

ANNUAL MEETING
Agenda
Reports from Organisations

ST. PAUL. ROYTON
SUNDAY 27TH APRIL 2025

Opening Prayer

AGENDA – The Annual Meeting of Parishioners

1. Apologies for Absence
2. The Minutes of the meeting held on Sunday 7th April 2024
3. Matters Arising from the Minutes of the above meeting
4. Appointment of Church Wardens for the year 2025 to 2026

Agenda – The Annual Parochial Church Meeting

1. Apologies for Absence
2. The Minutes of the meeting held on Sunday 7th April 2024
3. Matters Arising from the Minutes of the above meeting
4. Electoral Roll Report
5. Financial statement for the year ended 31st December 2024
6. Report on the fabric, goods and ornaments of the Church
7. Report on the proceedings of the Deanery Synod
8. Election of Representatives of the Laity to the P.C.C. for 2025 to 2028
9. Appointment of Honorary Senior Church Warden 2025 to 2026
10. Appointment of Deputy Church Wardens 2025 to 2026
11. Appointment of Independent Examiners for 2025 to 2026
12. Reports
13. P.C.C. Report
14. Any Other Business
15. Date and time of the newly elected P.C.C. – directly following the A.P.C.M.
16. Closing Prayer

ST. PAUL, ROYTON
ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2024

Parish: St. Paul, Royton
Deanery Oldham & Ashton
:
Diocese Manchester

The Parochial Church Council is a Registered Charity number

MINISTERS	
Incumbent	Vacant
Curate -in-Charge	Fr. Lewis Oliver-Hemmings-Fay (from 14 th April)
Reader	Barry Barnes
PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL	
Ex Officio	Barry Barnes
Church Wardens	Anthony Hawkins (stepped down 31 st August 2024)
	Roy Turner
Deputy Church Wardens	Rachel Dowd
	Leslie Fallows
	Constance Heslop
	Paul Hardy
Deanery Synod Members	Christopher Barnes
(until 2026)	Haydn Mason
	Graham Mottley
Treasurer	Peter Schofield
Secretary	Sandra Schofield
	Adele Beresford-Grindrod
	Maureen Dickens
	Patricia Gulliver
	David Mullin
	Joanna Whitehead
	Andrew Wood
	Eileen Wood (resigned 7 th March 2024)
Independent Financial Examiner	Jenny O'Callaghan
Bankers	Barclays Bank PLC, Rochdale
Insurers	Ecclesiastical
Safeguarding Officer	Julie Watkin
Electoral Roll Officer	Leslie Fallows

4. ELECTORAL ROLL REPORT

The number to be announced at the meeting following the production of the new Electoral Roll

5. FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2024

ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, ROYTON

General Fund and Payments Account

RECEIPTS

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
<u>Direct Giving</u>		
Gift Aid	23,756.00	24,786.50
Non-Gift Aid	2,992.00	2,440.00
Cash collections	2,152.90	1,347.30
Tax Recovered	6,468.77	6,964.98
	35,369.67	35,538.78
<u>Other Voluntary Income</u>		
Candle Money	43.60	238.65
Lenten Appeal	225.30	324.80
Anonymous Donation	3,000.00	-
Bread & Wine Donations	130.00	-
Donations	-	450.00
Fees	4,164.00	5,233.00
Magazine Account	250.00	-
Ladies Society	500.00	-
	8,312.90	6,246.45
<u>Other Income</u>		
Use of Photocopier	176.65	264.38
Coffee Bar	926.81	650.00
Contribution to Church Heating	200.00	560.00
BT Refund	135.60	-
Clergy Travel Exp Reclaimed	305.10	-
Contribution to Poppy Wreaths	40.00	-
Diocese Grant for Heating	-	330.00
Water Refund	-	179.91
Service Register Refund	-	36.25
Closure of Youth Group A/c	-	100.00
Closure of Sunday School A/c	-	36.57
Closure of Pilgrimage A/c	-	18.26
	1,784.16	2,175.37
Total Receipts	45466.73	43,960.60

P.H. Schofield

P.C.C. Treasurer

PAYMENTS

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
<u>Grants</u>		
Charity Donations	340.30	439.80
<u>Relating to the work of the church</u>		
Diocesan Quota	25,000.00	26,964.98
Clergy Expenses	1,067.86	-
Heat, Light & Water	4,577.42	4,696.41
Insurance	5,262.50	5,170.77
Telephone	329.78	643.44
Upkeep of Services	1,794.26	1,335.11
Organist Wages	3,860.00	4,105.00
Wine for St. Paul's Day	22.00	-
Confirmation Buffet	162.95	-
Refreshments St. Paul's Day	-	146.49
Contribution re Confirmation	-	100.00
	42,076.77	43,162.20
<u>Administration</u>		
Printing & Stationery	752.66	953.40
Fees paid to Diocese	2,101.00	1,952.00
PAT Testing	-	72.00
Boiler Service	-	90.00
Web Site Renewal	71.86	71.86
Sunday School Exp	79.33	-
Sundry	133.46	-
New vestment press	2,990.00	-
Christmas Postcards	90.00	-
	6,218.31	3,139.26
Total Payments	48,635.38	46,741.26
Total Receipts B/F	45,466.73	43,960.60
Net Deficit for the Year	<u>-3,168.65</u>	<u>-2,780.66</u>
Bank Current A/c 1.1.24	5,420.88	8,201.54
Bank Current A/c 31.12.24	2,252.23	5,420.88
Decrease in Cash Funds	<u>-3,168.65</u>	<u>-2,780.66</u>

P.H. Schofield
P.C.C. Treasurer

ST PAUL'S CHURCH, ROYTON
RESERVE FUND ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2024
RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS ACCOUNT

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
<u>RECEIPTS</u>		
CBF Account Interest	684.06	638.68
Deposits	200.00	150.00
Cell Donation to new book of Gospels	285.00	-
Donations to new Lectionaries	891.60	-
	<u>2,060.66</u>	<u>788.68</u>
<u>PAYMENTS</u>		
New Lectionaries & Book of Gospels	1,159.50	-
To Fee Income re Wedding Deposit	-	700.00
Bible Storybooks for School	318.04	-
Surplus for Year	583.12	88.68
	<u>2,060.66</u>	<u>788.68</u>

Current Account	1.1.24	1,752.90
CBF Account	1.1.24	17,103.16
		18,856.06
Surplus for year		583.12
		<u>19,439.18</u>

Current Account	31.12.24	1,651.96
CBF Account	31.12.24	17,787.22
		<u>19,439.18</u>

P.H. Schofield
P.C.C. Treasurer

ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, ROYTON
PARISH CENTRE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 21.12.24

<u>INCOME</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
<u>Rent</u>					
History Society	240.00	270.00	Post & Stationery	229.03	175.69
Uniform Organisations	1,520.00	1,525.00	Cleaning Materials	563.40	452.85
Thursday	0			2,259.8	2,236.0
Zumba	0.00	184.00	Concept Hygiene	8	0
Slimming	6,000.0		Trade Waste	1,100.0	1,200.5
World Luncheon	0	5,289.00	Disposal	0	0
Club	2,538.0			4,684.5	3,999.1
Art Workshop	0	2,513.50	Cleaner	9	0
	864.00	1,030.00	Telephone	947.95	651.53
	1,035.0			1,593.1	2,787.4
Keep Fit Club	0	1,058.00	Electric	2	8
Yoga	2,562.0			4,273.5	3,422.3
Club	0	1,372.50	Gas	0	8
Wednesday	1,008.0				1,271.5
Art Class	0	1,128.00	Water	752.87	6
				1,903.9	2,316.5
Wine Society	432.00	432.00	Insurance	9	9
			General Repairs & Maintenance	480.83	1,213.7
Polling Station	500.00	250.00			7
Springboard	3,880.0		Alcohol Licence	180.00	180.00
	0	3,386.00		1,332.0	1,635.6
Henshaw	1,008.0		Copier Lease	0	0
s	0	1,098.00	Garden	2,740.0	1,930.0
	1,615.0		Maintenance	0	0
Elwoods	0	2,536.00	Environmental		
Fierce	2,100.0		contract	300.00	300.00
Dance	0	2,085.00		1,461.0	1,456.8
1st Floor	7,200.0		Alarm Service	0	0
Tenant	0	6,666.66	Fire Extinguisher		
Other			Service	341.60	200.96
Hirings	957.00	701.00	Boiler Service & Repair		1,202.4
				620.40	0
			Remedial Electric	12,877.	
			Repairs	49	-
			Re-siting of Gas		
			Meter	300.00	-
			Christmas Tree	369.00	-
			Storage Boxes	126.00	-
			New Steps to	1,400.0	
			Willow Room	0	-
			Sundry	250.85	-
			Security Lighting & Repairs	-	1,669.2
			Plumbing	-	0
			Tree Felling	-	929.80
			Carpet in Willow		850.00
			Room	-	840.00

			Smartwater on Roof	2,064.00
			-	0
	33,459.00	31,524.66	41,087.50	32,986.21
Other Income				
Interest	377.74	558.83		
Ground				
Rent	12.00	12.00		
Tenant's Gas & Electric	1,225.30	1,033.96		
Tenant re Alarm	699.60	699.60		
Copier Lease Refund	0.00	370.80		
	35,773.64	34,199.85		
Total Income				
				1,213.64
Surplus for the year				
Deficit for the year	5,313.86			
	<u>41,087.50</u>	<u>34,199.85</u>	<u>41,087.50</u>	<u>43,699.04</u>
Credit Balances 1.1.24				20,312.44
		9,484.64		
Curr A/c 31.12.2024		4		
		5,513.94		
C.B.F. A/c 31.12.2024		4		14,998.58
Decrease in Credit Balances				<u>5,313.86</u>

ST PAUL'S CHURCH ROYTON
RESTORATION APPEAL FUND ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2024

<u>RECEIPTS</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
Donations	358.00	1,545.00
Book and Card Stalls	607.30	241.25
St Paul's Weekly Draw	444.00	238.00
Rose Queen	469.33	1,493.40
Bedding Plants Sale	5,134.39	5,655.97
Oldham Youth Brass Band Evening	834.00	737.60
Quiz Nights	1,503.50	1,790.45
Bar Takings at Events	612.70	837.90
Flower Fund	481.50	329.00
Christmas Fair	2,982.40	2,287.68
Seasons Greetings	135.00	130.00
1p Mile	47.00	58.95
Quiz Sheets	-	46.00
Legacy - late Jack Kenworthy	-	5,000.00
Magazine Account	-	1,300.00
Who's Bluffing?	-	375.00
Cell of Walsingham Lunch	-	208.61
Used Clothes Weighed In	-	182.50
	13,609.12	22,457.31
<u>Other Income</u>		
VAT Refund	4,384.50	1,513.80
Bank Interest	4.22	7.27
C.B.F. Interest	576.83	783.06
	18,574.67	24,761.44

P.H. Schofield
P.C.C. Treasurer

ST PAUL'S CHURCH ROYTON

RESTORATION APPEAL FUND ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2024

<u>PAYMENTS</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
Costco Membership	33.60	33.60
Bedding Plants	3,907.60	4,024.37
Oldham Youth Brass Band Evening	494.00	361.47
Quiz Nights	236.15	281.30
Bar Stock	379.18	439.70
Flower Fund	426.39	358.08
Christmas Fair	79.80	191.53
Grand Festive Raffle	-	82.20
Who's Bluffing?	-	65.42
Sundry	88.13	15.09
	5,644.85	5,852.76

The Church

Christmas Trees	280.00	270.00
Christmas Tree Lights	79.96	
Contribution to heating at events	-	50.00
Repairs & Maintenance	1,263.50	1,498.76
Altar Linen	277.79	-
Remedial electric work	5,889.99	-
New church boilers	22,104.00	-
Organ Service	552.60	-
Organ Repairs	463.20	2,670.00
New Cellar Gate	585.00	-
New Cellar Door	650.00	-
Smartwater on Roof	-	2,352.00
Trestle Covers & Bags	-	483.00
Poppy Crosses	-	300.00
Plumbing for new Water Meter	-	100.00
Barrier Rope	-	55.90
	32,146.04	7,779.66

37,790.89	13,632.42
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Receipts B/F	18,574.67	24,761.44
Deficit for the year (Surplus 2023)	<u>-19,216.22</u>	<u>11,129.02</u>

Credit Balances 1.1.24	36,402.43
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Current A/c 31.12.24	9,467.66
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Deposit A/c 31.1.24	1.00
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C.B.F. Fund	7,717.55
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17,186.21

Decrease in Credit Balances	<u>19,216.22</u>
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CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2024

Unless otherwise stated all funds are unrestricted under the terms of the 1993 Charities Act

	Opening Bal.	Income	Expenditure	Closing Bal.
General Expenses	8,201.54	43,960.60	46,741.26	5,420.88
Reserve Fund	18,767.38	788.68	700.00	18,856.06
Parish Centre	19,098.80	34,199.85	32,986.21	20,312.44
Restoration Fund*	25,273.41	24,761.44	13,632.42	36,402.43
Ladies Society	524.49	1,012.00	851.24	685.25
Rose Queen	708.40	2,281.95	2,285.35	705.00
Pilgrimage Fund*	18.26	0.00	18.26	0.00
Card Stall	60.80	228.65	0.00	289.45
Flower Fund	89.32	329.00	358.08	60.24
Coffee Bar	47.65	607.20	650.00	4.85
Magazine Account	1,193.36	529.10	1,500.06	222.40
St Paul's Weekly				
Draw	157.50	1,043.50	1,113.00	88.00
Sunday School	36.57	0.00	36.57	0.00
Sweet Stall	21.70	0.00	0.00	21.70
Youth Group	78.95	21.05	100.00	0.00
	74,278.13	109,763.02	100,972.45	83,068.70
Less transfers between accounts		7,983.00	7,983.00	
	74,278.13	101,780.02	92,989.45	83,068.70

*Restricted funds

P.H. Schofield
P.C.C. Treasurer

6. REPORT ON THE FABRIC, GOODS AND ORNAMENTS OF THE CHURCH

The work carried out to the fabric of the church in 2024, excluding the regular servicing of alarms, fire extinguishers etc., and taken from the Church Log Book

	Date of faculty	Contractor	Cost of works including fees	Details of grant aid from charitable trusts and other bodies
Electrical work carried out following Period Inspection Report (See Appendix A 2024)	-	Hannan Electrical & Security	£5,889.99	N/A
Supply and installation of two new gas heating boilers (See Appendix B 2024)	23.1.2024	HeatinGlobal Limited	£22,104.00	N/A
To supply a gate and fit a rail panel at the top of the steps to the boiler house		Garcias Gates & Railings Ltd	£585.00	N/A
New boiler house external door		Paul McConnell	£650.00	N/A

During 2024 a new vestment press was purchased for the Priest's Sacristy funded by an anonymous donation of £3,000.

7. REPORT ON THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE DEANERY SYNOD

During the period since the last APCM the Oldham and Ashton Deanery Synod has continued to meet on a quarterly basis.

Our Deanery Synod representatives are Graham Mottley, Haydn Mason and Chris Barnes. Along with other churches, and with the support of the PCC, St Paul's has made a financial contribution to the cost of booking venues and running the meetings.

7. REPORT ON THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE DEANERY SYNOD (CONTINUED)

A number of topics were covered in the meetings held in 2024; including;

- Growing Churches for All Generations
- Eco Church Expansion
- Building the Connection with Our Children
- Mission Communities
- Focal Ministry
- Growing Faith Enablement

The proceedings of this year's meetings have been reported back to the PCC and our representatives hope to be able to continue making a positive contribution to the work of the Synod in the year ahead.

*Chris Barnes
Deanery Synod Representative*

12. REPORTS 2024

SAFEGUARDING REPORT

Since the Summer there have been seven DBS renewals and there is one pending. Three more people have been invited to submit their applications and these should be processed within the next couple of months.

The notice board in the Church porch has the updated points of contact if anyone has any safeguarding concerns.

A Safeguarding Newsletter is sent to me on a weekly basis from The National Safeguarding Team.

I will update the PCC on any developments with DBS applications as they become available.

*Julie Watkin,
Parish Safeguarding Officer.*

ST. PAUL'S SUNDAY SCHOOL REPORT

Sunday School continues to be a calm and engaging environment where the children engage with the Gospel for each Sunday. It's a young bunch, so we are thinking about topics from a perspective that is appropriate. We have tried to include the children in projects that mark the church year, and you can see some these projects in the highlights section.

There are lots of craft exercises, with the children thinking about relevant topics whilst making related craft items.

It's lovely to see the children excited to show Fr. Lewis what they have been doing. The ones that are shy in Sunday School seem to be the stars of the stage in church.

This year's highlights

- The Christingle service with our School
- The Crib service and pop up nativity
- Our super Christmas tree made from handprints
- Remembrance Sunday display
- Harvest display

At the moment Rachel and Andrew lead Sunday school, and Gemma is an additional helper. It would be nice to have a couple more leaders. For safeguarding reasons it's essential that we have at least two adults present every Sunday.

ATTENDANCE

As you can see attendance is up a little bit this year, at an average of around 7 children per Sunday.

Andrew & Rachel

PARISH CENTRE REPORT

A change was seen in the day to day running of the Centre. After discussions, it was decided to amalgamate the cleaning duties and bookings of the Centre into one role, and Rachel Dowd was appointed to carry this out. To date this is working extremely well, and we have seen an increase from both new regular tenants and the one-off bookings. We even accommodated the BBC whilst they were filming in Royton!

The Parish Centre Support Group work hard throughout the year, and thanks are extended to those members who attend the meetings, take on responsibilities and support Rachel.

Tasks undertaken throughout 2024 include:

Electrical Remedial Work – it came to light following the Periodic Electric Check that much remedial work was needed. Unfortunately, we had to close the building for one week whilst the work was being done, however, it was carried out during August when some of the groups were on their summer break, meaning as little disruption as possible. The work also had to be completed in order for us to hold the Electrical Safety Certificate required by our Insurers.

Work on the Boilers – some corrosion was discovered at the annual service and the necessary work was carried out by HeatinGlobal.

Telephone – BT insisted that the analogue phone line was replaced with a digital one. We took the opportunity to record a new outgoing message to direct callers to the appropriate person. This was timely as there had been occasions when messages left on the phone were not being passed on quickly. Hopefully, another problem solved!

Fire Exit Steps the existing steps had been giving concern re their safety, and new steps were erected. We have had pleasing remarks from users.

Water – the water bills for the Centre were spiralling, and in an attempt to improve the situation both from a monetary and eco point of view, the running time of the taps in the toilets have been reduced from 28 seconds to 7 seconds, and what an amazing difference that has made.

Contract/Booking Form – this form was revamped with one or two alterations made, and comes into being as at January 2025

Age UK – they have been tenants of the Parish Centre for many years and in 2024 they had their funding slashed. As a result, they asked if we could aid them in any way as the meetings are a 'lifeline' to some of their clients. Their rent was reduced, and they in turn, use just one smaller room. They are very grateful for the Church's assistance.

Christmas Tree – an artificial, pre-lit tree was purchased, which helped make the Centre look very festive over the Christmas period.

These are only the main works undertaken, and thanks must be offered to Rachel and to those who carry out the mundane, every day tasks and respond to incidents as they arise – no mean feat!

The Parish Centre Support Group are passionate about maintaining the standard of the Parish Centre for use of the church, community and tenants. On no account must we be complacent

*Sandra Schofield
Parish Centre Secretary*

RESTORATION AND DEVELOPMENT REPORT

MISSION STATEMENT - The Restoration and Development Committee will work to secure funds for the restoration and development of St. Paul's Church, Royton whilst ensuring all our work is done through the CELEBRATION of our FAITH and in love and FELLOWSHIP.

After much discussion at the Restoration meetings we agreed that we continue to focus on the bigger events and events that went well e.g. THE CHRISTMAS FAYRE, TREVOR AND JANET'S QUIZ NIGHTS, THE BEDDING PLANT SALE, THE WEEKLY DRAW, SUPPORT FOR THE ROSE QUEEN and OLDHAM MUSIC CENTRE EVENTS.

THE WEEKLY DRAW- Aubrey has done a great job through 2024, he would like to pass the baton on. Could you do it ? Speak to Aubrey REMEMBER, IF YOU'RE NOT IN IT YOU CAN'T WIN IT!

Trevor and Janet continue to bring us very popular QUIZ NIGHTS. They are well supported, greatly appreciated and very profitable. It is noted that these quizzes reach out to the wider public. Great outreach work Trevor and Janet keep up the good work.

We worked with Mr Leedale and OLDHAM MUSIC CENTRE YOUTH BRASS BAND in February 2024. We are music lovers at Saint Paul's, and these young people give us some of the best.

A special thank you to our ROSE QUEEN and her mum, Rachel, the Retinue and the team of mums who have continued to work to make her year a success. Please consider supporting all the Rose Queen events as the funds raised go to benefit the Restoration Fund.

The LICENSED BAR has not featured much during 2024, however we plan to continue to use it in the future.

The CHRISTMAS FAYRE and the GRAND FESTIVE DRAW were both extremely successful with huge profits exceeding previous years. Again we were also able to support our school PTA by providing them space to raise funds for school. This has proved to benefit both the PTA and Restoration & Development. We aim to repeat this alliance and explore how we can if possible expand on it.

The ANNUAL BEDDING PLANT SALE is one of our main fundraisers and I am pleased to say that 2024 was again very profitable. *We will continue to use the order form strategy adopted during COVID; e.g. forms are delivered to customers, and they are responsible to return them to Aubrey, we have a good clientele so this works well.* This is an event that allows us to reach out to our Parish and beyond.

Another fine example of teamwork and fellowship. The profit from this event remains exceptional. So long as we continue to have your help and support, we will keep the Plant Sale on our annual programme of events. We need your help to make it a success; we can't do it without you. However, it was noted with the 2024 sale, we needed more help with deliveries. Would you be willing to help us for 2025 sale? Speak to Aubrey

RESTORATION AND DEVELOPMENT REPORT (continued)

MILE OF PENNIES RACE Because we have all grown to love the tinkling sound of Vivien with her bucket! Shaking the pennies of course! We aim to continue collecting your troublesome little coins. Pass your coins to Vivien Cross or Sandra Schofield.

Just to remind you again!.....back in 2007 the Diocese gave us valuable information that allowed us to use GIFT AID for some of our fund raising. We were issued with the Inland Revenue criteria on what could and could not be GIFT AIDED. In relation to the fundraising done by Restoration & Development it only applies to DONATIONS or SPONSORSHIP. The initial donation or sponsorship goes to Restoration whilst the reclaimed Tax helps to pay the Parish Share. Thank you to everyone who has utilised this. A good example of how we can utilise this is the Mile of Pennies Race, and 'One Off' Donations from individuals. The extra income recovered via tax goes towards our Parish Share while the initial donation/sponsorship goes to the Restoration & Development Fund. This amount is such that we will continue to operate this system, and will utilise it for other events. If you are a tax payer please take time to think if you can Gift Aid via Restoration in this way Eileen Wood (Deputy Chair Restoration & Development Committee)

WAYS YOU CAN HELP US IN 2025

If you have a talent or skill, use it to raise funds for us, join. We can help you to make your ideas into events!

Continue off loading those troublesome little coins to Vivien Cross for The Mile Pennies, and if you pay Tax, Gift Aid them.

Join the Weekly Draw, speak to Aubrey

Support the Restoration Events.

Support the Rose Queen Events.

Tell us of any new ideas to raise funds.

Join us every 3rd Wednesday in the month at our planning meetings, they are low key, informal meetings and everyone is welcome.

Please pray for the continuing work of the Restoration & Development Committee.

Whatever you do, put your whole heart in it.....

Colossians Chapter 3 verses 23 -24

I will show you my faith by what I can do.....

James Chapter 2 v 18

CELL OF OUR LADY OF WALSINGHAM, ST. PAUL, ST. GEORGE & ST. DENYS

Due to a lack of a priest, and other reasons, our Cell meetings did not resume until May when we welcomed Fr. Lewis to our group.

On Wednesday the 22nd May we met at 7.00 p.m. in church for 'May Devotions to Mary'. Fr. Lewis conducted a beautiful service which included the crowning of Mary, something we have not done before. We all presented our fresh flowers to Mary in the vases provided, which again for the first time were placed on pedestals arounds her, as well as others being placed

at her feet. Fr. Lewis made the crown for Mary (a Blue Peter badge, I think, would not be inappropriate) which was amazing. We sang hymns and said prayers and thanked God for the Mother of our Saviour. The meeting was well attended and we were all impressed by Fr. Lewis and his new ideas for the Walsingham Cell. My sincere thanks to Fr. Lewis for his time and endeavours and such a beautiful service. My thanks also to everyone who attended.

Our June Cell meeting was held on the 26th in church and began at 7.00 p.m. Fr. Lewis led us in saying the Rosary, again with a new look. Instead of sitting in the seats of the Lady Chapel, we sat on chairs in a circle in front of the main altar, which made a far more serene feeling of togetherness within the group. The meeting was well attended. My thanks to Fr. Lewis and all who attended.

Regrettably, our July meeting due to be held on the 24th had to be cancelled because Fr. Lewis was needed to undertake Confirmation lessons.

The August Cell meeting due to be held on the 28th had to be cancelled as Fr. Lewis was away on pilgrimage in Walsingham.

A slight change to our September Cell meeting as it was held on Tuesday the 24th at 7.00 p.m. This was so we could celebrate the new official 'Feast of Our Lady of Walsingham' on the day. Fr. Lewis conducted a beautiful sung Mass and our choir and organist led us in some lovely hymns. Attendance was really good too. Following the service we all enjoyed light refreshments and a get-together chat. My sincere thanks go to Fr. Lewis, our organist and choir for all their endeavours and time, and to everyone who attended including visitors from St. James, Barry Street for their support.

Our October Cell meeting was our Fundraiser Lunch held on Sunday the 20th at 2.00 p.m. in our Parish Centre. We all enjoyed a lovely meal, drinks and the company of Fr. Lewis for the first time. Twelve people dined and members unable to attend sent generous donations and we raised the sum of £220.62. This money together with a personal donation has been used to buy the new Book of The Gospels for our church, and will be dedicated to our Cell of Walsingham for future generations to come.

Regrettably our November Cell meeting due to be held on the 27th had to be cancelled due to illness.

Beryl Furlong

LADIES SOCIETY

We held our Annual Meeting on the 19th March, and all Reports were read and agreed. We decided to carry on with going out for lunches and have a day out during July.

Our first meal was at The Turks Head. A very nice meal, and then we said our goodbyes as the present family were leaving that weekend after many years running it. It was the end of an era.

On the 20th July we had our annual day out. Again to Llandudno, but this time the sun didn't shine on us. It rained in the afternoon. Most people had lunch in the resort at various restaurants and some went shopping. We made our way back to Royton, still in the rain.

On 19th November we went to the North Star for lunch. The meal was good and everyone had a pleasant time catching up with friends.

We would welcome new members to our organisation and if you are interested, please see Ann Longbottom or June Wynn to join us.

Ann Longbottom

ST. PAUL'S C.E. PRIMARY SCHOOL

St. Paul's has been busy as usual with lots going on both in and out of school.

There have been some major staffing changes during the year. Jo and Beth took over from Sally Brown in the office and settled in really well. Mr Russell, our popular English lead, left for a promotion at another school and was replaced by Gemma Crispin, who again has fitted in very well. Mrs Hilary Howarth, a teaching assistant took a well-earned retirement after working at St. Paul's for 45 years!

David Mullin finished as a governor after almost 8 years. Father Lewis joined us on the Governing Board, as well as a new parent governor Andy Dunn. We thank them for giving up their time to support the school.

The Children have been supporting various charities throughout the year. They have raised money for Comic Relief, Foodbank, Eastern European children (Shoebox Appeal), Macmillan (reading café), and various other causes.

Extra-curricular activities remain an important part of life at St. Paul's and this year has been as busy as ever. Many sporting competitions have taken place, both in and out of school in addition to music performances, dance, choral speaking and residential trips. These activities are vital in building up confidence and sharing experiences. Many fun events continue particularly in the Autumn term. We have pumpkin trails, light discos followed by our Christmas parties, Christmas jumper days and visits to the Pantomime to name but a few.

Our link with the church is as strong as ever. Father Lewis has made a really positive impact within school. He comes in every Tuesday for collective worship and interacts with the

ST. PAUL'S C.E. PRIMARY SCHOOL (continued)

children in class and in the worship group. Maybe he should help Lucie with dance in school after his recent Macarena performance.

School has been to church on many occasions throughout the year. Easter service, Summer serenade, leavers service attended by Bishop Mark, Harvest service, Christingle and choir and Uppermill brass band concert. More recently they have had a class attend church on Wednesday mornings.

Sadly, school ended the year with the tragic news that one of our Year 1 pupils, Karter, passed away. Despite his short time at St. Paul's, he touched many hearts. In his memory, a Christmas tree has been planted, which will be lit each year.

In the background much work has been going on with the school's wish to join Crompton House Trust. The legal processes have now been completed and conversion has gone ahead on Feb 1st 2025.

Writing this report is my final task as Chair of governors. It has been a very rewarding position and I am certain the school will go on from strength to strength with the support of Crompton House.

*Janet Wright
Chair of Governors*

13 P.C.C. REPORT

It could be said that 2024 at St. Paul's was a year of two halves!

We began the year, once more, in an Interregnum with a closed church due to the break down of both boilers towards the end of 2023. We ended 2024, still in Interregnum, but with an appointed Curate-in-Charge, and new boilers in situ.

It was an exciting event when Fr. Lewis became the Curate-in-Charge of ourselves and St. James, Barry Street. We had been told that he would be taking up his position in February, but for one reason or another it was actually the 14th April 2024 before he conducted his first Mass here at St. Paul's. It has been amazing to note the difference he has made to St. Paul's with his enthusiasm, dedication, forward thinking and youthfulness, not to mention his sharp sense of humour. He has been restricted in what he can actually do going forwards, but the suggestions and guidance he has brought to the P.C.C. for their consideration has always been thoughtful and well presented. This takes nothing away from the visiting priests who have conducted Masses and supported us through trying times.

It was heartening to see when the annual statistics were completed that for the first time in some years they were beginning to increase slightly. It has been delightful to welcome back some 'old' faces and warmly welcome some 'new'. Let's pray this trend continues.

The P.C.C. met 7 times during 2024 and the Standing Committee 3 times. Alongside the main P.C.C. meetings, the various Sub Committees meet, carry out work, and report to each

P.C.C. meeting. During 2024 there were five baptisms, one wedding and nine funerals, four of which

were not held in church. In August a service of Confirmation was held at our church by the Bishop of Beverley, Stephen Race.

For the first time in many years, we were able to pay our Parish Share in full. However, this was only made possible because the Diocese met with each parish to discuss what they could realistically afford to pay. The original amount for 2024 had been £54,000, which had been pointed out was greater than our total income! At a meeting held with them in September the Diocese had said that basically the Parish Share should be achievable but challenging. After a full discussion the agreed Parish Share was reduced from £54,000 to £25,000. The amounts for 2025 and 2026 have been set at £27,000 and £29,000 respectively. We must all work hard to ensure that we do pay our Parish Share as this does open other streams of funding to us e.g. Grants. However, we must not get complacent as we are all aware that all bills, especially utility bills are rising drastically.

In an attempt to move with the times, consideration has been given to exploring the possibility of having a digital giving device in church. This would mean that as we move more into a cashless society, visitors to the church are able to make a donation via their cards. Again, this is being taken forward into 2025 and we hope it is in place as soon in the New Year as possible.

The Buildings Sub Committee have been extremely busy in 2024. At the beginning of the year we received the Faculty for the installation of two new boilers in Church. The work was started at the end of February and took two weeks for the work to be completed. It has to be said that the results both temperature-wise and economy-wise have not really met our expectations, but the Sub Committee have not removed it from their Agenda and they will continue to meet with the contractors who installed the system, until satisfaction is reached.

The area around the outside of the boiler room was improved once the boilers were installed. The existing grille over the steps had to be replaced and a new small fence and gate put in place, which makes access to the boiler room much easier. The boiler room door was in a very poor state of repair, and this was replaced.

Following the Periodic Electrical Report, remedial work totalling almost £6,000 was required. The work was carried out and upon completion we were issued with the necessary Electrical Safety Certificate required by our insurers.

The north aisle behind the organ has given cause for concern. Cracks appeared in the plaster rendering it loose and a health and safety risk. Once the loose plaster had been removed, it was agreed that Ecclesiastical Insurance would be contacted to discover whether there was damage on the roof, and if so, whether we were covered by the insurance, as we would not be able to fund the work without the aid of a Grant.

More or less at the same time, dry rot was discovered in the bell frame and the concern was it could cause further problems in the main porch if the frame could no longer support the weight of the heavy bells. The quote for the work was impossible for us to undertake without the aid of a Grant, and in the short term the bells have been removed from the

frame thereby removing any risk. Fr. Lewis assured the Sub Committee there was no liturgical need for bells.

The vestibule in the south east corner continues to prove problematic. It would appear that the plaster has never fully dried out, and the Architects have recommended a new parapet on the outside of the door.

As evidenced, there is much work to do in 2025, but the Buildings Sub Committee are determined to continue their efforts in keeping our church as safe and maintained to as high a standard as possible within the restraints of our finances.

At the July P.C.C. meeting and following his first three months with us, Fr. Lewis was asked to bring any observations to the meeting. He explained that from Advent Sunday 2024 the whole Anglican church would be changing its translations from the Jerusalem Bible to the Standard Version-Catholic Edition. This would be mandatory for use in England, Wales and Scotland from Advent Sunday. He said that naturally there would be a considerable cost involved, just short of £1,200. It was decided that to offset some of the costs, members of the congregation would be asked if they would like to make a donation in memory of a loved one, with them being recognized on the bookplate at the front of each Lectionary, if so desired. This was agreed by the P.C.C and in actual fact all the Lectionaries were paid for in full by the congregation, with the Cell of our Lady of Walsingham donating the Book of Gospels. At the same time, it was explained that we were not using an authorized Rite. After consideration it was decided that we purchase laminated Mass cards to use alongside hymn books at Mass. Our organist Richard, has written a new music setting, which we are slowly getting to grips with, and as they say practice makes perfect!

The P.C.C. were told that on inspection, the high altar holding the blessed sacrament was not an altar nor was it consecrated. Fr. Lewis said that he had visited the Diocesan store at St. John's House, Bury whilst on other business, and noticed a redundant altar held by them. Whilst smaller than the original table in the sanctuary, he felt that the carvings matched the ones on the reredos. The altar would be free to us and we would be responsible for transporting it to St. Paul's. This now stands in place, and the previous table has been recycled to the back of church where it is used for displaying notices/leaflets.

After much consideration, the Children's Corner in church has been removed. Concern had been growing as the Corner was becoming an issue, particularly on Tuesday evenings when the children were colouring, not concentrating or showing interest in the Mass and it fostered noise and unwanted behaviour.

Coupled with this change, it was agreed that when the Sunday School joined the Mass they would come to the front of church, rather than the side aisle. Each week at the end of Mass, the children now tell us what they have been learning in Sunday School and are very enthusiastic about showing their work. It is working well and a definite improvement in their involvement of the service. The Sunday School leaders work hard each week in delivering liturgical themes that the children can understand and appreciate.

An unused consecrated altar which was standing in the Priest's Vestry and had become a 'dumping ground' has been moved to where the Children's Corner was and become the Holy Souls Chapel, with the Chantry Book being accommodated there. The original font is

now once again housed in the Sanctuary, and baptisms are conducted using this font. This is
a

much better arrangement for the congregation as it gives them a better view and involvement in the service.

The Priest's Vestry has had a refurbishment. The old wardrobes have been taken down, the cupboards tidied and a new vestment press purchased. This purchase was made possible by an anonymous donation given specifically for that purpose. There are just one or two more small items needed, and this area has been improved beyond recognition, and thanks must be extended to all who helped to achieve this.

Kaitlyn Dowd was crowned our Rose Queen on the 18th May, and since that time, along with the retinue mums has been working hard organising fundraising events. The Fireworks Night was very successful, and they also held stalls at our Christmas Fayre. As a parish we were very proud of Kaitlyn when she had her long hair cut short and donated her hair to a charity who provide wigs for children undergoing chemotherapy – an incredibly thoughtful and caring act, and there wasn't a dry eye in the house!

Other charity donations from St. Paul's included two collections, in June and October, of various items for Ukraine organized once more by Mrs. Connie Heslop, and our Lenten Appeal went to Oldham Young Carers. Both charities were thankful for our donations.

During the year it was discovered that there were mass baby graves in Royton Cemetery. Fr. Lewis was involved with Churches Together In Royton offering support to those families and conducted a dignified service for them at our church. He also led the vigil at Royton Cemetery. Whilst a very sad occasion, it was rewarding that St. Paul's was at the forefront showing empathy and support to the community.

There have been changes afoot at the school as well as church. At January's meeting, Mrs. Henderson, Head at St. Paul's C.E. Primary School gave a presentation explaining that the Board of Governors had unanimously agreed to apply to join the Multi Academy Trust led by Crompton House C.E. Secondary School. She explained in detail the procedure of becoming part of that Trust and emphasized that after looking at other Multi Academy Trusts, the Governors were confident that the Crompton House Trust was the right choice for St. Paul's C.E. Primary School. The purpose of the presentation was two-fold, being a matter of courtesy and seeking the consent of the P.C.C. to the school's decision. Following discussion, the P.C.C. unanimously agreed that

"The P.C.C. of Royton, St. Paul as foundation of St. Paul's C.E. Primary School, Royton, consents to the governing body of St. Paul's C.E. Primary School, Royton applying for an Academy Order under the Academies Act 2010, Section 3iv"

Whilst it was known that it would not be a quick process, it was hoped that all would be in place for the end of 2024. In fact, this did not happen, but the final legalities are planned for early 2025.

The links with the school continue to thrive, and Fr. Lewis and Mrs. Henderson work collaboratively delivering assemblies and other church services to the children. Fr. Lewis goes into school every Tuesday morning, and once again one class joins the Wednesday

morning Mass. This is done on a rotation basis. During Advent Fr. Lewis, with the help of some of the

congregation members, led an Advent event. Years 5 and 6 came into church and there were stations around the church where they spent 10 minutes at each. It went very well, and enjoyed by both adults and children alike and hopefully will be repeated in 2025. In December Sunday School once again enjoyed a joint Christingle with school. This was led by Fr. Lewis and Mrs. Henderson and was an enjoyable service and hit the right tone for everyone. We look forward to continuing to work closely with our school in 2025.

At the end of August, Mr. Hawkins stepped down as Church Warden and a P.C.C. member, and thanks must be offered for his work over many years, particularly for ensuring that the Masses were covered by visiting priests since we entered into our Interregnum. Mr. Turner has been ably supported by the Deputy Church Wardens and other members of the P.C.C.

It is impossible to mention everyone who give their time and talents to ensure that Masses are prepared and conducted, Sunday School nurturing the young people of our church, those who give home communion to the sick, the Wednesday group who keep the church looking spick and span, to the various sub committees working tirelessly, all part of the team here. We must give grateful thanks to them all.

We go forward into 2025 with hope, enthusiasm and confidence for the year ahead, during which our Interregnum should have finally ended.

Sandra Schofield
P.C.C. Secretary

Confirmation took place in December. This was a joint service held at St. Mark's, Chadderton. Along with our candidates, others from St. Mark's, Chadderton and St. Gabriel's, Middleton Junction were presented for confirmation. The Bishop of Beverley officiated.

As in the previous year, Mrs. Connie Heslop organised collections in February and November in support of the Crisis in Ukraine. The Ukraine Church in Oldham invited members of our congregation to their Easter Vigil on the 15th April, and those who went along remarked on how welcome they were made to feel. In December, Stephan from that church came to speak to the congregation to thank us for the donations made. He presented a Christmas bauble painted by the people in Ukraine as a thank you gift.

Finally, many thanks must go to all who work so hard in so many ways to keep the Church, Parish Centre, Sunday School and all activities going. As we move into 2024, we look forward to welcoming our new Curate, Fr. Lewis into a warm church, and starting a new chapter in the life at St. Paul's.

Sandra Schofield
P.C.C. Secretary

ST. PAUL'S, ROYTON

A.P.C.M.

7TH APRIL 2024