the financial statements and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent Examiners Statement

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

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 41 of the Act, and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Act.

have not been met;

2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

George Clark FCPFA
Independent Examiner

May 2022

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Statement of Financial Activities
For the period 1st January to 31st December 2021

	Note	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	Total Funds	2020
Incoming Resources						
Incoming resources from generated funds						
Voluntary income	2	105,739	193,290	0	299,029	156,041
Fundraising	3	18,462	1,072	0	19,534	28,598
Income from investments		7	2,411	0	2,418	2,549
Incoming resources from charitable activities						
Church activities	4	4,112	0	0	4,112	3,936
Other incoming resources		3	0	0	3	7
Total Incoming Resources		128,323	196,773	0	325,096	191,131
Resources used						
Cost of generating funds						
Cost of generating voluntary income	5	164	0	0	164	630
Fundraising costs	6	9,688	1,244	0	10,932	11,425
Church activities						
Parish Share		72,300	0	0	72,300	73,600
Church running expenses	7	34,795	248,229	0	283,024	58,726
Charitable giving	8	6,900	0	0	6,900	7,710
Governance costs	9	861	0	0	861	756
Total Resources Used		124,708	249,473	0	374,181	152,847
Transfers between funds		(1,739)	1,739	0	0	0
Net Incoming/Outgoing Resources		1,876	(50,961)	0	(49,085)	38,284
Balances Brought Forward		3,357	90,516	51,350	145,623	107,339
Balances Carried Forward		5,233	39,955	51,350	96,538	145,623

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Balance Sheet as at 31st December 2021

	Note	2021 £	2020 £
Fixed Assets			
Tangible assets	10	162,689	0
Forster Bequest Capital		40,640	40,640
		203,329	40,640
Current Assets			
Barclays Community Account		13,761	(2,256)
Barclays Business Premium Account		1,665	126,278
Cash in hand		0	0
CBF Fabric Capital account		10,710	10,710
CBF Fabric Income account		31,418	29,007
Accounts receivable (Debtors)	11	89,937	76,819
		147,491	240,558
Accounts payable (Creditors)	12	94,282	15,575
Loans		160,000	120,000
Total assets		96,538	145,623
Represented by			
Balance at 1st January 2021		145,623	107,339
Surplus/(Deficit) for year		(49,085)	38,284
Balance at 31st December 2021		96,538	145,623
Distribution of total equity by funds			
Unrestricted funds			
General Fund		5,233	3,357
Restricted funds			
Fabric Fund	31,383		36,438
Parish Hall Fund	4,545		0
Church Tower Fund	2,055		51,282
General Fund	1,796		2,796
Young People Activities Fund	176		400
		39,995	90,916
Endowment funds			
Forster Bequest	40,640		40,640
D E Reavell Fund	10,000		10,000
A Hogg Fund	710		710
		51,350	51,350
		96,538	145,623

Approved by the Parochial Church Council on 3 April 2022 and signed on its behalf by:

Jean Darby
Chair

Richard Dale
PCC Treasurer

Notes to the financial statements For the year ended 31st December 2021

1 Accounting policies

1.1 General

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

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention. The financial statements include all transactions, assets and liabilities for which the PCC is responsible in law. They do not include the accounts of church groups that owe their main affiliation to another body (e.g. the Mothers' Union), nor those that are informal gatherings of church members.

1.2 Funds

Endowment funds are funds, the capital of which must be retained either permanently or at the PCC's discretion; the income derived from the endowment is to be used either as restricted or unrestricted funds depending on the purpose for which the endowment was established in the first place.

The parish's endowment funds consist of:-

- The Forster Bequest. The capital for this fund is held by The Newcastle Diocesan Society and is invested in The Investment Fund of the Central Board of Finance of the Church of England. The book cost is as shown on the Balance Sheet (£40,640) and its market value at 31st December 2021 was £94,182 (2020: £82,395).
- The Fabric Capital Fund (CBF 625063004D). This consists of the D E Reavell Fund (£10,000) and the Alan Hogg Fund (£710).

The income from all these funds is paid into The Fabric Income Account (CBF 625063003D) which is a **Restricted fund** (see below) and is only available towards the maintenance and repair of the fabric of St Michael's Church, Alnwick as the Vicar and churchwardens in their absolute discretion think fit. This was laid down by those who gave the endowments.

Restricted funds represent (a) income from trusts or endowments which may be expended only on those restricted purposes intended by the donor, and (b) revenue donations or grants for a specific PCC activity intended by the donor. Where these funds have unspent balances, interest on their pooled investment is apportioned to the individual funds on an average balance basis.

Unrestricted funds are income funds which are to be spent on the PCC's general purposes.

Designated Funds are **unrestricted** funds set aside by the PCC for a specific purpose. They may be "undesignated" by the PCC at any time.

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1.3 Receipts

Planned giving, collections and donations are recognised when received. Tax refunds are recognised when the incoming resource to which they relate is received. Grants and legacies are accounted for when the PCC is entitled to the use of the resource, their ultimate receipt is considered reasonably certain and the amounts due are reliably quantifiable.

Dividends are accounted for when declared receivable, and interest as and when accrued by the payer. All incoming resources are accounted for Gross.

1.4 Payments

Grants and donations are accounted for when paid over, or when awarded if that award creates a binding or constructive obligation on the PCC. The diocesan parish share is accounted for as and when (and if) it is paid. All other expenditure is generally recognised when it is incurred and is accounted for gross.

1.5 Fixed assets

Consecrated and benefice property is not included in the accounts in accordance with sections 10(2)(a) and (c) of the Charities Act 2011.

Moveable church furnishings held by the vicar and churchwardens on special trust for the PCC and which require a faculty for disposal are inalienable property listed in the church's inventory which can be inspected at any reasonable time.

Office equipment and similar items used within the church premises are written off when the asset is acquired.

Capitalised assets are stated at cost and depreciated over their expected useful life as follows:

Parish Hall boiler	10 years
Church bells	50 years from 1st January 2022

Investments are valued at historical cost with a note of the value at 31st December if available.

1.6 Current assets and liabilities

Amounts owed to the PCC on 31st December are shown as "Accounts Receivable" commonly referred to as Debtors. Amounts owed by the PCC on 31st December are shown as "Accounts Payable" and are commonly known as Creditors.

Short term deposits are held either at Barclays or with the Central Board of Finance of the Church of England.

1.7 Staff costs

During the year the PCC paid an honorarium to a parish hall caretaker and fees and expenses to an organist. Neither of these persons are members of the PCC.

Fees were also paid to organists and vergers in respect of Occasional Offices (funerals, weddings etc) but these amounts do not form part of these financial statements.

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2 Voluntary income

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	2020
Regular giving				
Gift Aid	45,615	2,054	47,669	47,288
Non Gift Aid	4,833	12	4,845	4,219
Parish Giving Scheme	18,998	0	18,998	20,777
Income tax recovered	17,614	2,178	19,792	25,730
Sub-total	87,060	4,244	91,304	98,014
Collections				
Regular services	2,046	0	2,046	2,187
Occasional services	2,211	118	2,329	789
Sub-total	4,258	118	4,375	2,976
Legacies	0	2,000	2,000	0
Donations and grants	14,422	186,928	201,350	55,051
Total	105,739	193,290	299,029	156,041

3 Fundraising

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	2020
Fundraising activities				
Winter Market	2,476	0	2,476	0
Market stalls	589	615	1,204	0
Bells preview evening	0	457	457	2,450
Other events	0	0	0	438
Sub-total	3,065	1,072	4,137	2,888
Parish Hall				
Lettings and other income	13,275	0	13,275	12,878
Covid-19 grant	0	0	0	10,000
Monthly draw	0	0	0	800
Sub-total	13,275	0	13,275	23,678
Magazine	1,143	0	1,143	1,183
Catering income	172	0	172	213
Other	807	0	807	636
Total	18,462	1,072	19,534	28,598

4 Church activities

This income relates to PCC fees for weddings and funerals. During 2021, we collected £344 for weddings (2020: £733) and £3,768 (2020: £3,203) for funerals. Fees for clergy, vergers and organists are handled by the PCC on an agency basis and are excluded from these accounts.

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5 Cost of generating voluntary income

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	2020
Fundraising expenses	0	0	0	453
Planned giving expenses	164	0	164	177
Total	164	0	164	630

6 Fundraising costs

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	2020
Parish Hall				
Gas, electricity and water	3,994	0	3,994	3,761
Maintenance	490	0	490	2,183
Caretaker	4,200	0	4,200	4,200
Depreciation	0	1,244	1,244	0
Other expenses	1,004	0	1,004	1,087
Sub-total	9,688	1,244	10,932	11,231
Other	0	0	0	194
Total	9,688	1,244	10,932	11,425

7 Church running expenses

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	2020
Church				
Gas, electricity and water	10,030	0	10,030	8,228
Insurance	6,060	1,168	7,228	5,761
Repairs and maintenance	2,927	0	2,927	2,844
Refurbishment	1,050	246,618	247,668	24,145
Wine, wafers and candles	271	0	271	392
Organists	800	0	800	0
Organ maintenance	1,320	0	1,320	1,320
Worship	705	159	864	833
Other costs	100	66	166	106
Sub-total	23,263	248,229	271,294	43,069
Clergy				
Council Tax	4,539	0	4,539	5,797
Expenses and other costs	1,090	0	1,090	1,666
Sub-total	5,629	0	5,629	7,463
Administration				
Parish secretary	100	0	100	2,200
Photocopier	4,443	0	4,443	4,174
Office supplies etc	540	0	540	568
Telephone and internet	820	0	820	682
Sub-total	5,903	0	5,903	7,634
Total	34,795	248,229	283,024	67,733

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8 Charitable giving

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Giving	2020 from PCC Funds
Alnwick Community Centre	2,300	0	2,300	2,125
Contagious	2,300	0	2,300	2,125
St Michael's School	2,300	0	2,300	2,125
Carbon offsetting fund	0	0	0	1,335
Total	6,900	0	6,900	7,710

Special collections, donations and fundraising events which are specifically on behalf of another charity are not included in the accounts.

9 Governance costs

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	2020
Bank charges	581	0	581	507
Independent examination	150	0	150	120
Treasurer's expenses	130	0	130	130
Total	861	0	861	756

10 Tangible fixed assets

	Church Bells	Parish Hall Boiler	Total Assets
Cost			
Balance at 1 st January 2021	0	0	0
Additions	151,495	12,438	163,933
Balance at 31 st December 2021	151,495	12,438	163,933
Depreciation			
Balance at 1 st January 2021	0	0	0
Charge for year	0	1,244	1,244
Balance at 31 st December 2021	0	1,244	1,244
Net Book Value at 31st December 2021	151,495	11,194	162,689

11 Accounts receivable

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	2020
Income tax recoverable	76,342	11,793	88,135	73,092
Gas refund	1,267	0	0	0
Electricity refund	0	0	0	3,033
Parish Hall rental income	468	0	468	344
Other	67	0	67	350
Total	78,144	11,793	89,937	76,819

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12 Accounts payable

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	2020
Parish share	52,300	0	52,300	0
Gas	0	0	0	156
Electricity	3,435	0	3,435	790
Charitable giving	22,506	114	22,620	9,045
Agency balances	15,239	0	15,239	4,520
Clergy expenses	0	0	0	835
Other	688	0	688	229
Total	94,168	114	94,282	15,575