

**The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of
Stretton
St Matthew's**



**Trustee Annual Report and Financial Statements for Year ending 31st
December 2023**

Registered Charity Number: 1132920

Acknowledgement

This report pays tribute to all those in the congregation; the PCC and the Clergy team for all their work and ministry in supporting our church, often not seen, but for the benefit of the whole parish.

St. Matthew's Church

St. Matthew's Church is situated in the village of Stretton in Warrington with the parish boundaries encompassing Appleton and Stretton, and bordering Appleton Thorn and St Cross Church which is within the Benefice. The Parish of St Matthew's Stretton is in the Deanery of Great Budworth and is part of the Diocese of Chester.

The Church is a Grade II listed building with a rich heritage dating back to 1827.

The Church is built of red sandstone with Westmorland slate roofs and has a bell tower accommodating a ring of eight bells. It also has a tower clock with two unique clock faces (there are only about half a dozen church clocks in the country which have letters instead of numbers).



The Parish was originally in a rural village location, but now, north of the M56, is becoming part of the south Warrington conurbation, whilst remaining more rural south of the motorway. The recent housing developments have increased the population. New housing is proposed south of the church, which will place the Church at the heart of a housing community, rather than its previously rural position.

The Church considers itself very fortunate to have such a beautiful building, although maintenance of the fabric continues to be a challenge.

St Matthew's Church of England Primary School is an integral part of the Church family. It is located next to the Church which facilitates the use of the Church by the School. This allows children of all ages to familiarise themselves with the building, not just for faith-related activities, but for its history, architecture, and heritage.

The Church Hall is located next to the School. It is used on a regular basis by several local groups such as Brownies and Stretton Parish Council as well as Church groups and hired out for celebrations. During the weekdays, it is used by Pre-School, which is very popular. There is an ongoing effort by the Church Hall Management Committee to market the benefits of hire within the local community.



The Vicar's Report 2023 – the Reverend Alan Jewell

I began the year in Melbourne, Australia, as part of a three-month sabbatical. I was away from parish duties from the beginning of November 2022 to the end of January 2023. As I said in last year's report, I am very grateful to the Churchwardens and others for their support, and to the clergy and Readers who kindly stepped in to take services. Foremost amongst these was, of course, our own Reader, Linda Buckley, who generously gave much of her time and energy to ensure that things went well in my absence. I am also grateful to the Revd Chris Moore who provided priestly ministry.

During my sabbatical, I worshipped in a number of cathedrals and other splendid churches: from Chester, Gloucester, York, and Canterbury, to Berlin and Melbourne. I was in Melbourne for the whole of Advent and Christmas 2022 to Epiphany 2023. I attached myself to St Paul's Cathedral, Melbourne, and was privileged to lead some midweek eucharists there and to take part in a couple of Sunday services. My aim (as well as visiting family) was to try to make sense of following the Church's calendar in the southern hemisphere. (Christmas in the summer?!)

Life Events

In 2023, our churches held **31 baptisms** (down from 37 in 2022), **6 weddings** (down from 11 in 2022) and **18 funerals** (down from 23 in 2022). Of the baptisms, 24 were at St Matthew's, and 7 at St Cross. Of the weddings, 4 were at St Matthew's, and 2 at St Cross. Of the funerals, 12 were the responsibility of St Matthew's, and 6 came under St Cross (including services conducted at the crematorium or cemetery, rather than in church).

I'm grateful to those who support our 'Life Events' services— the Vergers, Alan Bruce at St Matthew's and David Rose at St Cross, the Churchwardens, and Carol Rylett who is Baptism Administrator at St Matthew's.

Of course, the 'Life Events' statistics don't tell the real story. Among those for whom funeral services were conducted, there were some very familiar names. I was approaching the end of my sabbatical when I heard the news that our Reader, Alan Hibbert, had died. Alan had reached the age of 90 and had exercised an active ministry in both churches until very recently. We feel his loss deeply. I always valued Alan's support, encouragement, his deep faith, and commitment to prayer. He was godly, spiritual, and Christlike. We thank God for Alan's example of Christian discipleship.

We also said farewell to Dorothy Edwards, who had been such a significant figure in the life of St Cross and the wider community.

Volunteers

Churches, along with other charities and voluntary groups, have experienced a drop in the numbers of people who are able to give their time to support their activities. Studies suggest that formal volunteering is at a record low: in 2019, 11 million people were recorded as volunteering at least once a month. By 2022, that figure was down to 7 million. The think tank, Theos, reported in September 2023 that possible causes of the reduction in volunteers included:

“a combination of changed working patterns, retirement, economic pressures, and a difference in the 'offer' that volunteers are now looking for after the pandemic”

Church Times, 29 September 2023

Churches have long relied on retired people to take responsibility for many of the jobs that need doing. As our members age, we are always looking for younger people to take over, but that is proving difficult. Church regulations require each parish to have two elected Churchwardens, but there is a growing number of parishes that are unable to do that as it becomes ever more difficult to find people willing to undertake the duties and responsibilities of this role. I am very grateful to the Churchwardens for both parishes – Stephen Edwards and Kath Holbourn at St Matthew's, and David Shaw and Sandra Bates at St Cross. Kath stood down in October 2023 and we are very grateful for all her hard work as Warden. (We have yet to replace her!)

Many parishes also struggle to find volunteers to fill places on the Parochial Church Council. I'm grateful to those who do give their time in this way for both churches. At St Matthew's, we have not been able to fill all available places. We are blessed to have very competent and committed Treasurers: Catherine Edwards at St Matthew's and Tracy-Anne Clancy at St Cross. Particular thanks to Catherine who announced her intention to stand down, for all that she has done for St Matthew's.

Against this backdrop, it is good to note that both churches still have a remarkably dedicated band of lay people. The danger of naming individuals is that I'm bound to leave someone out: but thanks to the unsung heroes who support our churches – who give their time and money, who keep the buildings safe, clean, and comfortable, who change the altar frontals, decorate with flowers, ring the bells, play pianos and organs, welcome visitors, take, count, and bank collections, work the technology, make tea and coffee and provide biscuits... Thank you!

Worship

With the interruption to regular worship in church during the pandemic, we lost a lot of ground. We lost regular worshippers as people aged, continued to isolate, or simply got out of the habit of attending church. Numbers at St Cross on a Sunday morning are not bad, but St Matthew's often feels rather empty. (30 people at St Cross feels good. 30 people at St Matthew's, not so much!) There are positive signs, too, with new people joining both congregations and, at St Matthew's, a number of young families who regularly worship with us.

One of the things that vanished in the pandemic was the rota of people doing readings and prayers in church. We now have a smaller number of people participating more often. If you would like to help, please let me know.

At St Matthew's, we have been able to re-introduce Sunday activities for children, with a small band of volunteers working with colouring sheets and crafts during the 10.45AM service when it is Holy Communion. We try to make the Morning Worship services more all-age friendly. The 10.45AM service at St Matthew's is routinely live streamed – as we have the technology in place – and we have had some online worshippers who have become in-person worshippers! All live streamed services are also available as videos on the St Matthew's website.

The evening Contemporary Worship on the first Sunday of the month has a small band of regular attenders: those who come are very appreciative of what is on offer.

Conclusion

As we look back on the events of 2023, it is clear that both churches have faced challenges and have also seen signs of life and growth. As well as saying goodbye to significant members of the community, and grappling with issues of finance, fabric, and smaller, older congregations, we have witnessed the dedication and resilience of those who continue to support our churches. There is much to be thankful for.

As we look ahead, what can we say? I can do no better than this:

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

Hebrews 13.8

Every blessing,

Alan Jewell, Vicar

Aim and Purpose.

Aim

The primary object of all Parochial Church Councils (PCCs) is the promotion of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to the doctrines and practices of the Church of England. The PCC has the responsibility to co-operate with the incumbent – the Reverend Alan Jewell – “in promoting in the parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.” (The PCC (Powers) Measure 1956).

At St. Matthew's the mission statement is “[Sharing the love of Jesus with all through friendship, prayer and service.](#)” The Church exists to serve its Parish – the whole local Community – not just its congregation.

Structure, governance, and management.

The Parochial Church Council is a corporate body established by the Church of England and is a Registered Charity (Charity No. 1132920). The PCC operates under the Parochial Church Council (Powers) Measure 1956, the Church Representation Rules 2023, and the Charities Act 2011.

Members of the PCC are either ex officio or elected at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting by those on the electoral roll, in accordance with the Church Representation Rules and the Charity Commission Guidance. They are the charity trustees who are “persons having the general control and management of the administration of the charity” (Charities Act 2011).

The PCC is chaired by the Vicar and meets monthly, with the exceptions of August and December. Meetings alternate between a full business meeting and a discussion meeting of one or two items only. This allows for the business meeting to deal primarily with the operational and financial management of the Church, with reports from sub-committees, and any urgent business. The discussion meeting allows for in-depth debate on key items and is important both for the education of members and to allocate more time for topics which may have greater medium to long term significance than could be given in a bigger agenda.

At the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on Sunday 21st May 2023 the following proposal was adopted:

a PCC member may continue to serve for two consecutive three-year terms provided that they are nominated for a second term at the APCM at the end of their third year. There will not be any annual retirements.

There were no new nominations to PCC. Carol Rylett has agreed to remain on the PCC for a further three-year term.

The churchwardens were elected for a further year.

An active database is maintained ensuring that DBS checks are undertaken and maintained, and that all PCC members complete the appropriate level of safeguarding training. This is reviewed annually. Through the year we were seeking to appoint a Parish Safeguarding Officer (an appointment was made early in 2024). It was recognised that this was a serious gap for the Church, so to mitigate the impact, Stephen Edwards, Church Warden handles the administrative aspects of the role. This ensures that DBS checks and training records are accurately maintained and are current. Information as to where to access support is prominently displayed in Church, should it be required.

The PCC has complied with the duty under Section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline

Measure 2016, fully recognising its duty to have due regard to the House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.

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

Ex Officio	Revd. Alan Jewell
Church Warden	Stephen Edwards Kath Holbourn (resigned 20 Oct 2023)
Lay Representatives on The Deanery Synod	Linda Buckley Stephen Edwards Kath Holbourn (resigned 20 Oct 2023)
Treasurer	Catherine Edwards (resigned 8 Dec 2023)
Elected Members	
Elected until 2023	Chris Ellson (until 21 May 2023)
Elected until 2024	Andree Hillas
Elected until 2025	Jean Doherty
Elected until 2026	Carol Rylett

The Standing Committee of the PCC meets every two months prior to the full business meeting of the PCC in order to set the agenda and to ensure that relevant papers and information are ready to inform decision-making. It also has the responsibility to transact the business of the PCC between meetings.

The PCC is assisted by a Finance Sub-Group and the Church Hall Management Committee. There had been a Strategy Group which planned our emergence from the pandemic, but during the year this was disbanded as it is the role of the PCC to set strategy.

The Sub-Committee membership is voluntary with PCC members agreeing to assist with the work required in their specific area in order that the PCC is given detailed information on which to base decisions. Non-PCC members are also invited to participate, where their individual area of expertise greatly assists the work being undertaken. The Sub-Groups do not have executive responsibility. The Church Hall Management Committee is responsible for the operational management of the Church Hall, and the management of bookings.

St Matthew's is represented on the Deanery Synod by the Vicar and two lay members (with one vacancy). Our Lay Reader is the Lay Chairman. The Deanery Synod is an intermediary between the PCC and Diocesan Synod and usually meets three times per year. The Deanery Synod is made up of

Clergy and Laity members from across the Great Budworth deanery. It met three times during the year. The February Synod was held in our church, and Archdeacon Ian Bishop spoke about the Diocese's commitment to net zero carbon by 2030, and what churches could do to reduce their carbon footprint.

The July meeting discussed the Diocesan strategy, and in October (again at St. Matthew's) Harriot Roberts, Director of development (vision and strategy) explained the Diocese of Chester's vision going forward and Sharon Taylor-Booth spoke about support available to Treasurers across the diocese.

A key responsibility of the PCC is to identify how our activities are focused on achieving public benefit and positively impacting on the lives of people in our congregation and community. The Strategy work has focused significantly on how the Church can outreach and build increasingly stronger links with the local community. The incumbent, Alan Jewell, and the PCC are very aware of the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the specific guidance on "Charities for the advancement of religion" (2011) and are keen to demonstrate how this is being achieved in practice.

Objectives and Activities

Strategic development to enable recovery and growth.

This built on the previous year's work to review and develop activities to return the church to a more normal situation post COVID.

Continuing to develop links and promote positive action beyond the Church building into the Community.

This involves communication and events.

Develop and progress our work on eco-church.

The introduction on the diocesan website explains:

Eco Church is a scheme run by A Rocha, UK equipping churches to care for God's creation through their worship, buildings, land, community engagement, and individual lifestyles.

The ethos behind Eco Church is underpinned by the National Church's goal to become Net Zero by 2030. In simple terms, Net Zero means, making no contribution to global warming. This is achieved by ensuring that the amount of fossil fuels (carbon) we put into the atmosphere is matched by the amount of carbon we take out of the atmosphere. Hence the term 'Carbon Neutral'.

The Diocese of Chester is committed to working towards the 2030 target and many of our churches have already taken steps to improve their carbon footprint by implementing improvements to their heating systems, recycling waste and planting trees etc.

Big old churches, that were built hundreds of years ago, aren't the most heat efficient of buildings, which does present a challenge when it comes to reducing energy consumption. But the key to Eco Church scheme is all about balancing your carbon output. A church might not be able to make many improvements to its heating consumption, but there might be ways to offset your carbon consumption to 'balance your carbon books'.

Promote the Diocesan strategy.

The Diocese has been developing its vision through consultation, a process known as "Casting the net wide". The key message of the vision is "Together in Christ sharing hope".

Meeting our Objectives – Performance and Review

Strategic development to enable recovery and growth

Building on the work of the previous year four areas were identified for further work:

- Service provision
- Children & young people
- Nurturing Discipleship
- Events

Service provision

After discussion the service pattern adopted from 1st April is:

- First and third Sunday 10045am Holy Communion
- Second and Fourth Sunday 8am Holy Communion, 10.45 Morning Worship
- Fifth Sunday: A United Service with St. Cross.
- A monthly Contemporary Evening Service.

Children & young people

With a number of families with young children having recently joined the church, we have re-started Children's Activities during the 10.45am Holy Communion services. Several people have volunteered to assist with this. It currently consists of activity sheets which are done around one of the tables at the back of the church.

If there is sufficient demand for Children's Activities on a Sunday morning, and there are sufficient numbers, then the church hall is available.

We have re-started doing Extravaganzas, aimed at families, on a quarterly basis. This involves refreshments, crafts and a short service.

Nurturing Discipleship

After discussion and consideration of courses, how they should be run, for whom and when, the Vicar offered to put on a course after Easter.

The Big Story was for people new to the Bible and those who wanted to go deeper, showing how all the books, characters, and events, fit together to form one BIG story from Genesis to Revelation. The Bible Course also provides tools and skills to help apply the Bible to everyday life.

The sessions were:

1. Introducing the Bible
2. Creation and Covenant
3. Exodus and Promised Land
4. Judges and Kings

5. Exile and Prophets
6. Jesus and the Gospels
7. Acts and the Church
8. Revelation and Review

Church Fellowship

This group meets monthly and has changed its name from St Matthew's to St Matthew's and St Cross Church Fellowship, to better reflect the membership of the Fellowship and that the two Churches have increasingly worked together to their mutual benefit. The Fellowship had a variety of speakers during the year covering the Commonwealth War Graves Foundation, Warrington Women's Aid, Warrington Street Pastors, craft events as well as an afternoon tea to celebrate the coronation of King Charles III.

The Singing Kettle.

The Singing Kettle restarted in the spring with regular gatherings on the fourth Thursday of every month in the Church Hall with refreshments and an informal sing-along.

Events

A number of events were put on during the year for the local community, with the intention of reaching beyond the regular congregation:

Six Stories of Stretton

In October Clare Olver gave a talk on the local history that was very well attended by people from across the parish, with a notable representation from Lower Stretton.

Quiz

Linda Buckley held a successful Quiz in the Church Hall, which was well received, and so further quizzes are planned.

Musical evening

This involved a range of people from across the parish including violinist from the school, a local pianist, a singer, the Appleton Thorn choir and the Singing Kettle band leading everyone in song.

Continuing to develop links and promote positive action beyond the Church building into the community.

Communication is mainly electronic, using the church's website and Facebook page.

Facebook

Our Facebook page has 556 followers (63% of whom live in Warrington), but with sharing to other local pages our posts reach more than double that number, with approximately a third engaging with the post (commenting, liking or sharing).

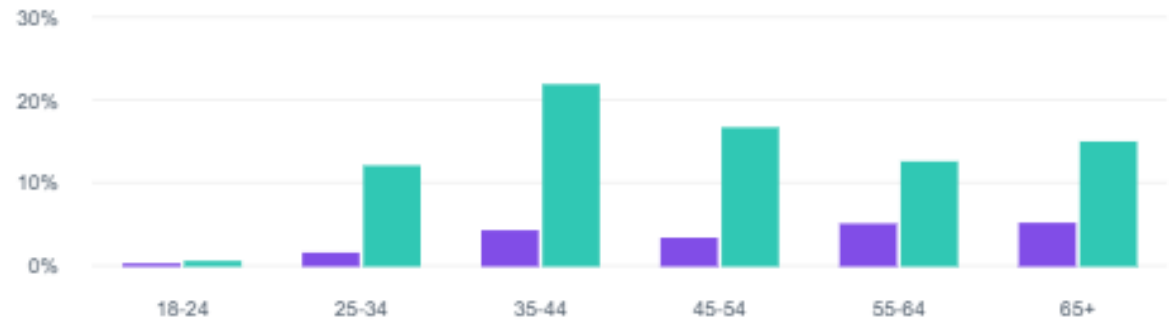
Our audience profile:

Audience

556 Facebook followers

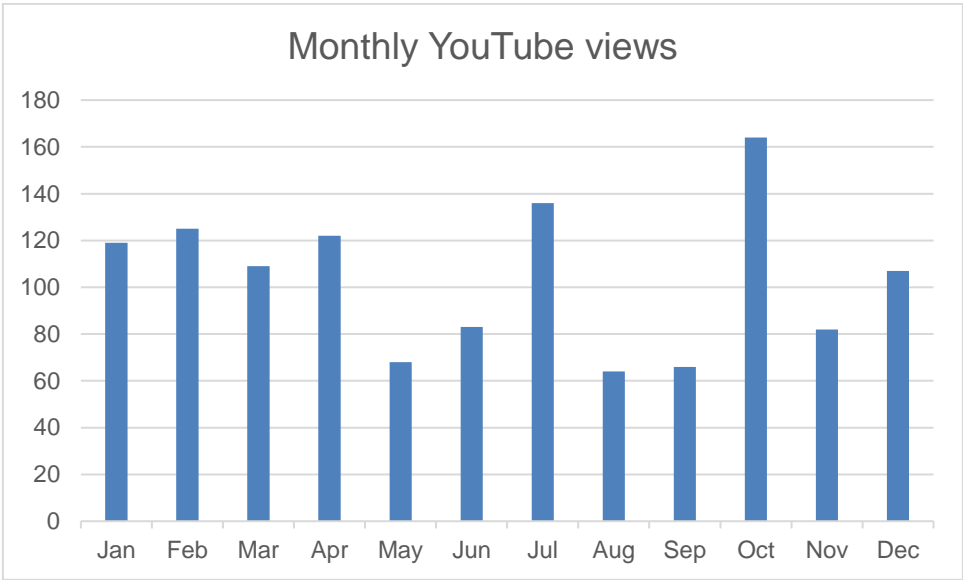
Age and gender

Men 20.50%
Women 79.50%



You Tube

Our main Sunday service is live streamed on You Tube, and averages over 100 views per month.



Website

Our website (www.stmatthewschurchstretton.org.uk) attracts over 1,000 visitors per month.



We have welcomed new people in the parish now that the housing developments have been completed. Our events have drawn in people from the wider community to make use of the church heritage.

This objective is ongoing – improvement in the external noticeboards is planned. Continuing development of the website and encouraging people to submit articles to keep a constant supply of quality information available, is essential to make the website the “go to” place for information.

The new housing estates have developed significantly over the past year with many families moving in during the Autumn months. Four hundred leaflets were distributed across the Parish, predominantly in the new estates, to advertise the Christmas services and events. It also presented an opportunity to speak to people as the leaflets were being posted. Attendance at the Christmas Tree Festival and Crib Services particularly, were excellent.

Develop and progress our work on eco-church.

We have undertaken the Eco-Church survey to benchmark ourselves against the criteria which produced the following outcome:

Category	Award
Worship and Teaching	Gold award
Buildings	Bronze award
Land	No award
Community and Global Engagement	No award
Lifestyle	No award

This objective needs more people to give it consideration to improve our ranking. Some of the questions we will not be able to change the answer, but there are areas where improvement could be made relatively simply:

Buildings

Questions relate to double glazing (not feasible as a Listed Building) and generating our own renewable energy. However, we could look at installing LED lights.

Land

Questions relate to encouraging wildlife (bird boxes and bug hotels), growing wild flowers, wild life surveys. Growing fruit and vegetables. Some of these could be done.

Community and Global Engagement

These questions are about organising events for people to engage with local leaders, MPs and environmentalists, organising litter-picking, local car-share schemes and environmental campaigns.

Lifestyle

Questions relate to having a champion to encourage the church community to become more environmentally sustainable, reducing car usage and personal energy consumption, personal ethical investment, and environmental lifestyle audits. It suggests having practical lifestyle tips on caring for God's earth which could be easily added to our website.

Promote the Diocesan strategy.

The PCC discussed the Diocesan vision "Together in Christ, sharing hope" in October, and considered how our church's strategy is aligned with the diocese. The diocesan vision has a number of sub-themes:

Growing braver, fuller faith

Getting out of the boat and taking steps of faith that feel strange and scary. Trusting God as we develop new ways and in unfamiliar places to make new disciples to live, love and grow in Christ.

Blessing 1.5 million lives, one life at a time

Engaging with people one at a time. Pointing people to Christ in everything we say and do. Prioritising introducing people to Jesus, sharing hope and inviting others to engage with the Gospel message.

Transformative loving service (in practice)

Sharing the love of Christ in diverse ways through the 'five marks of mission': Tell, Teach, Tend, Transform, Treasure.

Engaged locally, working together in loving generosity.

Responding and relating in creative expressions of loving service, faith, prayer, and worship at local level: working in partnership and in harmony, according to the diverse places and local communities we serve.

This objective will be continuing as the vision evolves.

Fabric

The PCC receives regular reports on the status of the fabric of the buildings, which requires a continued programme of repairs and maintenance. From the Quinquennial Inspection in 2019, the major areas not completed are the masonry repairs and the roof. The latter has been patch repaired to prevent leakage until such time that external funding is available to assist with a more extensive project.

During the year the floor at the back of church was repaired with volunteer labour, and the area carpeted. Adjustments were made to the electrical sockets to provide power to the screens in the chancel, and to the Clavinova. Some of the high level lights in church failed, and work is in progress to resolve the problem, with appropriate access.

The Community Payback Scheme has continued to work in the Churchyard, which has been mutually beneficial. Those using the Churchyard have seen a major improvement over time as it is regularly tidied and cared for. The men appreciate the positive feedback they receive from the parishioners.

Looking Forward to 2024

Whilst the challenges the Church faces are not underestimated, the church is growing in numbers across all ages. The PCC keeps the changes which have been made under review, and will make adaptations as necessary.

The PCC, Vicar and ministry team remain deeply committed to the development of St Matthew's, and are optimistic that 2024 will be a year of continued growth.

Financial Review

Income

Voluntary Giving

The total receipts on general unrestricted funds received were £56,533 and are detailed in the Financial Statements. Planned Giving through Standing Orders decreased by 3%. The Church has seen a slow but steady increase in numbers attending services, particularly the special services and as a result the collections at services have increased by £2,000. The church is grateful to the Friends of St Matthews for a donation towards the cost of repairs to the lighting circuit.

Other Income

The Church Hall continues to increase the number of hirers and fees received but income from fees for Weddings and Funerals has fallen by £1,100. The Church held several fundraising events during the year, raising £1,000.

Restricted Income

No further work has been undertaken on the re-ordering project due to the lack of funds.

Expenditure

Parish Share

The largest item of expenditure was the Parish Share. The amount due from the Church for 2023 was £79,274. The Parish Share is a contribution to the Diocese towards the cost of the provision and support of mission and ministry. This includes housing, support, stipend and pension costs of the clergy of this parish, training of new ordinands, a contribution to national church funds and shared costs of the diocese, including assistance towards the upkeep of churches less able to manage than ourselves. The PCC agreed that it was unable to pay the full Parish Share for 2023. As at 31 December 2023 the amount unpaid was £47,564 with a further £25,710 owing from 2022. This is not a legal liability and so does not show in the Financial Statements, however the PCC is aware that it should be paid when appropriate.

Staff costs

The PCC paid for a church hall and office cleaner, and a vergers for wedding and funerals.

Trustee payments and expenses

The PCC also supported the clergy by paying Council Tax, Water and environmental charges for the vicarage amounting to £3,628 as well as other costs such as travel, telephone and broadband. There were no expense payments to persons related to, or connected to, the trustees.

Other charitable giving

During the year the church was able to undertake its Christmas Tree Festival, donating 50% of the amount raised to The Room At The Inn Charity.

Repairs

Routine maintenance and repairs were undertaken during the year to ensure the PCC met its responsibility for health and safety.

Major Works

During the year a major repair to the church floor was undertaken by volunteers. The Church is very grateful for their willingness to help in this. The Church paid for materials costing £4,600.

Restricted Reserves

During the year the refurbishment of the Church Hall took place following the fire at the end of 2022. The costs were covered by the insurance monies received.

Reserves

The PCC has a good reserves position, thanks to generous legacies given in the past. It is the policy of the PCC to keep two months general running costs as a general reserve, and an additional amount to cover committed contract costs and minor repairs. Major building works, including those identified under the Quinquennial Inspection, will only be undertaken once additional funding has been secured. The reserve requirement under this policy is £25,000. Our current free reserves more than meet this policy and enable the PCC to use the remaining reserves to support its cash flow during 2024 and to continue its mission.

On 31 December 2023 unrestricted reserves were £62,449. There are no longer any designated reserves, so the unrestricted reserves are available to support the general running of the church.

The PCC also had £24,805 in restricted reserves. These include £20,203 for the church hall. The balance is made up of smaller funds belonging to groups within the church.

Our investments are accumulation shares held with CCLA in The Church of England Investment Fund. These create capital growth rather than income.

Financial Recovery Plan.

During the year the PCC continued with its Financial Recovery Plan. Repairs were kept to the minimum required for health and safety and there has been no further progress on the re-ordering project. High energy costs continue to slow progress towards financial recovery. The next stage of the Financial Recovery Plan is to look at ways of increasing the income of the Church.

Looking Forward

The continuing deficit is a concern. The PCC has looked to reduce costs wherever possible and will continue to do so in 2024. The PCC has made the decision to continue to not pay its full Parish Share. The need to increase regular giving to meet regular commitments remains and the PCC has started looking at ways to increase Church activities. The PCC is aware of its current dependence on a limited number of donors and regular hall hirers. The PCC is grateful to all those who contribute to the Church, both financially and in other ways.

Catherine Edwards
Acting Treasurer

Administration

Principal Address: St Matthew's Church
Stretton Road
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WA4 4NT

Independent Examiner: Lee Warburton, Voisey & Co
Chartered Accountants
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Warrington
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WA1 1JW

Bankers: HSBC
11 Bridge Street
Warrington
WA1 2EY

CCLA Investment Management Ltd
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London
EC4R 3AB

Architect: Mark Pearce BA(Hons), BArch, MA, AADiplCons, RIBA, AABC
Kepczyk Pearce and Sanderson
Architects, Surveyors & Historical Building Consultants
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Cheshire
SK9 3EN

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
of the
PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL
PARISH OF STRETTON – ST MATTHEW’S
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2023

**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL of the ECCLESIASTICAL
PARISH OF STRETTON - ST MATTHEWS
Financial Statements for year ended
31st December 2023**

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT
THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF STRETTON
(Registered Number: 1132920)**

Independent examiners report to the trustees of The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Stretton – St Matthew's.

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Stretton – St Matthew's for the year ended 31st December 2023.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

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

Basis of Independent Examiner's Report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the PCC and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts 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 no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a "true and fair view" and the report is limited to those matters set out in the Statement below.

Independent Examiner's Statement

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

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

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

Lee Warburton BA FCA
Voisey & Co
Chartered Accountants
8 Winmarleigh Street
Warrington
Cheshire
WA1 1JW

Date 21.03.24

**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL of the ECCLESIASTICAL
PARISH OF STRETTON - ST MATTHEWS
Financial Statements for year ended
31st December 2023**

**RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2023**

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
RECEIPTS					
Voluntary Receipts					
Planned giving		31,982	-	31,982	33,073
Collection at services		8,213	-	8,213	5,410
All other giving/voluntary receipts	4	7,488	1,120	8,608	16,041
Gift Aid Tax recovered		<u>8,850</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>8,850</u>	<u>9,168</u>
		56,533	1,120	57,653	63,692
Activities for generating funds					
Investment Income	5	2,252	705	2,957	1,790
Church Activities	6	325	212	537	205
Other Income	7	19,226	-	19,273	15,164
		<u>-</u>	<u>13,405</u>	<u>13,405</u>	<u>-</u>
Total receipts		78,336	15,442	93,778	80,851
PAYMENTS					
Church activities					
Diocesan parish contribution		31,710	-	31,710	51,255
Clergy and staff costs	8	8,913	-	8,193	17,076
Church running costs	9	21,818	1,084	22,902	17,591
Hall running costs		5,922		5,922	5,243
Charitable donations	10	<u>673</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>673</u>	<u>1,839</u>
		69,036	1,084	70,120	93,004
Costs of generating funds		-	350	350	5,000
Other Costs – major works	11	<u>6,155</u>	<u>12,851</u>	<u>19,006</u>	<u>13,689</u>
Total payments		75,191	14,285	89,476	111,693
Excess of receipts over payments					
		3,145	1,157	4,302	(30,842)
Proceeds from sale of shares					
		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>20,000</u>
		3,145	1,157	4,302	(10,842)
Cash at bank and in hand at 1 January		31,247	11,606	42,853	53,695
Cash at bank and in hand at 31 December		<u>34,392</u>	<u>12,763</u>	<u>47,155</u>	<u>42,853</u>

**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL of the ECCLESIASTICAL
PARISH OF STRETTON - ST MATTHEWS
Financial Statements for year ended
31st December 2023**

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Cash Funds					
Bank Current Account & Cash		23,392	-	23,392	21,104
Deposit Funds		<u>11,000</u>	<u>12,763</u>	<u>23,763</u>	<u>21,749</u>
		<u>34,392</u>	<u>12,763</u>	<u>47,155</u>	<u>42,853</u>
Investment Assets					
Investment Fund shares at market value		<u>28,057</u>	<u>12,042</u>	<u>40,099</u>	<u>35,623</u>
Assets retained for church use		<u>38,000</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>38,000</u>	<u>38,000</u>
Liabilities					
Due to Diocese		296	-	296	15
Other liabilities		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
		<u>296</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>296</u>	<u>15</u>

Approved by the Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Stretton – St Matthews on 21st March 2024

and signed on its behalf by:

Revd Alan Jewell

**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL of the ECCLESIASTICAL
PARISH OF STRETTON - ST MATTHEWS
Financial Statements for year ended
31st December 2023**

Notes to the accounts

1. The financial statements of the PCC have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006, using the Receipts and Payments basis.
2. The fixed asset retained for the church use is the church hall at historical cost.
3. The PCC has considered its reserves in accordance with the policy set out in their report. The reserve requirement based on these accounts is £ 25,000 which is more than met by the PCC's free reserves.

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
4. All other giving/voluntary receipts				
Legacies and Grants	1,375	-	1,375	2,274
Donations	3,369	1,120	4,284	11,377
Other Income	<u>2,744</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,744</u>	<u>2,390</u>
	<u>7,488</u>	<u>1,120</u>	<u>8,403</u>	<u>16,041</u>
5. Income from investments				
Bank interest	<u>325</u>	<u>212</u>	<u>537</u>	<u>205</u>
6. Church Activities				
Fees for weddings and funerals	6,078	-	6,078	7,765
Church hall hire	13,148	-	13,148	7,399
Magazine Sales	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>19,256</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>19,226</u>	<u>15,164</u>
7. Other Income				
Insurance Claim	<u>-</u>	<u>13,405</u>	<u>13,405</u>	<u>-</u>
8. Clergy and staff costs				
Clergy costs	4,279	-	4,279	4,085
Salaries	2,867	-	2,867	10,910
Parish Office costs	<u>1,767</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,767</u>	<u>2,082</u>
	<u>8,913</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>8,913</u>	<u>17,076</u>
9. Church running expenses				
Organist, Organ and Church Music	626	156	782	731
Bellringers	-	-	-	168
Church flowers	500	-	500	475
Church service costs	1,238	771	2,009	775
Youth Work	-	145	145	-
Insurance	5,777	-	5,777	5,252
Light and heat	7,987	-	7,987	4,416
Repairs and maintenance	4,004	-	4,004	4,395
Sundries	719	12	731	475
Professional fees	367	-	367	424
Accountancy	<u>600</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>600</u>	<u>480</u>
	<u>21,818</u>	<u>1,084</u>	<u>22,902</u>	<u>17,591</u>

**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL of the ECCLESIASTICAL
PARISH OF STRETTON - ST MATTHEWS
Financial Statements for year ended
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	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
10. Charitable donations				
Christian organisations	173	-	173	549
Secular organisations	<u>500</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>500</u>	<u>1,290</u>
	<u>673</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>673</u>	<u>1,839</u>
 11. Other Costs – major works				
Hall Development	-	12,851	12,851	11,300
Church Floor	4,841	-	4,841	
Re-ordering	<u>1,314</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,314</u>	<u>2,389</u>
	<u>6,155</u>	<u>12,851</u>	<u>19,006</u>	<u>13,689</u>

12. Staff Costs

The PCC pays for the services of a Verger, and a Church Hall Cleaner.

There were no employee benefits to key management personnel in the previous or current years.

13. Transactions with Trustees

The incumbent was reimbursed for expenses incurred on behalf of the Church, totalling £ 493.