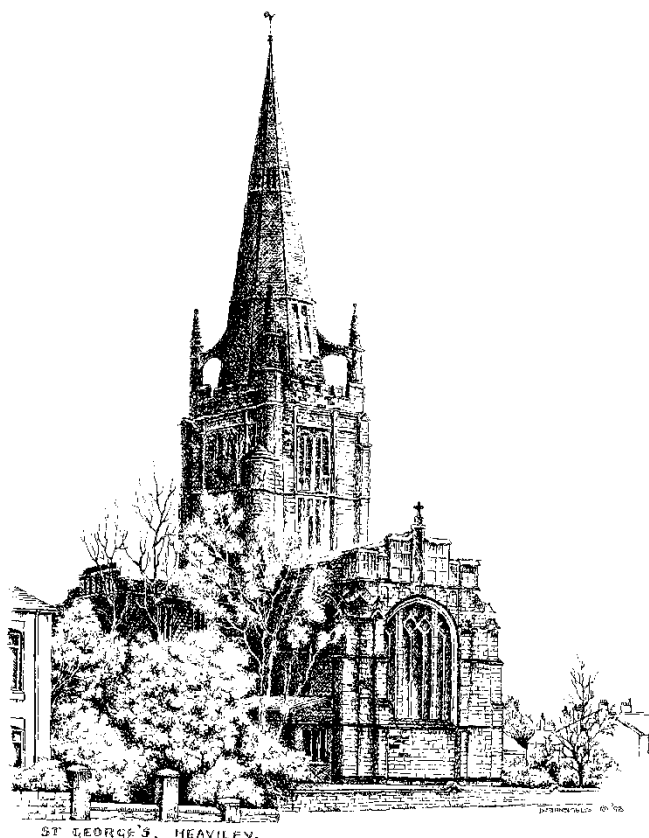


The Parish Church of St. George, Stockport.

REPORT and ACCOUNTS
of the
Parochial Church Council



presented to the
Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Sunday 21st April 2024

Annual Report for 2023

Administrative Information

The Parish of Stockport St George is located on Buxton Road, Heaviley, and the daughter church of St Gabriel is located at Clover Avenue, Adswood.

The parish is part of the Diocese of Chester within the Church of England.

PCC members who served during 2023 with future retirement dates in brackets are:

From January to May 2023

<i>Vicar:</i>	Revd Canon Elaine Chegwin Hall Chair	
<i>Associate Priest</i>	Revd Dr Jenny McKay	<i>(Minister in secular employment)</i>
<i>Readers</i>	Mr Peter Hall	<i>(Also Deanery and Diocesan Synod)</i>
<i>Reader Representative</i>	Mrs Rita Waters	
<i>Churchwardens</i>	Andrew Regan Mrs Hazel Jenkins	<i>(also Treasurer)</i>
<i>Deanery Synod</i>	Mr David Foulkes Mr Ian Roberts Mr John Sutcliffe	
<i>Elected members:</i>		
Mr Tommy Bowden	(2025)	
Mrs Sue Burt	(2025)	<i>Assistant PCC Secretary</i>
Mrs Lois Kelly	(2025)	<i>PCC Secretary</i>
Mr Philip Warner	(2025)	
Mrs Penny Bisby	(2024)	
Mrs Janet Neilson	(2024)	
Mrs Morag Ranson	(2024)	
Mr William Hesson	(2024)	<i>Deputy Warden</i>
Mrs Louise Clark	(2023)	
Mrs Sue Cordingly	(2023)	
Mr John Hardy	(2023)	<i>Deputy Warden</i>
<i>Co-opted Members</i>		
Mr Peter Smith		
Mr James Hibbert	<i>Safeguarding Officer</i>	

PCC Members From May 2023

<i>Vicar:</i>	Revd Canon Elaine Chegwin Hall	Chair
<i>Associate Priest</i>	Revd Dr Jenny McKay	<i>(Minister in secular employment)</i>

<i>Readers</i>	Mr Peter Hall	<i>(Also Deanery Synod)</i>
	Mrs Rita Waters	<i>(Also Deanery Synod)</i>

<i>Churchwardens</i>	Andrew Regan	<i>(Also Treasurer)</i>
	Mrs Hazel Jenkins	

<i>Deanery Synod Officer</i>	Mrs Sue Cordingly	(2026) <i>Assistant Safeguarding</i>
	Mr Ian Roberts	<i>(to November 2023)</i>

Elected members:

Mrs Sheila Daly	(2026)	
Mrs Marion McCall	(2026)	
Mrs Jennie Vandyes	(2026)	
Mr James Hibbert	(2026)	<i>Safeguarding Officer</i>
Mr Tommy Bowden	(2025)	
Mrs Sue Burt	(2025)	<i>Deputy Warden Assistant PCC</i>
<i>Secretary</i>		
Mrs Lois Kelly	(2025)	<i>PCC Secretary</i>
Mr Philip Warner	(2025)	
Mrs Penny Bisby	(2024)	
Mrs Janet Neilson	(2024)	
Mrs Morag Ranson	(2024)	
Mr William Hesson	(2024)	

<i>Co-opted Members</i>	Mr John Hardy	<i>Deputy Warden</i>
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<i>Independent Examiner:</i>	Mr Paul Clancy
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Structure and Governance

The PCC is a corporate body established by the Church of England. The PCC operates under the Parochial Church Council Powers Measure. The PCC is a charity, registered with the Charity Commission, number 1134170.

This report covers the activities of the two churches and of St George's Church Stockport Preservation Trust. The Trust was constituted under a trust deed dated 1st August 1990. While legally a separate charity, the Trust is regarded by the Diocesan Authorities as a connected charity, consequently its transactions and dealings are included in the accounts of the PCC.

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

Objectives and activities

The PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. This fulfils our public benefit requirement.

Committees

The PCC operates through a number of committees and project groups, which meet between meetings of the PCC.

The project groups in 2023 were for the Christmas Tree Festival, the Grapevine editorial group and the Inclusion Group

Standing Committee

This is the only committee required by law. It has the power to transact business of the PCC between meetings, subject to any directions given by the Council.

The Preservation Trust

The objectives of the Preservation Trust include the restoration and repair of the fabric and contents of St George's church and buildings. The Trustees may also finance other work connected with the voluntary aided school, youth work in the parish, or as agreed by the trustees.

The full PCC met 6 times during 2023 with an average level of attendance of 64%.

Achievements and Performance

The Electoral Roll total for St. George, Stockport PCC was 171 at the end of 2022.

- Marion McCall, Sheila Daly and Jennie Vandyes were elected to the PCC for the first time.
- James Hibbert was re-elected onto the PCC and John Hardy was co-opted.
- Peter Hall, Ian Roberts, Sue Cordingly and Rita Waters were elected to serve on the Deanery Synod.
- A faculty was obtained to install handrails on the steps to the North Porch, which were then installed.
- The PCC approved the appointment of Catherine Otley as Parish Secretary
- The PCC authorised celebrations for the Coronation in May.
- The PCC authorised the purchase of 30, Maple Close to replace 40, Beechfield Road as a curate's house and subsequent improvements to the property. This included installing double glazing; improving the loft insulation to meet current legislation; installing cavity wall insulation and decorating.
- The PCC applied for and were granted a Warm Spaces grant.
- The PCC approved the purchase of a new photocopier.
- A new Drainage Deed of Easement was signed to enable the developers to sell the final flat in the "Old Vicarage"

Church Attendance

The average weekly attendance, at church, for St. George's was:

NB last year's figures in italics

Choral Evensong	33.0	<i>27.6</i>
Early Communion	12.0	<i>13.8</i>
Parish Communion	88.2	<i>78.2</i>
Praise & Play	28.5	<i>26.8</i>
Wednesday Communion	17.8	<i>15.1</i>
Wednesday MP	9.1	<i>6.8</i>

Baptism Assistants Team

This year has once again been quite busy for baptisms. We have had 24 in total including 4 adults with 3 immersions and one set of twins.

The baptism team are always pleased to welcome the families into church. It is very rewarding to be of help to the clergy on these special occasions.

Sadly, this year we have lost Peter Pilbeam one of the baptism team's founder members. He is sadly missed both as a friend and colleague.

Holy baptism is a joyful celebration service for families. In 2024 we shall continue to welcome everyone into our lovely church.

Brenda Swindells

Bell Ringers

It is pleasing to report, as previously, that Sunday service ringing and practices have been maintained with very few cancellations. A good standard of ringing is being achieved, and that for Sunday services is something of which we can be justly proud.

Ringing for the coronation of HM King Charles III on 6th May was a particularly special occasion. Details of the ringing and those who took part were carefully recorded in our tower log, which in years to come will be an important historic document.

Three new learners are receiving tuition and are progressing encouragingly. We hope that they will soon be able to become full members of the band.

We were able to marshal two visits up the tower on Heritage Day, for which the weather was gratefully ideal. Thanks to all who assisted.

There was only one wedding last year for which bells were requested. We have rung for one wedding so far this year; there are further weddings on the list for which we await confirmation if bells will be required.

I continue to be extremely grateful for the commitment and support of all the band, for which they have my sincere thanks.

Andrew Mayes – Ringing Master

Choir

St. George's Church Choir

Building on the successes of the previous year, 2023 was another excellent year for St. George's Church Choir.

As well as singing for the usual schedule of Services and rehearsals there have been a number of notable occasions throughout the year, and some of these are listed below.

Epiphany Carol Service 2023

As always, the first major service of the year was the Epiphany Carol Service, a relatively recent addition to our list of annual Services, this continues to be a well-received Service, contrasting nicely with the scale and grandeur of the annual Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols a few weeks beforehand.

Spring Cathedral Tour 2023

In March 2023 the choir travelled to Lichfield Cathedral to sing Choral Evensong for their Spring Tour. This was our second visit to the Cathedral in 12 months, and we were invited back again for a further visit in the future.

Coronation Weekend (Sunday 7th May 2023)

On Sunday 7th May the choir sang at both the morning Service and afternoon Café Church to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III. It was a memorable occasion for all involved! In preparation for the festivities the choir learnt a number of big choral anthems including Zadok the Priest – Handel, I was glad – Parry, and a newly written anthem commissioned by the RSCM for the occasion called The mountain's shall bring peace – Forbes L'Estrange. Thanks must go to David Cavendish for playing the organ at the morning service.

Summer Cathedral Tour 2023

August saw the choir make the very short journey over the Diocesan boundary to Manchester Cathedral for their 2023 Summer Tour. The choir sang for three services on the last weekend in August, and received a very warm welcome from the Clergy and Congregation at the Cathedral. We have since been invited back on a future date. It is important to note that this was the first time that many of our Junior Choristers joined the Adults for a Cathedral visit, and this was noted during the Sermon at Evensong on the Sunday evening by Canon Nigel Ashworth who preached on the importance of youngsters in music and within Parish life.

Wedding of David Bird & Lauren Bird

On Saturday 2nd September the choir sang for Lauren and David's Wedding at St. George's. This was the first that the choir had sung for the wedding of a choir member for many years, and a lot of hard work went into learning the music for

the day to make it even more special. It was a wonderful occasion for everyone involved! Congratulations to Lauren and David!

Visit to St. Oswald's Church, Malpas

On Sunday 1st October members of the choir and ministry team visited St. Oswald's Church, Malpas, where a former Curate of St. George's, Revd Dr Janine Arnott is now Rector, to sing for their monthly Choral Evensong. We received a very warm welcome, and the Service was a great success.

RSCM Chester Area Festival 2023 & National Celebration Day

On Saturday 14th October 2023 members of St. George's Choir attended the Royal School of Church Music's National Celebration Day at Chester Cathedral to sing alongside the Cathedral Choir and Parish Choirs from around the Country. It was a real joy to be able to take some of our Junior Choristers to sing Choral Evensong at the Cathedral, and for them to experience singing with the Cathedral Choir.

Advent & Christmas 2023

As the festive season approached the Choir prepared for a number of important services and events. In addition to the regular pattern of Services the Choir provided music for Carol Singing at the Christmas Tree Festival, The Advent Carol Service, and the popular Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols on Sunday 17th December 2023.

The choir term ended with the Junior Choir singing for the three Christingle Services, and the Adults singing for Christmas Eve Midnight Communion and Christmas Day Service.

Music Department

My thanks to my friend and colleague Roger Briscoe for his work as Associate Director of Music. His support in accompanying the choir for rehearsals and Services each week is very much appreciated. Roger travels a great distance from home to St. George's, and this level of commitment to the choir and wider musical life of the Church is to be commended! His musicianship remains at the highest of standards, and we are very lucky to have someone with such a wealth of experience carrying out the role of Associate Director of Music. The work that Roger does often goes unnoticed to all but those attending the weekly adults' choir practice. If you want to see a really experienced professional at work I suggest coming along and watch how he accompanies a rehearsal with such skill. Thank you, Roger, for all of your work in 2023, particularly at weekly choir practices, monthly Choral Evensongs, and on Choir Tours.

Tom Glover joined us in August 2023, just in time for the choir's summer tour to Manchester Cathedral – *excellent timing on his part* – and has become a really

valuable asset to the musical life of St. George's. As an experienced organist Tom has played in some very illustrious places over recent years, and his arrival at St. George's during 2023 has been a blessing to us all. His accompaniment of the choir at rehearsals and Services has been wonderfully received, and the quality of his organ voluntaries week by week has been exceptional. The time and effort Tom puts in behind the scenes is remarkable – often giving up his lunch hour at work several times during the week to come to church and practice on the organ.

I thoroughly enjoy being able to share playing and conducting duties with Tom each Sunday. Thank you, Tom!

The working relationship, and friendship, that has built up between, myself Roger and Tom over the last couple of months has been a real joy to behold. I couldn't wish to have two better people to help me lead and direct the music at St. George's. Long may it continue!

As ever, thanks must go to Hannah Whitehouse for her support at Junior Choir rehearsals, and during Services. Hannah's work with the Junior Choristers behind the scenes is very much appreciated. Her experience as a teacher is a huge bonus to the success of the Junior Choir, allowing me to focus on music with the children. Not only does Hannah help in training the Junior Choristers but she goes above and beyond the call of duty to organise various trips out and social events for the Children throughout the year. I'm extremely grateful to her for her many hours of voluntary support to the Junior Choir, particularly in her work on the Voice for Life awards scheme.

RSCM Voice for Life Scheme

We continue to operate our internal ribbons programme using the Royal School of Church Music's Voice for Life resources. During 2023 a number of the 2022 intake of Junior Choristers received their surplices at points throughout the year, signalling an end to their probationary periods.

Some children worked towards their Voice for Life light blue and dark blue awards. At several points throughout the year Hannah Whitehouse ran workshops with the children to work on musical theory and understanding. These sessions are vital in helping the children work towards completing each stage of the VfL process.

Head Chorister

Maddie Wilson was admitted as Head Chorister in November 2023. Maddie is our longest serving Junior Chorister (of the present era). She is a real asset to the choir, and her promotion to Head Chorister is well deserved!

Membership

2023 was a very rewarding year for St. George's Choir. During the year the Choir's membership increased significantly with new members joining the Junior Choir and Adults. As of the end of 2023 we had a total of 50 choir members, up from 38 members at the end of the previous year. Whilst the increase in membership is a wonderful thing, we continued to suffer from a lack of robes for all of the new adults and children who have joined the choir. A donation from a choir parent enabled us to buy some new Cassocks from Ormsby of Scarisbrick – the firm that makes our cassocks and surplices. In addition, we've been very fortunate to have received some second-hand choir robes from a number of churches across the North West, including St Paul's, Sale, St. John's Altrincham (Closed), and Edenfield Parish Church, near Ramsbottom.

I am grateful to the overwhelming support of our Vicar, Elaine, and the wider Ministry Team in enabling the choir to achieve so much over the last year. Some churches aren't so lucky to have such a great team.

James Hibbert

Director of Music

Christmas Tree Festival

When planning for the 2023 Christmas Tree Festival, we took two very important decisions. Firstly due to poor economic climate we would not raise any of our prices and secondly that we would like Father Christmas to visit on both Saturday and Sunday. Father Christmas was very happy to oblige and met with children both morning and afternoon each day! Our decision to freeze prices certainly paid off as we returned a record profit of around £9,000.

As a team we were delighted to welcome new exhibitors as well as many returnees, some after a longish 'Covid' gap. As ever the standard of decorations and the ingenuity of people was great to see and drew many comments of admiration. We welcomed both children and adult choirs to entertain everyone and the Karela School of Dancing wowed us with their show on Saturday.

My thanks go to all of the team and everyone who helped, but particular thanks must go to Peter Smith and his team for presiding over an incredibly busy café. There was much late night baking happening in several kitchens as we tried to keep up a constant supply of cakes. Thanks also to Pat Rigley who managed a splendid raffle which brought in over £1,000 and to Andrea Millington who very efficiently took over the role of liaising with the schools for visits and singing.

During the five days of the Festival we had over 4000 visitors including the visiting schools and youth organisations. This was up by a couple of hundred on last year

and interestingly visitor numbers for Sunday have definitely increased over the last two years. So, here's to the 2024 Festival!

Hazel Jenkins

Garden Gnomes

As workers in the outdoors, gardeners are accustomed to variations in weather conditions during the various seasons. By dressing appropriately, we can usually find suitable jobs to do, whatever the weather.

However, over the last twelve months we seem to have had more 'washout' days than I can remember. We have also experienced very windy conditions with large amounts of twigs and branches being scattered around the grounds. We are hoping Mother Nature will be kinder to us this coming year.

One bonus this year was the completion of the building work on the former vicarage site, allowing us to regain clear access to the roadway and paving, which has made tidying up a bit easier.

This time last year we were expecting to have to use professional help again to prune the trees in the North Avenue. However, we have been able to control growth at the lower levels ourselves, and defer higher level work by tree specialists for the time being.

Planting and maintaining the various flower beds continues to be a fulfilling part of our regular work. The new bed at the east end of the grounds, which was planted to celebrate the church's 125th Anniversary, has been retained. It was filled with bedding plants in the earlier part of the year, which gave a welcome splash of colour to the area. However, for the longer term it was decided a rose garden would be more manageable and, thanks to donations from various sources, that change-over has been implemented.

We would like to record our appreciation to all who have provided plants, bulbs and monetary gifts to help us in maintaining variety in the garden areas.

The more mundane, but equally important, general maintenance tasks of clearing autumnal leaves, tree debris and general litter, plus the ongoing battle with moss and weeds on the gravel paths, keep us busy.

We endeavour to keep the Remembrance Garden paving area clean and weed free, but, as noted in last year's report, in reality it needs repaving. It is the part of the gardens that church members and visitors notice when entering our building.

One major task requiring action is to renovate the compost heap arrangements which have been overloaded and will require significant effort to restore.

Over recent times, our team numbers have been reduced as former members have had to retire, and our resources have become stretched. We have been pleased to have Anoosh and Nazanin join with us on Tuesday mornings, but additional help would be appreciated as we move into the growing season.

We meet up between 9.30am and 12.30pm, at whatever times suit people's personal circumstances. Every little helps! We do allow ourselves a tea/coffee break around 11am, to chat and catch up on news.

If you are interested, please contact Walter Stead (0161 430 2449) or speak to any other team member. You will be made very welcome, as together we endeavour to present to visitors and passers-by the message that our church is a place that is cared for, and cares for all.

Walter Stead – Novice Gnome

Grapevine

The magazine is published in 10 monthly issues per year except for July/August and December/January when a combined issue is published. The monthly magazine is a 24-page full colour issue including the December/January issue, while the July/August issue was expanded to a 28-page issue. During 2023 the magazine has published a range of articles related to our Christian mission, with some of the highlights including articles on Christian worship in Ukraine, Holocaust Memorial Day, the Bishops' visitation to the Stockport Deanery accompanied by the Melanesian Brothers from the Solomon Isles, and on life as a Reader in the Church of England. Chris Dawson has provided a series of insightful and reflective pieces on meditation and prayer. We have also introduced more regular prayers as a feature of the magazine and the Storytime feature has a Christian theme.

The magazine continues to include regular contributions from the Garden Gnomes, Praise and Play, the Mothers' Union, and the Sunday Clubs as well as the monthly recipe provided by Pamela Ferguson. Printing in full colour has provided opportunities to include attractive photo stories. These have included photo stories on messy church, baptism and confirmation, the afternoon tea for the Coronation of King Charles III, Lauren and David Bird's wedding, and the Sunday Clubs work on God's creation for the Christmas Tree Festival. The December/January edition included a centre page spread of 12 of the best photos from the year. The magazine incorporates photos from contributors as well as using copyright free photos from the Unsplash website but with a clear acknowledgement of the photographers. The magazine has also included more regular features on environmental issues as part of our Eco Church mission. We have also introduced a regular 'What am I' challenge.

During 2023 we sadly included obituaries for Frances Farrar, Peter Pilbeam, Margaret Sharrard, Alice Ramsbottom, Stan Berry, Olwen Garrido, Jean Norton, and Kathleen Heaword.

The magazine committee meets on the third Tuesday of the month ahead of the publication of the magazine at the beginning of each month. Roles have shifted with some stepping down and others taking on these roles. We acknowledge the many years of service and extend grateful thanks to Judith Swift for taking receipt of the magazines each month and for delivering them to households across our community. We thank Kate Stephenson for adopting the duty of taking receipt of the magazines and Carol Condliffe for organising their postal delivery. We thank Angela Foulkes for her work with Andrew Regan undertaking final proofing of the magazine text ahead of the publication. We are also grateful to Olwen Smith, Carol Condliffe, and Rosie Stead for their work in hand delivering copies of the magazine, which extends its reach into our community.

Andy Clark

Handbell Ringers

The handbell ringers stopped meeting regularly during the initial stages of the first COVID-19 lockdown. Following easing of restrictions some of the participants moved away and were not able to attend regular practice. As a result, we have not been able to organise a regular team of ringers for some years. In 2023 we have managed to organise two events. The handbells were displayed at the Heritage Day giving visitors the opportunity to 'have a go'. This garnered interest from adults and children alike with younger visitors particularly enjoying the challenge of playing the biggest bells. In December we managed to assemble a team of 12 to play at the Nine Lessons and Carols service. We played an arrangement of the Carol of the Bells, which was very well received. Going forward we are looking to assemble a team to play at events and special services in the future.

Andy Clark

Lent Breakfasts

Once again we ran five consecutive sessions on Saturday mornings, starting on 25 February and ending on 25 March. As usual, breakfast began at 9.30am and the talks at 10.0am followed by questions. We finished at 11.00am. Each session began and ended with a short prayer.

This year's subject was Exploring Mental Health and it proved a popular one. The atmosphere in which these sessions took place was notably calm, sympathetic and supportive. I have put attendance figures at the end of my summary of each talk.

In the first session Retired Consultant Psychiatrist Bob Baldwin talked to us about Mental Health and the NHS from a doctor's perspective. He gave an overview of mental health and illness. Our answers to a quiz he had given us acted as the basis for this overview. He emphasised that mental well-being is on a continuum for all of us. (21)

On 4 March, Marion McCall, our former Parish Secretary, spoke about Finding Hope in a Troubled World – for ourselves and for others. In a moving presentation, Marion spoke from her own experience of recovering from depression and things in her life falling apart. (23)

Anne Rodger of Rev320 (a reference to the book of Revelation 3:20) talked to us on 11 March. She told of how she found herself called to leave her conventional job and open a charity shop drop-in in Stockport. Somewhere where people can talk and be listened to. (19)

Our last speaker, on 18 March, was Linda Buckley, Reader at St. Matthew's Stretton and Papyrus Champion. She gave a presentation called SPARK on the work of Papyrus in suicide prevention amongst young people. SPARK stands for Suicide Prevention through Awareness, Resources and Knowledge. (18)

On 25 March we held our usual reflection and discussion session under the title What Have We Discovered? Not only did we discuss what had experienced, but also what we might do more effectively as a church. A summary of our observations and suggestions was circulated following this session.(14)

A huge 'thank you' to all our speakers, to Peter Smith and his team for setting up and providing breakfast and to Marion McCall, Sue Cordingley and Morag Ranson for their support in organising the Lent Prayer Breakfasts.

Chris Dawson

Linen Guild

The small group have continued to care for all the white linen used during the various services. We were very saddened to lose our friend Jose and miss her very much. She was a great perfectionist. We now welcome Kate Stephenson on to the team.

Pat Rigley

Messy Church Bake Off

Thank you, God for giving us food (and elasticated waistbands)!

Messy Church Bake Off, requires at least two portions of whatever is being made; one that is prepared earlier and one for the actual service.

There are times, especially when using yeast, that even more samples in various states of rising, litter the Vicarage kitchen out of sight of the camera. My trusty assistant, Peter passes then to me when needed and being more than happy to lick the bowl, especially if chocolate has been involved.

Two recipes come to mind as being particularly successful one being the mini Christmas Crumble Cakes which sold well at the Christmas tree Festival and the gluten free lemon meringue cupcakes which someone described as follows, “ I’m pleased to say that your recent batch of Lemon cupcakes have been awarded the highest level of merit on offer by yours truly! I don’t think anyone has baked anything as good since Henry VIII founded the Church of England. “High praise indeed!

The main thing to glean from this is that I am always on the look out to get the various batches out to people to eat so the ministry team, clergy chapter and other events are likely to have been the recipients of my batch cooking!

Jesus in particular and the Christian faith in general features prominently in these services so the baking is only part of it.

Whilst it was initially devised as a Childrens’ service, it has been a delight to welcome so many adults who have come to join in. Thank you for doing that.

Elaine Chegwin Hall

Messy Church for Adults

Why should children have all the fun? It was decided to hold a Messy Church for adults so they could take time out to be creative and to reflect upon the reason for the season.

Messy Church Easter for Adults

Quite a large crowd of men and women gathered in the parish rooms to make friendship bracelets, simnel cakes, flatbread, Easter cards and people moved around from one table to access other crafts. There was a real buzz in the air, and everyone enjoyed themselves.

Messy Church Christmas for Adults

We tried out a Christmas Messy Church, but we couldn’t be in the parish rooms as they were being used by another group. We had the heating on and set up at the back of the church to make floral displays (one person made a Christmas tree), chocolates and decorations. Again, a number of people came along and had a good time.

Elaine Chegwin Hall

Mothers' Union

The Mothers' Union have had a very varied programme during 2023. Our speakers included, 'Chuckle with Chutney' with Melanie Latham, Julia Maunders spoke about 'Independent Options', Angela Foulkes on 'Ear Friendly', 'Virtual Babies' were brought to us by Helen Harrison, an MU member from Congleton. For Easter Kim Regan gave a multimedia presentation entitled 'God of majesty, suffering and Joy'. 'Steady in Stockport' provided information on how we can stay safe at home and what facilities are available to us. We had an afternoon tea, all provided by local shops, a communion service and two new members were enrolled, Angela Foulkes and Hazel Jenkins.

A lunch at The Deanwater was enjoyed by members and guests. Catherine Brown demonstrated flowers with a Christmas theme. Our December meeting celebrated Christmas with Nine Lessons and Carols, readings by the Vicar and Rev Jenny and music provided by James with carols from famous cathedrals.

During the year we have lost three very dear friends and long-standing members, Margaret Sharrard, Olwen Garrido and Jose Westwood, their support and advice is greatly missed. In memory of all recently departed members we have received donations, and these have been used to buy rose bushes for the church garden and then we are to give Bibles to those couples married in church and small books of prayers for those children baptised at St. George's.

During the year we have collected items for the 'Bags of Education' project run in conjunction with the Diocese when we provided items such as pens, crayons exercise books for children who have to provide their own, four bags were sent off.

We are a friendly group meeting in the afternoon on the second Monday of the month and would welcome visitors and new members.

Pat Rigley

Praise And Play

Praise and Play continued to meet on Tuesday mornings between 10 and 11 during term time in the Parish Room. This has proved to be much more comfortable than when we met in church as it is much warmer and there is more room for the children to play.

The numbers attending Praise and Play has been fairly stable throughout the year, with between 10 and 16 children each week, plus their parents and carers. At the end of the summer term 3 children left to start school, nursery or pre-school and it was lovely to welcome new members to the Praise and Play family during the autumn term. It is a privilege to watch the children grow, becoming more mobile in some cases and other children becoming more confident over time.

For a few weeks during the first half of the Autumn Term Praise and Play had to relocate to the back of church whilst the Parish Room was out of action due to problems with dry rot. Most of the children and their parents/ carers coped with the change, however everyone was pleased when we were able to move back to the Parish Room after the October half-term break.

During September Marion Johnson had to stand down from helping with the refreshments due to ill health. Thank you Marion for all the years you have helped at Praise and Play.

In the Autumn Term there were a number of weeks when Sue Burt and Tracey Bennett were the only two leaders at Praise and Play as Lois was on holiday. Praise and Play has been a valuable part of the ministry at St. George's since it was started by Libby in the early 2000's and unless new people volunteer Praise and Play may have to close due to lack of leaders. This would be a pity as there is demand in the community.

Lois Kelly

Prayer Chain

This past year has been a busy one.

We have prayed for many people with many different conditions and noted some remarkable recoveries.

Some people have experienced the comfort of the healing prayers whilst crossing the threshold. Their families have been grateful for these.

Of course, none of this comes from us but from the Great Healer, our Lord Jesus.

Sadly, two of our members passed away this year – Josie Westwood and Stan Berry. They were stalwarts of our team.

Happily, we have welcomed new members to our prayer chain team – Dr Jenny McKay, Sue Cordingley and Marion.

I wish to thank all the members of the prayer chain for their constancy and commitment to this work.

We would love to welcome new members who have a few minutes each day to remember those on the list.

Never underestimate the power of prayer.

In gratitude

Phoebe MacLeod

Singing Group

Despite some initial interest in restarting the Singing Group during 2023, the group weren't able to provide enough singers to perform as a standalone group at specific evening Services during the latter part of 2023 – these being the Harvest evening Service at St. Gabriel's in October, the Remembrance Sunday Taizé Service at St. George's in November, and the Churches Together Carol Service at St. Gabriel's during December. A conversation is ongoing about the provision for the Singing Group to sing during Services, but whilst the number of participants remain low it isn't easy to plan occasions for the Singing Group to sing in the future without a significant increase in membership, and a regular pattern of rehearsals.

James Hibbert

Director of Music

Storytime

We managed the first ten months of the year and some of the stories had been included in the magazine. In November, we simply ran out of time, and no one noticed that Storytime hadn't taken place. December was the same, so it was decided that we'd lay it to rest.

It had been a useful way of connecting with children and adults over lockdown and we'd received some very helpful and positive comments over that time.

It took such a lot of preparation each month to produce something, and it may be that we do occasional Storytimes or stories for the magazine but we'll be leaving it for the present. Thanks for your support.

Elaine Chegwin Hall

St Gabriel's

Following a flood at St Gabriel's, the building was out of action for the early part of the year. The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity was kindly hosted by Davenport Methodists whilst restoration work was on going which included the levelling, stripping and resealing of the floor.

We were able to get in to use it for our beloved Frances Farrar's Memorial service in April. It was a service like no other, as it lasted three hours. Bunting made from her old hats festooned the ceiling and a model "Fairy Liquid" complete with wings, gave testament to Frances treading the boards at the Gang Show. It was packed.

Her sons did her proud in organisation, catering and hospitality. Each attendee was encouraged to take a bobble hat which had the legend: "Fran 1932 – 2023.

Gone to be a sunbeam". We borrowed the Fairy Liquid pinny to use as part of the Christmas Tree Festival display later on in the year at St George's.

We were able to gather for the Pentecost breakfast in June, the Harvest service in October and a Community Christmas Carol service in December. Our friends from the Churches Together joined us in worship on these services along with shared services at Davenport Methodist, singing Easter hymns outside the Community Centre in Adswood and the ever popular Carols around the Tree on the green near Davenport station.

Thanks for those who have been praying around the future of St Gabriel's as your prayers seems to have been answered, We were approached by a house church who had outgrown their premises and were looking for somewhere with a bit more space.

After checking the usual legal and safeguarding requirements, we were pleased to welcome Ebenezer Fellowship to St Gabriels'. They use the premises on Saturdays and Sundays, and we are delighted to have them with us. Due to a local church having the same name, they are now called Stockport Pentecostal Church.

Elaine Chegwin Hall

Sunday Clubs

Sunday Clubs have continued to operate two groups this year. The pre-school / infants group leave during the first hymn and use the back of the parish room. The choristers leave after the Gloria and occupy the front of the room. It can be distracting to be in the same room, but we do not currently have enough staff to use two rooms. The timing for the older group is quite tight; they are not always able to complete an activity to back up the bible story and discussion. It is however preferable to them having no session at all, as the youngsters contribute well and enjoy Sunday Club.

As with other groups, Sunday Clubs were unable to use the Parish rooms whilst they were due to emergency building work in the autumn. As there was short notice the first week we held an outdoor session in the church gardens where we explored and observed nature. This proved to be an exciting and extremely positive experience for everyone, and we created a photo story for the Grapevine magazine. Despite having such a small space, we discovered a wide variety of flora and fauna using magnifiers and field glasses. In the following weeks we considered these gifts from God and the importance of the natural world, including the importance of pollinators, fungi, and lichen. This fitted well with the Church working towards A Roche Eco Church status and inspired a theme for our tree at the Christmas Tree Festival where the children made decorations depicting

butterflies, mushrooms, lichen and moss. Our creations were then re-used as we were invited to decorate a Christmas tree at Lyme Park.

There is a wide age span within the groups, some of our older children are now in year 6 and 7 and we have some pre-school regulars who could benefit from joining in. To do this we would need to split into three groups but we do not have the staff. Ideally we need two to three further Leaders and another two Assistant Leaders (helpers). The commitment for Leaders is about 30–40 minutes to prepare a session using the published lectionary around once a month; helpers don't need to prepare, just turn up when it's their session.

Louise Clark

Telephone Buddies

This continues on an informal basis with people still keeping in touch with others.

This might well be extended usefully in the coming year so that everyone knows that they are being thought about and included in parish life.

Happy to hear from anyone who might be prepared to coordinate this as it proved to be a real life-line for those who might be feeling isolated.

Elaine Chegwin Hall

Associate Minister's Report

I have now been at St George's Stockport for over one year now. The time has flown and I feel thoroughly at home in this lovely parish. My working agreement is for two Sundays per month with some flexibility. I have led, presided and preached predominantly at the 8.00am and 10.15am services and have also taken nine baptisms, one of them being three at once!

I co-hosted a 5 week "Contentious Christianity" on-line series on Zoom during Lent with Chris Dawson. We had a great selection of talks and these are available to watch on YouTube. Our speakers were most engaging, especially local speaker, Andrew Graystone, who knew many people associated with St George's from his days in Adswood and talked about small acts of kindness which can lead to real change in communities.

[YouTube links for Contentious Christianity Series Lent 2023](#)

Do Animals go to Heaven? Speaker: Rev'd Dr Jenny McKay

<https://youtu.be/fE4BWbXvJR8>

When is it Right to Protest? Speaker: Rev'd Mark Coleman

<https://youtu.be/vn9pkL5swxs>

How to be an Every Day Activist. Speaker: Mr. Andrew Graystone

<https://youtu.be/jqgMZsAs28E>

Euthanasia and Christianity. Speaker: Rev'd Professor Peter Selby

<https://youtu.be/rR-xx9P6qzI>

Artificial Intelligence and Christianity. Speaker: Rev'd Dr Tim Bull

<https://youtu.be/y5tPJiGq2Qo>

It was a pleasure to design the Good Friday afternoon service this year which was based on a service written by the Iona Community. A mixture of traditional and modern perspectives, it received very good feedback.

A lovely surprise, the equivalent of two weekdays annually, to be in the parish, was made available to me though my secular employment and thanks to this, I was able to participate in the Christmas Tree Festival (I loved the RSPCA Tree!), and to lead the Nine Lessons and Carols for the Mothers' Union this December. I led my first Christingle this December as well, and it was marvellous to see such a large congregation of over 300 adults and children participating in the Christingle story.

We held an afternoon Animal Blessing Service in July and a wide array of mainly dogs, a few cats and a very large, now sadly deceased golden hamster, Norris, attended for their blessings. Another Animal Blessing Service will be held in the Morning Service slot in June 2024.

Our first ever Reflective Service began on Sunday 25th June at 12 noon after the morning service. I was pleased by the positive response where we could carve out a short time of reflection and silence contemplating Psalms, Bible passages and sacred music. Special thanks to Chris Dawson and Sue Cordingley for all their help and active leading of our sessions on a monthly basis. I look forward to continuing to collaborate with Chris and Sue on our monthly Reflective Half Hours in church after the 10.15 service and to have a half day introductory session on Meditation in early summer, venue yet to be decided!

I continue to be a Minister in Secular Employment (MSE) in my IDEXX Laboratory workplace. Physical presence on site has continued to decrease following COVID, although I am on site every other month wearing my clerical collar most days. The focus there is my veterinary work, and to continue to provide a visible presence of the Christian faith in a diverse, multicultural workplace. An important part of my

role as MSE is to build relationships and trust with those who have felt let down by church.

Social media as The Reverend Vet continues well with Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and TikTok presence and group of 250 followers who participate in a Facebook Pet Prayer group. The main platform is Facebook which currently has increased to 8400 followers. Many followers say they appreciate the daily reflections, poems, animal facts etc, especially where unable to attend church due to physical disability or lack of inclination/confidence to broach the physical threshold of church. A large proportion are also exploring faith and it is both exciting and humbling to learn of people who have started attending their own local churches (even as far away as New Zealand).

My Podcast series “Believe it or Not” where I discuss faith, environmental, animal issues with a different guest each month, is expanding and is available on Spotify.

<https://open.spotify.com/show/4bKDAIZMW2gmLI5HkuWBJZ?si=-doeJvm2TJOAUn62aNXHAQ>

Hopefully, there will be more radio broadcasts and building up further presence on Thought for the Day, Radio Ulster to spread the good news to those of all faith and none. I also do occasional broadcasts on Radio Manchester and Radio London. I look forward to attracting further followers to expand my virtual ministry, and to continue to explore ways of ministry and discipleship to diverse communities in Stockport, with the other members of the Ministry Team.

St George’s has a rich musical tradition and I could not have been welcomed into the choir more kindly by James and the fellow choir members. I was thrilled to join the choir as a soprano on the March visit to Lichfield Cathedral, to be invited to Cantor at one Choral Evensong and sing in the choir at some other services, including two weddings. I look forward to an opportunity to Cantor again with a guest choir in June 2024 and to join the St George’s choir for one day on their Summer Tour to Blackburn Cathedral.

Thank you to everyone, especially Elaine, for all the help and support. You make it a joy and privilege!!

Jenny McKay

Report from the Vicar 2023

It has been a busy year which felt as if it has flown by. I must have met hundreds of people, planned and delivered hours of services and spent many more hours “enjoying” the overwhelming administration needs of a lively and vibrant parish.

Writing some of the reports within the main report has reminded me of the connections we’ve made, in person and online. It has been fabulous to link with so many new people in our church and wider community. It has been a real privilege to worship alongside those from different countries, backgrounds and cultures and to see them grow in the love of Jesus Christ.

Bishop Sam came in January to baptise or confirm 13 people, 3 of who attended St Alban’s Offerton but who were prepared for Confirmation by me. It was a wonderfully happy occasion for all concerned.

We continued to baptise people throughout the year, some by full immersion, and journeyed with other adults and children who were enquiring about their faith.

We had two joyous weddings, which have been written about elsewhere, and several more were booked in for 2024.

We had an unusually high number of funerals and separate burials of ashes (36 in total). Several of them were church family members which made it ever more poignant as we all shared in a time of grief at the many services throughout the year.

I applied for a grant for our Warm Spaces initiative which was held in the parish rooms over the winter. £1,000 was a welcome addition and enabled us to fund soup, bread and crafts although it has to be said that most people were happy to donate their delicious homemade soup and bread. With the Bishop’s permission we also held Morning Prayer and Wednesday Communion in the parish rooms giving it an intimate and slightly more informal feel and gave people an opportunity to linger and chat after the service.

With our Deanery licensed ministers and ministers in training, we attended an away day at Foxhill and explored the theme of “The Place of Psalms in everyday Christian Life”. This theme continued in a poetry workshop for the Deanery at St Albans and though music at a service at St George’s

This work on the psalms became a useful platform to begin a Time of Reflection which was led by Jenny McKay and Chris Dawson and which has further evolved into a very helpful time to pause, consider and pray once a month at 12 noon in the chapel area.

As noted elsewhere we held special services to commemorate the Coronation of King Charles and enjoyed an afternoon tea with Songs of Praise as part of our

emerging Café Church programme which so far in 2023 has included the Place of Psalms in everyday Christian Life through music in September and an evocative Taizé service in November.

It was the 60th anniversary of Self Supporting Ministers in June and so some of us went to Chester Cathedral for the special service which Jenny (our own SSM) took part.

Also in June, it was also the final Archdeacon's visitation service for Ian Bishop before he moved to Norwich Diocese to become the Bishop of Thetford. The service went like clockwork, thanks to the wonderful assistance from several people at St George's that evening.

It was my 25th anniversary of ordination in July and I was delighted to welcome my friend and former colleague, Linda Buckley, who kindly came to preach. She also led sessions about her work with Papyrus for our Lent Breakfast and for our Deanery Clergy Chapter.

We tried out a short time of lunchtime prayers. There seemed some appetite for this in the beginning but there were occasions when no one turned up apart from the leader so we've let that rest for the moment.

We are invited to the Renew Stockport first Friday prayers which take place at Stockport Baptist Church. There are more than 20 churches involved. Although it's an early start, I have found it to be a real time of blessing and fellowship as we gather for an hour from 8.00am to 9.00am to pray for our town.

Several of those churches took part in an interactive nativity service starting at St Mary's in the Marketplace. We were invited to dress up to help tell the story as we moved around the town centre. I soon discovered that not everyone had received (or decided to follow) the memo, so I was the only sheep present but was grateful for the two shepherds in the shape of Sue Cordingley and Hazel Jenkins who came equipped with their tea towels on their heads for authenticity.

Singing has been a big part of this year, not only in services in church, but out in the community. On Palm Sunday in Adswold we sang outside the community centre and sang Carols around the Tree near Davenport Station, both with the Churches Together. In addition to that, we sang around the parish for the Children's' Society at Christmas and also sang at the four Residential Care and Nursing Homes we have been visiting in the parish as part of communion services there.

We now have an augmented Ministry Team and we welcomed Andrea Millington and Alan Brown to join us. They make up a wonderful group of people. It is nothing short of a delight to be with them, and their vision, their sense of humour,

their care of each other and their willingness to eat my cakes is overwhelming. So much goes on behind the scenes and it is this team who make much of it happen. Please pray for them as they minister to you and to each other.

Finally in a litany of so many valuable and precious occasions, events, services and happenings that I could write about, I just want to mention one in particular.

Thanks to the kind donations of a few people, we enabled our Christian brothers and sisters from Iran to prepare a traditional meal in the parish room kitchen. This was greeted with delight as, due to their present circumstances they were deprived of kitchen facilities.

The preparation went on all afternoon and the resulting food was a feast for the senses. Starters, main meal – meat and vegetarian, desert and hot drink for free although donations were gratefully accepted to go towards a planned trip out.

The food was delicious and, as we sat back to chat, the background music, playing on someone's phone was turned up and, one by one those from the Iranian community got up and danced. The joy and freedom in that dancing was palpable and there were a number of us smiling through the tears that sprung up as we witnessed something really special happening.

Let's keep dancing and witnessing and wondering for the Lord Jesus so that our smiles become infectious, so that people will want to join in and that we will share in the wonderment of being a follower of Christ.

Thank you for your partnership in the Gospel.

With every blessing Elaine.

Elaine

Financial Review for 2023

The PCC recorded an increase in funds of £371,694 over the year. PCC unrestricted funds grew by £353,428. The Fabric Fund increased by £19,370 and St Gabriel's funds reduced by £315. The Choir Legacy fund increased by £31. The Fearn fund reduced by £319, the Preservation Trust by £100 and the Music Fund by £400.

St George's unrestricted funds

St George's unrestricted funds showed a surplus of £353,428, compared with a surplus of £1,861 last year. This was after transferring an amount of £8,000 from unrestricted funds to the Fabric Fund, and was entirely due to the sale of the curate's house 40 Beechfield Road, which resulted in a surplus above book value (shown as "Other income") of £359,983. Removing the effect of this sale would result in a net income before transfer to the Fabric Fund of £1,445, and a deficit after transfer of £6,555.

Overall income to unrestricted funds increased by £354,826 to £503,849, however, without the effect of the sale of Beechfield Road this would have been a decrease of £5,697. Total voluntary income, excluding legacies and grants, decreased by £1,436 to £93,653. Most of our regular giving scheme members continued or increased their support. Income received from letting the church and parish rooms decreased by £1,967 to £16,071, mainly because of fewer events in church. Net income from fundraising events was £9,992, as a result of a very successful Christmas Tree Festival. This was a little lower than last year (£11,489) when we also held the 125th Anniversary Festival. Net income from Grapevine magazine was £2,476, an increase of £408 over last year. Grants totalling £2,582 were received, including £2,000 for two warm spaces grants received in the same financial year.

Overall expenditure increased by £1,719 to £142,421. Parish share costs increased by £2,246 to £71,757. Church running costs increased by £8,698 to £32,337, which was entirely caused by increased energy costs and was also despite a significant reduction in energy usage. Expenditure on church maintenance changed very little at £627. Upkeep of services, including music and organ costs, was almost unchanged at £5,335. Expenditure on the Parish Rooms increased by £1,648 to £5,872, with gas heating (£4,280) being by far the major cost.

Following the sale of the curate's house at 40, Beechfield Road for £394,983 in April, a replacement house at 30 Maple Close was purchased for £316,798 at the

end of June. Several improvements are being made to the property in order to prepare it for rental, and the total cost up to 31st December 2023 (including the initial purchase) is £332,626, which now appears as an addition to tangible fixed assets.

The lease of our copier/printer came to an end in April, and a refurbished model has been purchased (rather than leased) at a cost of £2,760. This printer is also a new addition to tangible fixed assets and will be depreciated over five years.

A transfer of £8,000 was made from St George's unrestricted funds to the Fabric Fund, this representing most of the net income from the Christmas Tree Festival. It was not necessary to transfer back any funds in order to comply with our financial reserving policy, however this was only possible because of the surplus resulting from the sale of 40 Beechfield Road.

Designated Funds

St Gabriel's funds

There was a deficit of £315 for the year, which is a reduction on the deficit of £1,442 last year. Income for the year increased by £1,673 to £2,339 mainly because of new rental income from the regular use by a local worship group. Total expenditure increased by £546 with the increased use of the church, to £2,654, which included £1,200 for professional upkeep of the churchyard. The reserves available to the church now stand at £8,274.

Fabric Fund

This fund was established in 2017 and received a further grant of £100 from the St George's Preservation Trust. Interest received on investments was £1,261, and there was an increase in the value of the investments of £10,141, compared with a decrease of £8,081 in 2022. There was a transfer of £8,000 into the fund from Unrestricted Funds. A grant of £1,776 was received from the Ironmongers' Company, which was used for the installation of handrails to the north porch. The fund currently stands at £145,278, representing an increase for the year of £19,370.

Choir Legacy Fund

This fund was established in 2020 with a £5,000 bequest from Frank Gee, a former chorister. After expenditure of £500 to support the choir and revaluation gains of £531, the fund stands at £4,492.

St George's restricted funds

The PCC is grateful for the continuing support of the Fearn Trust, which provided a grant of £20,000 to be used towards the cost of insuring both St George's and St Gabriel's churches.

Music Fund

This fund was established to receive grants for musical activities. In 2023 income received was nil, and payments totalling £400 were made to support our choral scholars. The fund has a balance of £5,822.

Choir Music Fund

This fund may be used to cover the cost of the replacement of choir music and has a balance of £112.

St George's Preservation Trust

Full accounts for the Trust are available on application. Income for the year was nil.

Expenditure this year comprised a grant to the Fabric Fund of £100, which has reduced the balance within the fund to £400. The Trustees have indicated their intention to pass the remaining balance to the Fabric Fund over the next four years.

Charitable giving

The following donations were made to charities from agency collections:

Donations of £142 from the annual Baby Memorial Service were shared between the Cradle Charity and the Stillbirth and Neonatal Death Society.

The collection of £284 at the Archdeacon's visitation service was given to Transforming Lives Together.

The sum of £986 was transferred to the Children's Society, from collections at the Christingle Services and carol singing.

Reserves and Investment Policies

The PCC reviewed its reserving policy in 2017. It is the policy of St George's to hold in reserves the equivalent of three months general running costs and an additional three month's salaries. At least one half of its minimum reserve should be held in Unrestricted Funds. These reserves may be invested in funds which provide some protection against loss of value due to inflation. This may take the form of capital appreciation or income which can be re-invested.

Reserves will continue to be held in the PCC's accounts with CCLA Investment Managers which is the leading fund manager for the assets of the church, charities and local authorities. It has a policy of engaging only in ethical investments and is owned by its clients – through the Boards of Finance in the case of the Church of England. The CBF Church of England Investment Fund is used which is highly diversified and balanced across many sectors of investment and is actively managed to achieve long term capital growth and steady income.

As at 31 December 2023 it was not necessary for the PCC to transfer funds from the Fabric Fund to Unrestricted Funds in order to comply with this policy. Transfers may become necessary during 2024 if expenditure exceeds income.

It is also the policy to hold a reserve to cover the work for projects that have been identified as necessary. This reserve, which may be required at short notice, is to be held in secure funds that are not subject to capital risks. An income from these funds while desirable is not essential. The CBF Church of England Deposit Fund is used, which holds only funds with AAA rated organisations and is managed by CCLA. However, excess funds may also be invested in the CBF Church of England Investment Fund.

The PCC has set a target minimum amount to be held in the Fabric Fund. This is calculated as a percentage of the insurance valuation of St George's Church, and the PCC make transfers from Unrestricted Funds into the Fabric Fund with the aim of reaching the target minimum within five to ten years. The current target minimum level is £142,000

A number of potential projects have been identified by the PCC including:

St George's Church

- Review of the lighting and sound systems in church
- Repairs to the west window
- Further investigations into the subsidence in the north east corner of the church, and any remedial actions required
- Repointing of churchyard wall
- Maintenance of masonry at roof level
- Development of kitchen and toilet facilities, with changes to the internal porches

Parish Rooms

- Redevelopment of the kitchen

The PCC believes that, at present, there are insufficient reserves available to cover all of these projects. Consequently, individual projects will commence only when adequate finance is available.

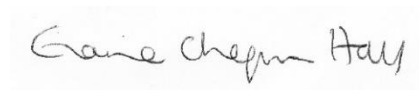
The reserves policy for St Gabriel's church was reviewed in 2016 and was amended to match that of St George's, i.e. the equivalent of three months general running costs. No major projects are envisaged in the near future, and the reserves are considered to be adequate.

The reserves are held on deposit with the church's bankers, or with CCLA Investment Managers.

Dr Andrew Regan
18th February 2024

Approval

The annual report was approved by the Parochial Church Council on 2nd April 2024 and signed on its behalf by:

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Gaire Chapman Hall". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. The first name "Gaire" is written in a larger, more prominent script, followed by "Chapman" and "Hall". The signature is positioned on a light-colored, slightly textured background.

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of the Parochial Church Council of St George, Stockport

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Parochial Church Council of St George, Stockport for the year ended 31 December 2023.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the Parochial Church Council ("PCC") 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 PCC's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 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.

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:

- accounting records were not kept in respect of the PCC as required by section 130 of the Act; or
- the accounts do not accord with those records; or
- 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.

Signed



Date 16-04-2024

Paul Clancy, BA (Hons), ACA, MBA
19 Rosemoor Gardens
Appleton
Warrington
WA4 4RF.

Parochial Church Council of St George, Stockport
Charity number 1134170

Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31 December 2023

	Notes	Unrestricted funds	Designated funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Prior year total funds
Income and endowments from:							
Donations and legacies	6.a	101,235	1,949	20,000	-	123,184	130,849
Income from charitable activities	6.b	17,902	-	-	-	17,902	20,471
Other trading activities	6.c	20,637	1,734	-	-	22,372	22,756
Investments	6.d	4,092	1,525	-	-	5,617	885
Other income	6.e	359,983	167	-	-	360,150	-
Total income		503,849	5,376	20,000	-	529,225	174,961
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds	6.f	1,961	-	-	-	1,961	5,460
Expenditure on charitable activities	6.g	140,460	5,062	20,720	-	166,242	162,075
Other expenditure		-	-	-	-	-	-
Total expenditure		142,421	5,062	20,720	-	168,203	167,535
Net income / (expenditure) resources before transfer		361,428	313	(720)	-	361,022	7,426
Transfers							
Gross transfers between funds - in	3, 4	-	9,100	-	-	9,100	-
Gross transfers between funds - out	3, 4	(8,000)	(1,000)	(100)	-	(9,100)	-
Other recognised gains / losses							
Gains/losses on investment assets	7.b	-	10,671	-	-	10,671	(8,571)
Gains on revaluation, fixed assets, charity's own use		-	-	-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds		353,428	19,085	(820)	-	371,694	(1,145)
Reconciliation of funds							
Total funds brought forward	3	76,963	138,959	17,838	-	233,760	234,905
Total funds carried forward	2	430,391	158,043	17,019	-	605,453	233,760

Parochial Church Council of St George, Stockport
Charity number 1134170

Balance Sheet

	Notes	General	Designated	Restricted	Endowment	At 31/12/2023 £	At 31/12/2022 £
Fixed assets							
Tangible Assets	2, 7.a	335,036	-	-	-	335,036	35,000
Investments	2, 7.b	-	95,597	-	-	95,597	84,926
		335,036	95,597	-	-	430,633	119,926
Current assets							
Debtors	2, 8	14,508	-	1,180	-	15,688	16,632
Cash At Bank And In Hand	2	88,987	62,446	16,104	-	167,537	107,234
		103,495	62,446	17,284	-	183,226	123,865
Liabilities							
Creditors: Amounts Falling Due In One Year	2, 9	8,140	-	265	-	8,405	10,031
		8,140	-	265	-	8,405	10,031
Net current assets less current liabilities							
		95,355	62,446	17,019	-	174,820	113,834
Total assets less current liabilities							
		430,391	158,043	17,019	-	605,453	233,760
Liabilities							
		-	-	-	-	-	-
Total net assets less liabilities							
		430,391	158,043	17,019	-	605,453	233,760

Represented by

Unrestricted

Unrestricted - General Fund	3	430,391	-	-	-	430,391	76,963
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Designated

Designated - Choir (Legacy)	3	-	4,492	-	-	4,492	4,461
Designated - Fabric Fund	3	-	145,278	-	-	145,278	125,908
Designated - St Gabriel's	3	-	8,274	-	-	8,274	8,589

Parochial Church Council of St George, Stockport
Charity number 1134170

Restricted

Restricted - Choir Music	3	-	-	112	-	112	112
Restricted - Fearn Trust Grants	3	-	-	10,686	-	10,686	11,005
Restricted - Music Fund	3	-	-	5,822	-	5,822	6,222
Restricted - Preservation Trust	3	-	-	400	-	400	500

Fund Totals	430,391	158,043	17,019	-	605,453	233,760
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This Financial Report for the year ended 31st December 2023, including the notes following, was approved by the Parochial Church Council and signed on its behalf by Revd. Canon Elaine Chegwin Hall, PCC Chairman:

..... *Elaine Chegwin Hall*

Date *13/3/24*

NOTES to the FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
for the year ended 31st December 2023

1 Accounting Policies

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Charities Act 2011, current Church Accounting Regulations and Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard 102 (FRS102) together with the exemptions available to smaller charities under Section 1A. These accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention except for the value of investment assets which are shown at market value.

They include all transactions for which the PCC is responsible in law. They do not include accounts of church groups that owe their affiliation to another body nor those that are informal gatherings of church members.

Funds

Restricted funds represent donations or grants received for a specific object or invited by the PCC for a specific object. They are only expended on the specific object for which they were given. Any balance remaining at the end of each year is carried forward as a balance on that fund.

Unrestricted funds represent the funds of the PCC that are not subject to any restrictions regarding their use and are available for application on the general purposes of the PCC.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds which the PCC has designated for a particular purpose, but the PCC retains the ability to use some or all of these funds for the general purposes of the PCC.

Income recognition

All income sources are accounted for gross. *Planned giving, collections and donations* are recognised when received by or on behalf of the PCC. *Tax refunds* are recognised when the incoming resource to which they relate is recognised. *Grants and legacies* are accounted for when the PCC is legally entitled to the amounts due. *Dividends* are accounted for when due and payable. *Interest entitlements* are accounted for as they accrue. All other income is recognised when it is receivable.

The value of any voluntary help received is not included in the accounts but is described in the annual report.

Expenditure recognition

Grants and donations are accounted for when paid over, or when awarded, if that award creates a binding obligation on the PCC. The parish share is accounted for when payable. Any parish share unpaid at 31st December is provided for in these accounts as an operational (though not legal) liability and is shown as a creditor in the Balance Sheet. All *other expenditure* is generally recognised when it is incurred and is accounted gross.

Governance costs include any costs of the preparation and examination of statutory accounts and of any legal advice to the PCC on governance or constitutional matters.

Assets

Consecrated and beneficed property is excluded from the accounts by s10(2)(a) and (c) of the Charities Act 2011.

Movable church furnishings held by the Vicar and Churchwardens on special trust for the PCC and which require a faculty for disposal are accounted as inalienable property unless consecrated. They are listed in the church's inventories which can be inspected at any reasonable time. For inalienable property acquired prior to 2001 there is insufficient cost information available and therefore such assets are not valued in the accounts. Items acquired since 1 January 2001 have been capitalised and depreciated in the accounts over their anticipated useful economic life on a straight line basis.

All expenditure incurred in the year on *consecrated and benefice buildings*, or individual items under £1,000 or on the repair of movable church furnishings acquired before 1 January 2001 is written off. The parish office printer is depreciated on a straight line basis over 5 years. Other items of equipment with a purchase price over £1,000 used within church premises are depreciated on a straight line basis over 4 years.

From 2023, no depreciation is provided on *freehold buildings* as the useful economic life of these assets exceeds 50 years and residual values are so high that potential depreciation would be immaterial. It is the PCC's policy to maintain these assets in a continual state of sound repair. Resulting from regular impairment reviews, provision will be made if there has been any permanent diminution in value.

Parochial Church Council of St George, Stockport
Charity number 1134170

Investments are valued at market value at 31 December.

The Parochial Church Council consider that there are no material uncertainties about the ability of St George's PCC to continue as a going concern.

Parochial Church Council of St George, Stockport
Charity number 1134170

2 Statement of Assets and Liabilities

Class and nominal code	General	Designated	Restricted	Endowment	Total	Last year
Fixed Asset - Investments						
6440: Investments	-	95,597	-	-	95,597	84,926
Total	-	95,597	-	-	95,597	84,926
Fixed Asset - Tangible Assets						
6430: Tangible fixed assets: property	332,626	-	-	-	332,626	35,000
6431: Office printer	2,411	-	-	-	2,411	-
Total	335,036	-	-	-	335,036	35,000
Current Asset - Cash At Bank And In Hand						
6501: Bank of Scotland current account	1,645	5,749	12,994	-	20,388	23,402
6502: NatWest current account	20,202	8,005	2,711	-	30,917	22,746
6503: Preservation Trust current account	-	-	400	-	400	500
6510: CCLA (CBF) deposit account	67,140	48,692	-	-	115,832	60,586
Total	88,987	62,446	16,104	-	167,537	107,234
Current Asset - Debtors						
Z05: Accounts Receivable	14,508	-	1,180	-	15,688	16,632
Total	14,508	-	1,180	-	15,688	16,632
Liability - Agency Accounts						
6699: Agency collections	-	-	265	-	265	902
Total	-	-	265	-	265	902
Liability - Creditors: Amounts Falling Due In One Year						
Z04: Accounts Payable	8,140	-	-	-	8,140	9,129
Total	8,140	-	-	-	8,140	9,129
Net total assets	430,391	158,043	17,019	-	605,453	233,760
Represented by						
General (Unrestricted)	430,391	-	-	-	430,391	76,963
Designated - Choir Legacy	-	4,492	-	-	4,492	4,461
Designated - Fabric	-	145,278	-	-	145,278	125,908
Designated - St Gabriel's	-	8,274	-	-	8,274	8,589
Restricted - Choir Music	-	-	112	-	112	112
Restricted - Fearn	-	-	10,686	-	10,686	11,005
Restricted - Music	-	-	5,822	-	5,822	6,222

Parochial Church Council of St George, Stockport
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Restricted - Preservation	-	-	400	-	400	500
Total	430,391	158,043	17,019	-	605,453	233,760

3 Fund movement summary

Fund	Opening	Incoming	Outgoing	Transfers	Gains/Losses	Journals	Closing
Choir Legacy							
Designated	4,461	-	500	-	531	-	4,492
Sub-totals	4,461	-	500	-	531	-	4,492
Choir Music							
Restricted	112	-	-	-	-	-	112
Sub-totals	112	-	-	-	-	-	112
Fabric							
Designated	125,908	3,037	1,908	8,100	10,141	-	145,278
Sub-totals	125,908	3,037	1,908	8,100	10,141	-	145,278
Fearn							
Restricted	11,005	20,000	20,320	-	-	-	10,686
Sub-totals	11,005	20,000	20,320	-	-	-	10,686
Music							
Restricted	6,222	-	400	-	-	-	5,822
Sub-totals	6,222	-	400	-	-	-	5,822
Preservation							
Restricted	500	-	-	(100)	-	-	400
Sub-totals	500	-	-	(100)	-	-	400
St Gabriel's							
Designated	8,589	2,339	2,654	-	-	-	8,274
Sub-totals	8,589	2,339	2,654	-	-	-	8,274
General							
Unrestricted	76,963	503,849	142,421	(8,000)	-	-	430,391

Parochial Church Council of St George, Stockport
Charity number 1134170

Sub-totals	76,963	503,849	142,421	(8,000)	-	-	430,391
Totals	233,760	529,225	168,203	-	10,671	-	605,453

4 Transfers Between Funds

An amount of £8,000 has been transferred from unrestricted funds to the Fabric Fund. This represents the regular transfers which the PCC makes towards the cost of larger maintenance works.

An amount of £100 was transferred from the Preservation Trust to the Fabric Fund. This represents a grant made by the Preservation Trust to the PCC.

As the value of unrestricted funds was above the minimum required by our financial reserving policy, it was not necessary to transfer any funds from the Fabric Fund to unrestricted funds as at 31/12/23 to meet the necessary minimum reserve.

5 Explanation of Funds:

Designated Funds

Designated Funds are fund set aside for a particular purpose. However, the PCC may resolve to use such funds for any other purpose.

The St Gabriel's Fund is used for all matters relating to St Gabriel's Church, and the PCC has given the St Gabriel's Committee limited financial authority over these finances.

The Fabric Fund holds monies set aside for the maintenance and repair of church buildings, including the Parish Rooms and the Curate's House. The PCC intend to make regular transfers into this fund from unrestricted income.

The Choir Legacy Fund was established in 2020 with a bequest from Frank Gee, a former choir member. It is intended to be used for the benefit of the choir.

Restricted Funds

St George's Church Preservation Trust was established under a trust deed in 1990. The objects include the restoration and repair of the fabric and contents of St George's church, the parish office, the parish rooms and other PCC property.

In 2022 the trustees made a grant of £100 from the Preservation Trust to the Fabric Fund, and have stated their intention to transfer the remaining amount over the coming years.

The Preservation Trust is considered to be a connected charity, consequently the transactions and balances have been included in these accounts, but are restricted funds.

The PCC Restricted Fund represents donations given and monies raised for specific objectives.

An annual grant from the Fearn Trust of £20,000 (2022: £20,000) was received towards the cost of insuring St George's Church and St Gabriel's Church.

The Music Fund holds any grant income received in respect of musical activities. No further grant was received during 2023 (2022: £0) from the Pilling Trust to support our Choral Scholars.

Parochial Church Council of St George, Stockport
Charity number 1134170

6 Analysis of income and expenditure

					Total	
	Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	Endowment	This year	Last year
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM:						
6.a Donations and legacies						
0101 - Standing orders: Gift Aid	46,041	-	-	-	46,041	47,595
0102 - Standing orders: non-Gift Aid	2,890	-	-	-	2,890	2,100
0110 - Weekly Envelopes: Gift Aid	9,279	-	-	-	9,279	9,136
0201 - Weekly envelopes	1,525	-	-	-	1,525	1,480
0202 - Gift Aid Envelopes	2,056	-	-	-	2,056	2,316
0301 - Plate collections: GASDS	6,622	166	-	-	6,787	6,413
0302 - Plate collections: non-GASDS	30	-	-	-	30	-
0303 - Baptisms: plate collections (GASDS)	658	-	-	-	658	847
0304 - Baptisms: Gift-Aid envelopes	150	-	-	-	150	553
0305 - Funerals: plate collections (GASDS)	267	-	-	-	267	69
0306 - Weddings: plate collections (GASDS)	-	-	-	-	-	127
0307 - Funerals: gift-aid envelopes	-	-	-	-	-	10
0501 - Donations: other, gift aided	2,634	-	-	-	2,634	1,429
0502 - Donations for specific projects	107	-	-	-	107	-
0520 - Donations: floodlighting, gift aided	110	-	-	-	110	220
0521 - Donations: floodlighting	55	-	-	-	55	40
0550 - Donations: other (GASDS)	1,407	-	-	-	1,407	-
0560 - Donations: other	2,484	-	-	-	2,484	6,570
0601 - Tax recoverable on Gift Aid	17,337	8	-	-	17,345	17,107
0701 - Legacies	5,000	-	-	-	5,000	1,723
0802 - Non-recurring one-off grants	2,582	1,776	20,000	-	24,358	33,115
Donations and legacies Totals	101,235	1,949	20,000	-	123,184	130,849
6.b Income from charitable activities						
0901 - Fundraising: festivals	10,770	-	-	-	10,770	16,738
0902 - Fundraising: other	1,043	-	-	-	1,043	-
1101 - Fees for weddings and funerals	3,241	-	-	-	3,241	3,733
1102 - DoM fees	1,457	-	-	-	1,457	-
1106 - Church fees - other than statutory fees for weddings and funerals	1,390	-	-	-	1,390	-

Parochial Church Council of St George, Stockport
Charity number 1134170

Income from charitable activities Totals	17,902	-	-	-	17,902	20,471
6.c Other trading activities						
1220 - Bookstall sales - fund raising	-	-	-	-	-	21
1240 - Parish Room lettings	10,351	-	-	-	10,351	10,878
1241 - Church letting	5,720	1,734	-	-	7,454	7,502
1250 - Magazine income - advertising	3,585	-	-	-	3,585	3,133
1260 - Parish magazine sales	981	-	-	-	981	1,222
Other trading activities Totals	20,637	1,734	-	-	22,372	22,756
6.d Investments						
1020 - Bank and building society interest	4,092	1,525	-	-	5,617	876
1030 - Rent from lands or buildings	-	-	-	-	-	9
Investments Totals	4,092	1,525	-	-	5,617	885
6.e Other income						
1310 - Insurance claims	-	167	-	-	167	-
1320 - Surplus - sales of fixed assets	359,983	-	-	-	359,983	-
Other income Totals	359,983	167	-	-	360,150	-
Income and endowments Grand totals	503,849	5,376	20,000	-	529,225	174,961

EXPENDITURE ON:

6.f Raising funds

1720 - Costs of printing envelopes	140	-	-	-	140	211
1730 - Costs of festivals & other events	1,821	-	-	-	1,821	5,249
Raising funds Totals	1,961	-	-	-	1,961	5,460

6.g Expenditure on charitable activities

1850 - Home mission	-	-	-	-	-	726
1870 - Secular charities	-	-	-	-	-	30
1910 - Ministry parish share etc	71,757	-	-	-	71,757	69,666
2001 - Assistant staff costs	11,229	-	-	-	11,229	11,381
2101 - Working expenses of incumbent	1,168	-	-	-	1,168	2,372
2120 - Council tax - vicarage	3,687	-	-	-	3,687	3,537
2121 - Council tax - curate's house	-	-	-	-	-	819
2130 - Curate's house expenses	56	-	-	-	56	-
2131 - Curate's house - insurance	486	-	-	-	486	795
2132 - Curate's house - electricity and gas	(393)	-	-	-	(393)	703
2140 - Water - vicarage	839	-	-	-	839	702
2145 - Water - curate's house	(180)	-	-	-	(180)	610

Parochial Church Council of St George, Stockport
Charity number 1134170

2150 - Vicarage telephone and internet	425	-	-	-	425	-
2201 - Parish training and mission	-	-	-	-	-	37
2301 - Church running - insurance	-	-	20,320	-	20,320	21,062
2310 - Church office - telephone	570	-	-	-	570	-
2320 - Organ / piano tuning	1,512	-	-	-	1,512	41
2321 - Other music costs	1,850	500	400	-	2,750	3,840
2330 - Church maintenance	627	2,424	-	-	3,051	2,311
2340 - Upkeep of services	1,973	-	-	-	1,973	3,077
2350 - Upkeep of churchyard	2,335	1,332	-	-	3,667	5,265
2360 - Administration	2,222	-	-	-	2,222	3,838
2401 - Church running - electricity	8,775	504	-	-	9,279	6,505
2410 - Church running - gas	23,212	-	-	-	23,212	17,008
2420 - Church running - water	350	302	-	-	653	525
2501 - Magazine expenses	2,090	-	-	-	2,090	2,287
2520 - Parish Room running - consumables	375	-	-	-	375	353
2530 - Parish Room running - electricity	300	-	-	-	300	300
2540 - Parish Room running - gas	4,280	-	-	-	4,280	2,785
2560 - Parish Room running - maintenance	917	-	-	-	917	786
2602 - Professional fees	-	-	-	-	-	714
Expenditure on charitable activities Totals	140,460	5,062	20,720	-	166,242	162,075
Expenditure Grand totals	142,421	5,062	20,720	-	168,203	167,535

Note: Amounts collected from the St Gabriel's congregation, including planned giving, are shown under Plate collections (Designated Funds). This is necessary to ensure confidentiality given the small number of donors in some categories.

Staff costs

	2023	2022
Wages and salaries	11,229	11,378
National Insurance	-	3
Total:	11,229	11,381

During the year the PCC employed a Director of Music and a secretary at St George's, both on a part-time basis.

Payments to PCC members

James Hibbert was a PCC member throughout 2022 and 2023. In 2023 the PCC paid him a salary as the Director of Music (including payment for weddings and funerals) of £7,121 (2022: £6,842) and paid £280 (2022: £280) towards his professional development.

Parochial Church Council of St George, Stockport
Charity number 1134170

7 Fixed Assets

7.a Tangible fixed assets	Freehold land and buildings		Office printer
	Beechfield Rd	Maple Close	
	£	£	£
Cost or valuation			
At 01/01/2023	52,000	-	-
Additions	-	332,626	2,760
Disposals	(35,000)	-	-
At 31/12/2023	-	332,626	2,760
Depreciation			
At 01/01/2023	17,000	-	-
Charge for year	-	-	(349)
at 31/12/2023	17,000	-	(349)
Net Book Value			
At 31/12/2022	35,000	-	-
At 31/12/2023	-	332,626	2,411

The freehold land and buildings at the beginning of the year comprised the curate's house at 40 Beechfield Road, Stockport. The house was purchased in 1988 at a cost, after refurbishing, of £52,000. The building was being depreciated at £500 per annum from 2003, on the basis of its expected useful life of 50 years, and was sold on 13th April 2023 for net proceeds of £394,983. It was then replaced by the purchase of the property at 30 Maple Close, Stockport on 29th June 2023 for £316,798 plus costs of surveys and capitalised improvements, totalling £332,626 up to 31st December 2023. This property is not being depreciated (see Assets in Note 1 above).

Those meeting rooms owned by the PCC are integral parts of the school premises and were donated by the Founder in 1901. As such the rooms are deemed to have no value for the purposes of these accounts.

The rented copier/printer in the parish office was replaced by a purchased machine on 15th May 2023 at a cost of £2,760, which is being depreciated linearly over five years.

7.b Investment assets

	2023				2022
	Designated Choir legacy £	Designated Fabric Fund £	Designated Total £	All Funds £	All Funds £
Movements in the year:					
Opening market value	4,461	80,464	84,926	84,926	93,497
Purchases at cost, less disposals at carrying value	(500)	500	-	-	-
Net gains/(losses) on disposals and annual revaluation	531	10,141	10,671	10,671	(8,571)
Closing market value	4,492	91,105	95,597	95,597	84,926

No investment assets were held in Unrestricted Funds or in Restricted Funds.

Holdings at 31 December in CBF Church of England Investment Fund Accumulation Units:

	2023	2022
Choir legacy	75.23	84.10
Fabric Fund	1525.69	1516.82
Total	1600.92	1600.92

Parochial Church Council of St George, Stockport
Charity number 1134170

8 Debtors

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total Funds 2023	Total Funds 2022
	£	£	£	£
Income tax recoverable	12,336	-	12,336	12,215
Prepayments and accrued income	2,173	1,180	3,353	2,356
Other debtors	-	-	-	2,061
Total	14,508	1,180	15,688	16,632

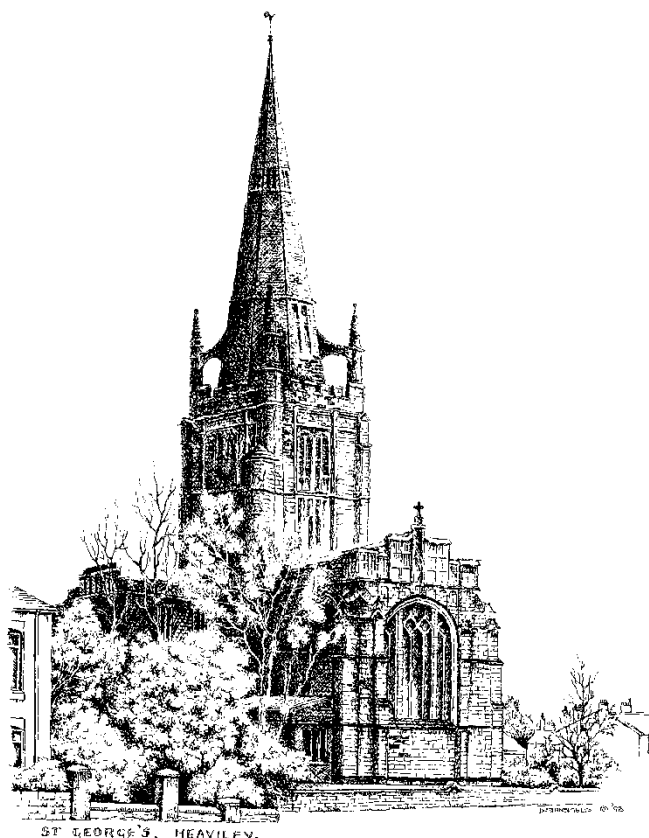
9 Creditors

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total Funds 2023	Total Funds 2022
	£	£	£	£
Amounts falling due within one year				
Accruals for utilities and other costs	5,902	-	5,902	8,971
Creditors for goods and services	2,239	-	2,239	1,060
Agency accounts	-	265	265	-
Total	8,140	265	8,405	10,031

Agency accounts contain monies to be transferred to external agencies, e.g. collections for charities, payments received for statutory DBF fees, etc.

The Parish Church of St. George, Stockport.

REPORT and ACCOUNTS
of the
Parochial Church Council



presented to the
Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Sunday 21st April 2024

Annual Report for 2023

Administrative Information

The Parish of Stockport St George is located on Buxton Road, Heaviley, and the daughter church of St Gabriel is located at Clover Avenue, Adswood. The parish is part of the Diocese of Chester within the Church of England.

PCC members who served during 2023 with future retirement dates in brackets are:

From January to May 2023

<i>Vicar:</i>	Revd Canon Elaine Chegwin Hall Chair	
<i>Associate Priest</i>	Revd Dr Jenny McKay	<i>(Minister in secular employment)</i>
<i>Readers</i>	Mr Peter Hall	<i>(Also Deanery and Diocesan Synod)</i>
<i>Reader Representative</i>	Mrs Rita Waters	
<i>Churchwardens</i>	Andrew Regan Mrs Hazel Jenkins	<i>(also Treasurer)</i>
<i>Deanery Synod</i>	Mr David Foulkes Mr Ian Roberts Mr John Sutcliffe	
<i>Elected members:</i>		
Mr Tommy Bowden	(2025)	
Mrs Sue Burt	(2025)	<i>Assistant PCC Secretary</i>
Mrs Lois Kelly	(2025)	<i>PCC Secretary</i>
Mr Philip Warner	(2025)	
Mrs Penny Bisby	(2024)	
Mrs Janet Neilson	(2024)	
Mrs Morag Ranson	(2024)	
Mr William Hesson	(2024)	<i>Deputy Warden</i>
Mrs Louise Clark	(2023)	
Mrs Sue Cordingly	(2023)	
Mr John Hardy	(2023)	<i>Deputy Warden</i>
<i>Co-opted Members</i>		
Mr Peter Smith		
Mr James Hibbert	<i>Safeguarding Officer</i>	

PCC Members From May 2023

<i>Vicar:</i>	Revd Canon Elaine Chegwin Hall	Chair
<i>Associate Priest</i>	Revd Dr Jenny McKay (<i>Minister in secular employment</i>)	

<i>Readers</i>	Mr Peter Hall	(<i>Also Deanery Synod</i>)
	Mrs Rita Waters	(<i>Also Deanery Synod</i>)

<i>Churchwardens</i>	Andrew Regan	(<i>Also Treasurer</i>)
	Mrs Hazel Jenkins	

<i>Deanery Synod Officer</i>	Mrs Sue Cordingly	(2026) <i>Assistant Safeguarding</i>
	Mr Ian Roberts	(<i>to November 2023</i>)

Elected members:

Mrs Sheila Daly	(2026)	
Mrs Marion McCall	(2026)	
Mrs Jennie Vandyes	(2026)	
Mr James Hibbert	(2026)	<i>Safeguarding Officer</i>
Mr Tommy Bowden	(2025)	
Mrs Sue Burt	(2025)	<i>Deputy Warden Assistant PCC</i>
<i>Secretary</i>		
Mrs Lois Kelly	(2025)	<i>PCC Secretary</i>
Mr Philip Warner	(2025)	
Mrs Penny Bisby	(2024)	
Mrs Janet Neilson	(2024)	
Mrs Morag Ranson	(2024)	
Mr William Hesson	(2024)	

<i>Co-opted Members</i>	Mr John Hardy	<i>Deputy Warden</i>
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<i>Independent Examiner:</i>	Mr Paul Clancy
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Structure and Governance

The PCC is a corporate body established by the Church of England. The PCC operates under the Parochial Church Council Powers Measure. The PCC is a charity, registered with the Charity Commission, number 1134170.

This report covers the activities of the two churches and of St George's Church Stockport Preservation Trust. The Trust was constituted under a trust deed dated 1st August 1990. While legally a separate charity, the Trust is regarded by the Diocesan Authorities as a connected charity, consequently its transactions and dealings are included in the accounts of the PCC.

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

Objectives and activities

The PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. This fulfils our public benefit requirement.

Committees

The PCC operates through a number of committees and project groups, which meet between meetings of the PCC.

The project groups in 2023 were for the Christmas Tree Festival, the Grapevine editorial group and the Inclusion Group

Standing Committee

This is the only committee required by law. It has the power to transact business of the PCC between meetings, subject to any directions given by the Council.

The Preservation Trust

The objectives of the Preservation Trust include the restoration and repair of the fabric and contents of St George's church and buildings. The Trustees may also finance other work connected with the voluntary aided school, youth work in the parish, or as agreed by the trustees.

The full PCC met 6 times during 2023 with an average level of attendance of 64%.

Achievements and Performance

The Electoral Roll total for St. George, Stockport PCC was 171 at the end of 2022.

- Marion McCall, Sheila Daly and Jennie Vandyes were elected to the PCC for the first time.
- James Hibbert was re-elected onto the PCC and John Hardy was co-opted.
- Peter Hall, Ian Roberts, Sue Cordingly and Rita Waters were elected to serve on the Deanery Synod.
- A faculty was obtained to install handrails on the steps to the North Porch, which were then installed.
- The PCC approved the appointment of Catherine Otley as Parish Secretary
- The PCC authorised celebrations for the Coronation in May.
- The PCC authorised the purchase of 30, Maple Close to replace 40, Beechfield Road as a curate's house and subsequent improvements to the property. This included installing double glazing; improving the loft insulation to meet current legislation; installing cavity wall insulation and decorating.
- The PCC applied for and were granted a Warm Spaces grant.
- The PCC approved the purchase of a new photocopier.
- A new Drainage Deed of Easement was signed to enable the developers to sell the final flat in the "Old Vicarage"

Church Attendance

The average weekly attendance, at church, for St. George's was:

NB last year's figures in italics

Choral Evensong	33.0	<i>27.6</i>
Early Communion	12.0	<i>13.8</i>
Parish Communion	88.2	<i>78.2</i>
Praise & Play	28.5	<i>26.8</i>
Wednesday Communion	17.8	<i>15.1</i>
Wednesday MP	9.1	<i>6.8</i>

Baptism Assistants Team

This year has once again been quite busy for baptisms. We have had 24 in total including 4 adults with 3 immersions and one set of twins.

The baptism team are always pleased to welcome the families into church. It is very rewarding to be of help to the clergy on these special occasions.

Sadly, this year we have lost Peter Pilbeam one of the baptism team's founder members. He is sadly missed both as a friend and colleague.

Holy baptism is a joyful celebration service for families. In 2024 we shall continue to welcome everyone into our lovely church.

Brenda Swindells

Bell Ringers

It is pleasing to report, as previously, that Sunday service ringing and practices have been maintained with very few cancellations. A good standard of ringing is being achieved, and that for Sunday services is something of which we can be justly proud.

Ringing for the coronation of HM King Charles III on 6th May was a particularly special occasion. Details of the ringing and those who took part were carefully recorded in our tower log, which in years to come will be an important historic document.

Three new learners are receiving tuition and are progressing encouragingly. We hope that they will soon be able to become full members of the band.

We were able to marshal two visits up the tower on Heritage Day, for which the weather was gratefully ideal. Thanks to all who assisted.

There was only one wedding last year for which bells were requested. We have rung for one wedding so far this year; there are further weddings on the list for which we await confirmation if bells will be required.

I continue to be extremely grateful for the commitment and support of all the band, for which they have my sincere thanks.

Andrew Mayes – Ringing Master

Choir

St. George's Church Choir

Building on the successes of the previous year, 2023 was another excellent year for St. George's Church Choir.

As well as singing for the usual schedule of Services and rehearsals there have been a number of notable occasions throughout the year, and some of these are listed below.

Epiphany Carol Service 2023

As always, the first major service of the year was the Epiphany Carol Service, a relatively recent addition to our list of annual Services, this continues to be a well-received Service, contrasting nicely with the scale and grandeur of the annual Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols a few weeks beforehand.

Spring Cathedral Tour 2023

In March 2023 the choir travelled to Lichfield Cathedral to sing Choral Evensong for their Spring Tour. This was our second visit to the Cathedral in 12 months, and we were invited back again for a further visit in the future.

Coronation Weekend (Sunday 7th May 2023)

On Sunday 7th May the choir sang at both the morning Service and afternoon Café Church to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III. It was a memorable occasion for all involved! In preparation for the festivities the choir learnt a number of big choral anthems including Zadok the Priest – Handel, I was glad – Parry, and a newly written anthem commissioned by the RSCM for the occasion called The mountain's shall bring peace – Forbes L'Estrange. Thanks must go to David Cavendish for playing the organ at the morning service.

Summer Cathedral Tour 2023

August saw the choir make the very short journey over the Diocesan boundary to Manchester Cathedral for their 2023 Summer Tour. The choir sang for three services on the last weekend in August, and received a very warm welcome from the Clergy and Congregation at the Cathedral. We have since been invited back on a future date. It is important to note that this was the first time that many of our Junior Choristers joined the Adults for a Cathedral visit, and this was noted during the Sermon at Evensong on the Sunday evening by Canon Nigel Ashworth who preached on the importance of youngsters in music and within Parish life.

Wedding of David Bird & Lauren Bird

On Saturday 2nd September the choir sang for Lauren and David's Wedding at St. George's. This was the first that the choir had sung for the wedding of a choir member for many years, and a lot of hard work went into learning the music for

the day to make it even more special. It was a wonderful occasion for everyone involved! Congratulations to Lauren and David!

Visit to St. Oswald's Church, Malpas

On Sunday 1st October members of the choir and ministry team visited St. Oswald's Church, Malpas, where a former Curate of St. George's, Revd Dr Janine Arnott is now Rector, to sing for their monthly Choral Evensong. We received a very warm welcome, and the Service was a great success.

RSCM Chester Area Festival 2023 & National Celebration Day

On Saturday 14th October 2023 members of St. George's Choir attended the Royal School of Church Music's National Celebration Day at Chester Cathedral to sing alongside the Cathedral Choir and Parish Choirs from around the Country. It was a real joy to be able to take some of our Junior Choristers to sing Choral Evensong at the Cathedral, and for them to experience singing with the Cathedral Choir.

Advent & Christmas 2023

As the festive season approached the Choir prepared for a number of important services and events. In addition to the regular pattern of Services the Choir provided music for Carol Singing at the Christmas Tree Festival, The Advent Carol Service, and the popular Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols on Sunday 17th December 2023.

The choir term ended with the Junior Choir singing for the three Christingle Services, and the Adults singing for Christmas Eve Midnight Communion and Christmas Day Service.

Music Department

My thanks to my friend and colleague Roger Briscoe for his work as Associate Director of Music. His support in accompanying the choir for rehearsals and Services each week is very much appreciated. Roger travels a great distance from home to St. George's, and this level of commitment to the choir and wider musical life of the Church is to be commended! His musicianship remains at the highest of standards, and we are very lucky to have someone with such a wealth of experience carrying out the role of Associate Director of Music. The work that Roger does often goes unnoticed to all but those attending the weekly adults' choir practice. If you want to see a really experienced professional at work I suggest coming along and watch how he accompanies a rehearsal with such skill. Thank you, Roger, for all of your work in 2023, particularly at weekly choir practices, monthly Choral Evensongs, and on Choir Tours.

Tom Glover joined us in August 2023, just in time for the choir's summer tour to Manchester Cathedral – *excellent timing on his part* – and has become a really

valuable asset to the musical life of St. George's. As an experienced organist Tom has played in some very illustrious places over recent years, and his arrival at St. George's during 2023 has been a blessing to us all. His accompaniment of the choir at rehearsals and Services has been wonderfully received, and the quality of his organ voluntaries week by week has been exceptional. The time and effort Tom puts in behind the scenes is remarkable – often giving up his lunch hour at work several times during the week to come to church and practice on the organ.

I thoroughly enjoy being able to share playing and conducting duties with Tom each Sunday. Thank you, Tom!

The working relationship, and friendship, that has built up between, myself Roger and Tom over the last couple of months has been a real joy to behold. I couldn't wish to have two better people to help me lead and direct the music at St. George's. Long may it continue!

As ever, thanks must go to Hannah Whitehouse for her support at Junior Choir rehearsals, and during Services. Hannah's work with the Junior Choristers behind the scenes is very much appreciated. Her experience as a teacher is a huge bonus to the success of the Junior Choir, allowing me to focus on music with the children. Not only does Hannah help in training the Junior Choristers but she goes above and beyond the call of duty to organise various trips out and social events for the Children throughout the year. I'm extremely grateful to her for her many hours of voluntary support to the Junior Choir, particularly in her work on the Voice for Life awards scheme.

RSCM Voice for Life Scheme

We continue to operate our internal ribbons programme using the Royal School of Church Music's Voice for Life resources. During 2023 a number of the 2022 intake of Junior Choristers received their surplices at points throughout the year, signalling an end to their probationary periods.

Some children worked towards their Voice for Life light blue and dark blue awards. At several points throughout the year Hannah Whitehouse ran workshops with the children to work on musical theory and understanding. These sessions are vital in helping the children work towards completing each stage of the VfL process.

Head Chorister

Maddie Wilson was admitted as Head Chorister in November 2023. Maddie is our longest serving Junior Chorister (of the present era). She is a real asset to the choir, and her promotion to Head Chorister is well deserved!

Membership

2023 was a very rewarding year for St. George's Choir. During the year the Choir's membership increased significantly with new members joining the Junior Choir and Adults. As of the end of 2023 we had a total of 50 choir members, up from 38 members at the end of the previous year. Whilst the increase in membership is a wonderful thing, we continued to suffer from a lack of robes for all of the new adults and children who have joined the choir. A donation from a choir parent enabled us to buy some new Cassocks from Ormsby of Scarisbrick – the firm that makes our cassocks and surplices. In addition, we've been very fortunate to have received some second-hand choir robes from a number of churches across the North West, including St Paul's, Sale, St. John's Altrincham (Closed), and Edenfield Parish Church, near Ramsbottom.

I am grateful to the overwhelming support of our Vicar, Elaine, and the wider Ministry Team in enabling the choir to achieve so much over the last year. Some churches aren't so lucky to have such a great team.

James Hibbert

Director of Music

Christmas Tree Festival

When planning for the 2023 Christmas Tree Festival, we took two very important decisions. Firstly due to poor economic climate we would not raise any of our prices and secondly that we would like Father Christmas to visit on both Saturday and Sunday. Father Christmas was very happy to oblige and met with children both morning and afternoon each day! Our decision to freeze prices certainly paid off as we returned a record profit of around £9,000.

As a team we were delighted to welcome new exhibitors as well as many returnees, some after a longish 'Covid' gap. As ever the standard of decorations and the ingenuity of people was great to see and drew many comments of admiration. We welcomed both children and adult choirs to entertain everyone and the Karela School of Dancing wowed us with their show on Saturday.

My thanks go to all of the team and everyone who helped, but particular thanks must go to Peter Smith and his team for presiding over an incredibly busy café. There was much late night baking happening in several kitchens as we tried to keep up a constant supply of cakes. Thanks also to Pat Rigley who managed a splendid raffle which brought in over £1,000 and to Andrea Millington who very efficiently took over the role of liaising with the schools for visits and singing.

During the five days of the Festival we had over 4000 visitors including the visiting schools and youth organisations. This was up by a couple of hundred on last year

and interestingly visitor numbers for Sunday have definitely increased over the last two years. So, here's to the 2024 Festival!

Hazel Jenkins

Garden Gnomes

As workers in the outdoors, gardeners are accustomed to variations in weather conditions during the various seasons. By dressing appropriately, we can usually find suitable jobs to do, whatever the weather.

However, over the last twelve months we seem to have had more 'washout' days than I can remember. We have also experienced very windy conditions with large amounts of twigs and branches being scattered around the grounds. We are hoping Mother Nature will be kinder to us this coming year.

One bonus this year was the completion of the building work on the former vicarage site, allowing us to regain clear access to the roadway and paving, which has made tidying up a bit easier.

This time last year we were expecting to have to use professional help again to prune the trees in the North Avenue. However, we have been able to control growth at the lower levels ourselves, and defer higher level work by tree specialists for the time being.

Planting and maintaining the various flower beds continues to be a fulfilling part of our regular work. The new bed at the east end of the grounds, which was planted to celebrate the church's 125th Anniversary, has been retained. It was filled with bedding plants in the earlier part of the year, which gave a welcome splash of colour to the area. However, for the longer term it was decided a rose garden would be more manageable and, thanks to donations from various sources, that change-over has been implemented.

We would like to record our appreciation to all who have provided plants, bulbs and monetary gifts to help us in maintaining variety in the garden areas.

The more mundane, but equally important, general maintenance tasks of clearing autumnal leaves, tree debris and general litter, plus the ongoing battle with moss and weeds on the gravel paths, keep us busy.

We endeavour to keep the Remembrance Garden paving area clean and weed free, but, as noted in last year's report, in reality it needs repaving. It is the part of the gardens that church members and visitors notice when entering our building.

One major task requiring action is to renovate the compost heap arrangements which have been overloaded and will require significant effort to restore.

Over recent times, our team numbers have been reduced as former members have had to retire, and our resources have become stretched. We have been pleased to have Anoosh and Nazanin join with us on Tuesday mornings, but additional help would be appreciated as we move into the growing season.

We meet up between 9.30am and 12.30pm, at whatever times suit people's personal circumstances. Every little helps! We do allow ourselves a tea/coffee break around 11am, to chat and catch up on news.

If you are interested, please contact Walter Stead (0161 430 2449) or speak to any other team member. You will be made very welcome, as together we endeavour to present to visitors and passers-by the message that our church is a place that is cared for, and cares for all.

Walter Stead – Novice Gnome

Grapevine

The magazine is published in 10 monthly issues per year except for July/August and December/January when a combined issue is published. The monthly magazine is a 24-page full colour issue including the December/January issue, while the July/August issue was expanded to a 28-page issue. During 2023 the magazine has published a range of articles related to our Christian mission, with some of the highlights including articles on Christian worship in Ukraine, Holocaust Memorial Day, the Bishops' visitation to the Stockport Deanery accompanied by the Melanesian Brothers from the Solomon Isles, and on life as a Reader in the Church of England. Chris Dawson has provided a series of insightful and reflective pieces on meditation and prayer. We have also introduced more regular prayers as a feature of the magazine and the Storytime feature has a Christian theme.

The magazine continues to include regular contributions from the Garden Gnomes, Praise and Play, the Mothers' Union, and the Sunday Clubs as well as the monthly recipe provided by Pamela Ferguson. Printing in full colour has provided opportunities to include attractive photo stories. These have included photo stories on messy church, baptism and confirmation, the afternoon tea for the Coronation of King Charles III, Lauren and David Bird's wedding, and the Sunday Clubs work on God's creation for the Christmas Tree Festival. The December/January edition included a centre page spread of 12 of the best photos from the year. The magazine incorporates photos from contributors as well as using copyright free photos from the Unsplash website but with a clear acknowledgement of the photographers. The magazine has also included more regular features on environmental issues as part of our Eco Church mission. We have also introduced a regular 'What am I' challenge.

During 2023 we sadly included obituaries for Frances Farrar, Peter Pilbeam, Margaret Sharrard, Alice Ramsbottom, Stan Berry, Olwen Garrido, Jean Norton, and Kathleen Heaword.

The magazine committee meets on the third Tuesday of the month ahead of the publication of the magazine at the beginning of each month. Roles have shifted with some stepping down and others taking on these roles. We acknowledge the many years of service and extend grateful thanks to Judith Swift for taking receipt of the magazines each month and for delivering them to households across our community. We thank Kate Stephenson for adopting the duty of taking receipt of the magazines and Carol Condliffe for organising their postal delivery. We thank Angela Foulkes for her work with Andrew Regan undertaking final proofing of the magazine text ahead of the publication. We are also grateful to Olwen Smith, Carol Condliffe, and Rosie Stead for their work in hand delivering copies of the magazine, which extends its reach into our community.

Andy Clark

Handbell Ringers

The handbell ringers stopped meeting regularly during the initial stages of the first COVID-19 lockdown. Following easing of restrictions some of the participants moved away and were not able to attend regular practice. As a result, we have not been able to organise a regular team of ringers for some years. In 2023 we have managed to organise two events. The handbells were displayed at the Heritage Day giving visitors the opportunity to 'have a go'. This garnered interest from adults and children alike with younger visitors particularly enjoying the challenge of playing the biggest bells. In December we managed to assemble a team of 12 to play at the Nine Lessons and Carols service. We played an arrangement of the Carol of the Bells, which was very well received. Going forward we are looking to assemble a team to play at events and special services in the future.

Andy Clark

Lent Breakfasts

Once again we ran five consecutive sessions on Saturday mornings, starting on 25 February and ending on 25 March. As usual, breakfast began at 9.30am and the talks at 10.0am followed by questions. We finished at 11.00am. Each session began and ended with a short prayer.

This year's subject was Exploring Mental Health and it proved a popular one. The atmosphere in which these sessions took place was notably calm, sympathetic and supportive. I have put attendance figures at the end of my summary of each talk.

In the first session Retired Consultant Psychiatrist Bob Baldwin talked to us about Mental Health and the NHS from a doctor's perspective. He gave an overview of mental health and illness. Our answers to a quiz he had given us acted as the basis for this overview. He emphasised that mental well-being is on a continuum for all of us. (21)

On 4 March, Marion McCall, our former Parish Secretary, spoke about Finding Hope in a Troubled World – for ourselves and for others. In a moving presentation, Marion spoke from her own experience of recovering from depression and things in her life falling apart. (23)

Anne Rodger of Rev320 (a reference to the book of Revelation 3:20) talked to us on 11 March. She told of how she found herself called to leave her conventional job and open a charity shop drop-in in Stockport. Somewhere where people can talk and be listened to. (19)

Our last speaker, on 18 March, was Linda Buckley, Reader at St. Matthew's Stretton and Papyrus Champion. She gave a presentation called SPARK on the work of Papyrus in suicide prevention amongst young people. SPARK stands for Suicide Prevention through Awareness, Resources and Knowledge. (18)

On 25 March we held our usual reflection and discussion session under the title What Have We Discovered? Not only did we discuss what had experienced, but also what we might do more effectively as a church. A summary of our observations and suggestions was circulated following this session.(14)

A huge 'thank you' to all our speakers, to Peter Smith and his team for setting up and providing breakfast and to Marion McCall, Sue Cordingley and Morag Ranson for their support in organising the Lent Prayer Breakfasts.

Chris Dawson

Linen Guild

The small group have continued to care for all the white linen used during the various services. We were very saddened to lose our friend Jose and miss her very much. She was a great perfectionist. We now welcome Kate Stephenson on to the team.

Pat Rigley

Messy Church Bake Off

Thank you, God for giving us food (and elasticated waistbands)!

Messy Church Bake Off, requires at least two portions of whatever is being made; one that is prepared earlier and one for the actual service.

There are times, especially when using yeast, that even more samples in various states of rising, litter the Vicarage kitchen out of sight of the camera. My trusty assistant, Peter passes then to me when needed and being more than happy to lick the bowl, especially if chocolate has been involved.

Two recipes come to mind as being particularly successful one being the mini Christmas Crumble Cakes which sold well at the Christmas tree Festival and the gluten free lemon meringue cupcakes which someone described as follows, “ I’m pleased to say that your recent batch of Lemon cupcakes have been awarded the highest level of merit on offer by yours truly! I don’t think anyone has baked anything as good since Henry VIII founded the Church of England. “High praise indeed!

The main thing to glean from this is that I am always on the look out to get the various batches out to people to eat so the ministry team, clergy chapter and other events are likely to have been the recipients of my batch cooking!

Jesus in particular and the Christian faith in general features prominently in these services so the baking is only part of it.

Whilst it was initially devised as a Childrens’ service, it has been a delight to welcome so many adults who have come to join in. Thank you for doing that.

Elaine Chegwin Hall

Messy Church for Adults

Why should children have all the fun? It was decided to hold a Messy Church for adults so they could take time out to be creative and to reflect upon the reason for the season.

Messy Church Easter for Adults

Quite a large crowd of men and women gathered in the parish rooms to make friendship bracelets, simnel cakes, flatbread, Easter cards and people moved around from one table to access other crafts. There was a real buzz in the air, and everyone enjoyed themselves.

Messy Church Christmas for Adults

We tried out a Christmas Messy Church, but we couldn’t be in the parish rooms as they were being used by another group. We had the heating on and set up at the back of the church to make floral displays (one person made a Christmas tree), chocolates and decorations. Again, a number of people came along and had a good time.

Elaine Chegwin Hall

Mothers' Union

The Mothers' Union have had a very varied programme during 2023. Our speakers included, 'Chuckle with Chutney' with Melanie Latham, Julia Maunders spoke about 'Independent Options', Angela Foulkes on 'Ear Friendly', 'Virtual Babies' were brought to us by Helen Harrison, an MU member from Congleton. For Easter Kim Regan gave a multimedia presentation entitled 'God of majesty, suffering and Joy'. 'Steady in Stockport' provided information on how we can stay safe at home and what facilities are available to us. We had an afternoon tea, all provided by local shops, a communion service and two new members were enrolled, Angela Foulkes and Hazel Jenkins.

A lunch at The Deanwater was enjoyed by members and guests. Catherine Brown demonstrated flowers with a Christmas theme. Our December meeting celebrated Christmas with Nine Lessons and Carols, readings by the Vicar and Rev Jenny and music provided by James with carols from famous cathedrals.

During the year we have lost three very dear friends and long-standing members, Margaret Sharrard, Olwen Garrido and Jose Westwood, their support and advice is greatly missed. In memory of all recently departed members we have received donations, and these have been used to buy rose bushes for the church garden and then we are to give Bibles to those couples married in church and small books of prayers for those children baptised at St. George's.

During the year we have collected items for the 'Bags of Education' project run in conjunction with the Diocese when we provided items such as pens, crayons exercise books for children who have to provide their own, four bags were sent off.

We are a friendly group meeting in the afternoon on the second Monday of the month and would welcome visitors and new members.

Pat Rigley

Praise And Play

Praise and Play continued to meet on Tuesday mornings between 10 and 11 during term time in the Parish Room. This has proved to be much more comfortable than when we met in church as it is much warmer and there is more room for the children to play.

The numbers attending Praise and Play has been fairly stable throughout the year, with between 10 and 16 children each week, plus their parents and carers. At the end of the summer term 3 children left to start school, nursery or pre-school and it was lovely to welcome new members to the Praise and Play family during the autumn term. It is a privilege to watch the children grow, becoming more mobile in some cases and other children becoming more confident over time.

For a few weeks during the first half of the Autumn Term Praise and Play had to relocate to the back of church whilst the Parish Room was out of action due to problems with dry rot. Most of the children and their parents/ carers coped with the change, however everyone was pleased when we were able to move back to the Parish Room after the October half-term break.

During September Marion Johnson had to stand down from helping with the refreshments due to ill health. Thank you Marion for all the years you have helped at Praise and Play.

In the Autumn Term there were a number of weeks when Sue Burt and Tracey Bennett were the only two leaders at Praise and Play as Lois was on holiday. Praise and Play has been a valuable part of the ministry at St. George's since it was started by Libby in the early 2000's and unless new people volunteer Praise and Play may have to close due to lack of leaders. This would be a pity as there is demand in the community.

Lois Kelly

Prayer Chain

This past year has been a busy one.

We have prayed for many people with many different conditions and noted some remarkable recoveries.

Some people have experienced the comfort of the healing prayers whilst crossing the threshold. Their families have been grateful for these.

Of course, none of this comes from us but from the Great Healer, our Lord Jesus.

Sadly, two of our members passed away this year – Josie Westwood and Stan Berry. They were stalwarts of our team.

Happily, we have welcomed new members to our prayer chain team – Dr Jenny McKay, Sue Cordingley and Marion.

I wish to thank all the members of the prayer chain for their constancy and commitment to this work.

We would love to welcome new members who have a few minutes each day to remember those on the list.

Never underestimate the power of prayer.

In gratitude

Phoebe MacLeod

Singing Group

Despite some initial interest in restarting the Singing Group during 2023, the group weren't able to provide enough singers to perform as a standalone group at specific evening Services during the latter part of 2023 – these being the Harvest evening Service at St. Gabriel's in October, the Remembrance Sunday Taizé Service at St. George's in November, and the Churches Together Carol Service at St. Gabriel's during December. A conversation is ongoing about the provision for the Singing Group to sing during Services, but whilst the number of participants remain low it isn't easy to plan occasions for the Singing Group to sing in the future without a significant increase in membership, and a regular pattern of rehearsals.

James Hibbert

Director of Music

Storytime

We managed the first ten months of the year and some of the stories had been included in the magazine. In November, we simply ran out of time, and no one noticed that Storytime hadn't taken place. December was the same, so it was decided that we'd lay it to rest.

It had been a useful way of connecting with children and adults over lockdown and we'd received some very helpful and positive comments over that time.

It took such a lot of preparation each month to produce something, and it may be that we do occasional Storytimes or stories for the magazine but we'll be leaving it for the present. Thanks for your support.

Elaine Chegwin Hall

St Gabriel's

Following a flood at St Gabriel's, the building was out of action for the early part of the year. The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity was kindly hosted by Davenport Methodists whilst restoration work was on going which included the levelling, stripping and resealing of the floor.

We were able to get in to use it for our beloved Frances Farrar's Memorial service in April. It was a service like no other, as it lasted three hours. Bunting made from her old hats festooned the ceiling and a model "Fairy Liquid" complete with wings, gave testament to Frances treading the boards at the Gang Show. It was packed.

Her sons did her proud in organisation, catering and hospitality. Each attendee was encouraged to take a bobble hat which had the legend: "Fran 1932 – 2023.

Gone to be a sunbeam". We borrowed the Fairy Liquid pinny to use as part of the Christmas Tree Festival display later on in the year at St George's.

We were able to gather for the Pentecost breakfast in June, the Harvest service in October and a Community Christmas Carol service in December. Our friends from the Churches Together joined us in worship on these services along with shared services at Davenport Methodist, singing Easter hymns outside the Community Centre in Adswood and the ever popular Carols around the Tree on the green near Davenport station.

Thanks for those who have been praying around the future of St Gabriel's as your prayers seems to have been answered, We were approached by a house church who had outgrown their premises and were looking for somewhere with a bit more space.

After checking the usual legal and safeguarding requirements, we were pleased to welcome Ebenezer Fellowship to St Gabriels'. They use the premises on Saturdays and Sundays, and we are delighted to have them with us. Due to a local church having the same name, they are now called Stockport Pentecostal Church.

Elaine Chegwin Hall

Sunday Clubs

Sunday Clubs have continued to operate two groups this year. The pre-school / infants group leave during the first hymn and use the back of the parish room. The choristers leave after the Gloria and occupy the front of the room. It can be distracting to be in the same room, but we do not currently have enough staff to use two rooms. The timing for the older group is quite tight; they are not always able to complete an activity to back up the bible story and discussion. It is however preferable to them having no session at all, as the youngsters contribute well and enjoy Sunday Club.

As with other groups, Sunday Clubs were unable to use the Parish rooms whilst they were due to emergency building work in the autumn. As there was short notice the first week we held an outdoor session in the church gardens where we explored and observed nature. This proved to be an exciting and extremely positive experience for everyone, and we created a photo story for the Grapevine magazine. Despite having such a small space, we discovered a wide variety of flora and fauna using magnifiers and field glasses. In the following weeks we considered these gifts from God and the importance of the natural world, including the importance of pollinators, fungi, and lichen. This fitted well with the Church working towards A Roche Eco Church status and inspired a theme for our tree at the Christmas Tree Festival where the children made decorations depicting

butterflies, mushrooms, lichen and moss. Our creations were then re-used as we were invited to decorate a Christmas tree at Lyme Park.

There is a wide age span within the groups, some of our older children are now in year 6 and 7 and we have some pre-school regulars who could benefit from joining in. To do this we would need to split into three groups but we do not have the staff. Ideally we need two to three further Leaders and another two Assistant Leaders (helpers). The commitment for Leaders is about 30–40 minutes to prepare a session using the published lectionary around once a month; helpers don't need to prepare, just turn up when it's their session.

Louise Clark

Telephone Buddies

This continues on an informal basis with people still keeping in touch with others.

This might well be extended usefully in the coming year so that everyone knows that they are being thought about and included in parish life.

Happy to hear from anyone who might be prepared to coordinate this as it proved to be a real life-line for those who might be feeling isolated.

Elaine Chegwin Hall

Associate Minister's Report

I have now been at St George's Stockport for over one year now. The time has flown and I feel thoroughly at home in this lovely parish. My working agreement is for two Sundays per month with some flexibility. I have led, presided and preached predominantly at the 8.00am and 10.15am services and have also taken nine baptisms, one of them being three at once!

I co-hosted a 5 week "Contentious Christianity" on-line series on Zoom during Lent with Chris Dawson. We had a great selection of talks and these are available to watch on YouTube. Our speakers were most engaging, especially local speaker, Andrew Graystone, who knew many people associated with St George's from his days in Adswood and talked about small acts of kindness which can lead to real change in communities.

[YouTube links for Contentious Christianity Series Lent 2023](#)

Do Animals go to Heaven? Speaker: Rev'd Dr Jenny McKay

<https://youtu.be/fE4BWbXvJR8>

When is it Right to Protest? Speaker: Rev'd Mark Coleman

<https://youtu.be/vn9pkL5swxs>

How to be an Every Day Activist. Speaker: Mr. Andrew Graystone

<https://youtu.be/jqgMZsAs28E>

Euthanasia and Christianity. Speaker: Rev'd Professor Peter Selby

<https://youtu.be/rR-xx9P6qzI>

Artificial Intelligence and Christianity. Speaker: Rev'd Dr Tim Bull

<https://youtu.be/y5tPJiGq2Qo>

It was a pleasure to design the Good Friday afternoon service this year which was based on a service written by the Iona Community. A mixture of traditional and modern perspectives, it received very good feedback.

A lovely surprise, the equivalent of two weekdays annually, to be in the parish, was made available to me though my secular employment and thanks to this, I was able to participate in the Christmas Tree Festival (I loved the RSPCA Tree!), and to lead the Nine Lessons and Carols for the Mothers' Union this December. I led my first Christingle this December as well, and it was marvellous to see such a large congregation of over 300 adults and children participating in the Christingle story.

We held an afternoon Animal Blessing Service in July and a wide array of mainly dogs, a few cats and a very large, now sadly deceased golden hamster, Norris, attended for their blessings. Another Animal Blessing Service will be held in the Morning Service slot in June 2024.

Our first ever Reflective Service began on Sunday 25th June at 12 noon after the morning service. I was pleased by the positive response where we could carve out a short time of reflection and silence contemplating Psalms, Bible passages and sacred music. Special thanks to Chris Dawson and Sue Cordingley for all their help and active leading of our sessions on a monthly basis. I look forward to continuing to collaborate with Chris and Sue on our monthly Reflective Half Hours in church after the 10.15 service and to have a half day introductory session on Meditation in early summer, venue yet to be decided!

I continue to be a Minister in Secular Employment (MSE) in my IDEXX Laboratory workplace. Physical presence on site has continued to decrease following COVID, although I am on site every other month wearing my clerical collar most days. The focus there is my veterinary work, and to continue to provide a visible presence of the Christian faith in a diverse, multicultural workplace. An important part of my

role as MSE is to build relationships and trust with those who have felt let down by church.

Social media as The Reverend Vet continues well with Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and TikTok presence and group of 250 followers who participate in a Facebook Pet Prayer group. The main platform is Facebook which currently has increased to 8400 followers. Many followers say they appreciate the daily reflections, poems, animal facts etc, especially where unable to attend church due to physical disability or lack of inclination/confidence to broach the physical threshold of church. A large proportion are also exploring faith and it is both exciting and humbling to learn of people who have started attending their own local churches (even as far away as New Zealand).

My Podcast series “Believe it or Not” where I discuss faith, environmental, animal issues with a different guest each month, is expanding and is available on Spotify.

<https://open.spotify.com/show/4bKDAIZMW2gmLI5HkuWBJZ?si=-doeJvm2TJOAUn62aNXHAQ>

Hopefully, there will be more radio broadcasts and building up further presence on Thought for the Day, Radio Ulster to spread the good news to those of all faith and none. I also do occasional broadcasts on Radio Manchester and Radio London. I look forward to attracting further followers to expand my virtual ministry, and to continue to explore ways of ministry and discipleship to diverse communities in Stockport, with the other members of the Ministry Team.

St George’s has a rich musical tradition and I could not have been welcomed into the choir more kindly by James and the fellow choir members. I was thrilled to join the choir as a soprano on the March visit to Lichfield Cathedral, to be invited to Cantor at one Choral Evensong and sing in the choir at some other services, including two weddings. I look forward to an opportunity to Cantor again with a guest choir in June 2024 and to join the St George’s choir for one day on their Summer Tour to Blackburn Cathedral.

Thank you to everyone, especially Elaine, for all the help and support. You make it a joy and privilege!!

Jenny McKay

Report from the Vicar 2023

It has been a busy year which felt as if it has flown by. I must have met hundreds of people, planned and delivered hours of services and spent many more hours “enjoying” the overwhelming administration needs of a lively and vibrant parish.

Writing some of the reports within the main report has reminded me of the connections we’ve made, in person and online. It has been fabulous to link with so many new people in our church and wider community. It has been a real privilege to worship alongside those from different countries, backgrounds and cultures and to see them grow in the love of Jesus Christ.

Bishop Sam came in January to baptise or confirm 13 people, 3 of who attended St Alban’s Offerton but who were prepared for Confirmation by me. It was a wonderfully happy occasion for all concerned.

We continued to baptise people throughout the year, some by full immersion, and journeyed with other adults and children who were enquiring about their faith.

We had two joyous weddings, which have been written about elsewhere, and several more were booked in for 2024.

We had an unusually high number of funerals and separate burials of ashes (36 in total). Several of them were church family members which made it ever more poignant as we all shared in a time of grief at the many services throughout the year.

I applied for a grant for our Warm Spaces initiative which was held in the parish rooms over the winter. £1,000 was a welcome addition and enabled us to fund soup, bread and crafts although it has to be said that most people were happy to donate their delicious homemade soup and bread. With the Bishop’s permission we also held Morning Prayer and Wednesday Communion in the parish rooms giving it an intimate and slightly more informal feel and gave people an opportunity to linger and chat after the service.

With our Deanery licensed ministers and ministers in training, we attended an away day at Foxhill and explored the theme of “The Place of Psalms in everyday Christian Life”. This theme continued in a poetry workshop for the Deanery at St Albans and though music at a service at St George’s

This work on the psalms became a useful platform to begin a Time of Reflection which was led by Jenny McKay and Chris Dawson and which has further evolved into a very helpful time to pause, consider and pray once a month at 12 noon in the chapel area.

As noted elsewhere we held special services to commemorate the Coronation of King Charles and enjoyed an afternoon tea with Songs of Praise as part of our

emerging Café Church programme which so far in 2023 has included the Place of Psalms in everyday Christian Life through music in September and an evocative Taizé service in November.

It was the 60th anniversary of Self Supporting Ministers in June and so some of us went to Chester Cathedral for the special service which Jenny (our own SSM) took part.

Also in June, it was also the final Archdeacon's visitation service for Ian Bishop before he moved to Norwich Diocese to become the Bishop of Thetford. The service went like clockwork, thanks to the wonderful assistance from several people at St George's that evening.

It was my 25th anniversary of ordination in July and I was delighted to welcome my friend and former colleague, Linda Buckley, who kindly came to preach. She also led sessions about her work with Papyrus for our Lent Breakfast and for our Deanery Clergy Chapter.

We tried out a short time of lunchtime prayers. There seemed some appetite for this in the beginning but there were occasions when no one turned up apart from the leader so we've let that rest for the moment.

We are invited to the Renew Stockport first Friday prayers which take place at Stockport Baptist Church. There are more than 20 churches involved. Although it's an early start, I have found it to be a real time of blessing and fellowship as we gather for an hour from 8.00am to 9.00am to pray for our town.

Several of those churches took part in an interactive nativity service starting at St Mary's in the Marketplace. We were invited to dress up to help tell the story as we moved around the town centre. I soon discovered that not everyone had received (or decided to follow) the memo, so I was the only sheep present but was grateful for the two shepherds in the shape of Sue Cordingley and Hazel Jenkins who came equipped with their tea towels on their heads for authenticity.

Singing has been a big part of this year, not only in services in church, but out in the community. On Palm Sunday in Adswold we sang outside the community centre and sang Carols around the Tree near Davenport Station, both with the Churches Together. In addition to that, we sang around the parish for the Children's' Society at Christmas and also sang at the four Residential Care and Nursing Homes we have been visiting in the parish as part of communion services there.

We now have an augmented Ministry Team and we welcomed Andrea Millington and Alan Brown to join us. They make up a wonderful group of people. It is nothing short of a delight to be with them, and their vision, their sense of humour,

their care of each other and their willingness to eat my cakes is overwhelming. So much goes on behind the scenes and it is this team who make much of it happen. Please pray for them as they minister to you and to each other.

Finally in a litany of so many valuable and precious occasions, events, services and happenings that I could write about, I just want to mention one in particular.

Thanks to the kind donations of a few people, we enabled our Christian brothers and sisters from Iran to prepare a traditional meal in the parish room kitchen. This was greeted with delight as, due to their present circumstances they were deprived of kitchen facilities.

The preparation went on all afternoon and the resulting food was a feast for the senses. Starters, main meal – meat and vegetarian, desert and hot drink for free although donations were gratefully accepted to go towards a planned trip out.

The food was delicious and, as we sat back to chat, the background music, playing on someone's phone was turned up and, one by one those from the Iranian community got up and danced. The joy and freedom in that dancing was palpable and there were a number of us smiling through the tears that sprung up as we witnessed something really special happening.

Let's keep dancing and witnessing and wondering for the Lord Jesus so that our smiles become infectious, so that people will want to join in and that we will share in the wonderment of being a follower of Christ.

Thank you for your partnership in the Gospel.

With every blessing Elaine.

Elaine

Financial Review for 2023

The PCC recorded an increase in funds of £371,694 over the year. PCC unrestricted funds grew by £353,428. The Fabric Fund increased by £19,370 and St Gabriel's funds reduced by £315. The Choir Legacy fund increased by £31. The Fearn fund reduced by £319, the Preservation Trust by £100 and the Music Fund by £400.

St George's unrestricted funds

St George's unrestricted funds showed a surplus of £353,428, compared with a surplus of £1,861 last year. This was after transferring an amount of £8,000 from unrestricted funds to the Fabric Fund, and was entirely due to the sale of the curate's house 40 Beechfield Road, which resulted in a surplus above book value (shown as "Other income") of £359,983. Removing the effect of this sale would result in a net income before transfer to the Fabric Fund of £1,445, and a deficit after transfer of £6,555.

Overall income to unrestricted funds increased by £354,826 to £503,849, however, without the effect of the sale of Beechfield Road this would have been a decrease of £5,697. Total voluntary income, excluding legacies and grants, decreased by £1,436 to £93,653. Most of our regular giving scheme members continued or increased their support. Income received from letting the church and parish rooms decreased by £1,967 to £16,071, mainly because of fewer events in church. Net income from fundraising events was £9,992, as a result of a very successful Christmas Tree Festival. This was a little lower than last year (£11,489) when we also held the 125th Anniversary Festival. Net income from Grapevine magazine was £2,476, an increase of £408 over last year. Grants totalling £2,582 were received, including £2,000 for two warm spaces grants received in the same financial year.

Overall expenditure increased by £1,719 to £142,421. Parish share costs increased by £2,246 to £71,757. Church running costs increased by £8,698 to £32,337, which was entirely caused by increased energy costs and was also despite a significant reduction in energy usage. Expenditure on church maintenance changed very little at £627. Upkeep of services, including music and organ costs, was almost unchanged at £5,335. Expenditure on the Parish Rooms increased by £1,648 to £5,872, with gas heating (£4,280) being by far the major cost.

Following the sale of the curate's house at 40, Beechfield Road for £394,983 in April, a replacement house at 30 Maple Close was purchased for £316,798 at the

end of June. Several improvements are being made to the property in order to prepare it for rental, and the total cost up to 31st December 2023 (including the initial purchase) is £332,626, which now appears as an addition to tangible fixed assets.

The lease of our copier/printer came to an end in April, and a refurbished model has been purchased (rather than leased) at a cost of £2,760. This printer is also a new addition to tangible fixed assets and will be depreciated over five years.

A transfer of £8,000 was made from St George's unrestricted funds to the Fabric Fund, this representing most of the net income from the Christmas Tree Festival. It was not necessary to transfer back any funds in order to comply with our financial reserving policy, however this was only possible because of the surplus resulting from the sale of 40 Beechfield Road.

Designated Funds

St Gabriel's funds

There was a deficit of £315 for the year, which is a reduction on the deficit of £1,442 last year. Income for the year increased by £1,673 to £2,339 mainly because of new rental income from the regular use by a local worship group. Total expenditure increased by £546 with the increased use of the church, to £2,654, which included £1,200 for professional upkeep of the churchyard. The reserves available to the church now stand at £8,274.

Fabric Fund

This fund was established in 2017 and received a further grant of £100 from the St George's Preservation Trust. Interest received on investments was £1,261, and there was an increase in the value of the investments of £10,141, compared with a decrease of £8,081 in 2022. There was a transfer of £8,000 into the fund from Unrestricted Funds. A grant of £1,776 was received from the Ironmongers' Company, which was used for the installation of handrails to the north porch. The fund currently stands at £145,278, representing an increase for the year of £19,370.

Choir Legacy Fund

This fund was established in 2020 with a £5,000 bequest from Frank Gee, a former chorister. After expenditure of £500 to support the choir and revaluation gains of £531, the fund stands at £4,492.

St George's restricted funds

The PCC is grateful for the continuing support of the Fearn Trust, which provided a grant of £20,000 to be used towards the cost of insuring both St George's and St Gabriel's churches.

Music Fund

This fund was established to receive grants for musical activities. In 2023 income received was nil, and payments totalling £400 were made to support our choral scholars. The fund has a balance of £5,822.

Choir Music Fund

This fund may be used to cover the cost of the replacement of choir music and has a balance of £112.

St George's Preservation Trust

Full accounts for the Trust are available on application. Income for the year was nil.

Expenditure this year comprised a grant to the Fabric Fund of £100, which has reduced the balance within the fund to £400. The Trustees have indicated their intention to pass the remaining balance to the Fabric Fund over the next four years.

Charitable giving

The following donations were made to charities from agency collections:

Donations of £142 from the annual Baby Memorial Service were shared between the Cradle Charity and the Stillbirth and Neonatal Death Society.

The collection of £284 at the Archdeacon's visitation service was given to Transforming Lives Together.

The sum of £986 was transferred to the Children's Society, from collections at the Christingle Services and carol singing.

Reserves and Investment Policies

The PCC reviewed its reserving policy in 2017. It is the policy of St George's to hold in reserves the equivalent of three months general running costs and an additional three month's salaries. At least one half of its minimum reserve should be held in Unrestricted Funds. These reserves may be invested in funds which provide some protection against loss of value due to inflation. This may take the form of capital appreciation or income which can be re-invested.

Reserves will continue to be held in the PCC's accounts with CCLA Investment Managers which is the leading fund manager for the assets of the church, charities and local authorities. It has a policy of engaging only in ethical investments and is owned by its clients – through the Boards of Finance in the case of the Church of England. The CBF Church of England Investment Fund is used which is highly diversified and balanced across many sectors of investment and is actively managed to achieve long term capital growth and steady income.

As at 31 December 2023 it was not necessary for the PCC to transfer funds from the Fabric Fund to Unrestricted Funds in order to comply with this policy. Transfers may become necessary during 2024 if expenditure exceeds income.

It is also the policy to hold a reserve to cover the work for projects that have been identified as necessary. This reserve, which may be required at short notice, is to be held in secure funds that are not subject to capital risks. An income from these funds while desirable is not essential. The CBF Church of England Deposit Fund is used, which holds only funds with AAA rated organisations and is managed by CCLA. However, excess funds may also be invested in the CBF Church of England Investment Fund.

The PCC has set a target minimum amount to be held in the Fabric Fund. This is calculated as a percentage of the insurance valuation of St George's Church, and the PCC make transfers from Unrestricted Funds into the Fabric Fund with the aim of reaching the target minimum within five to ten years. The current target minimum level is £142,000

A number of potential projects have been identified by the PCC including:

St George's Church

- Review of the lighting and sound systems in church
- Repairs to the west window
- Further investigations into the subsidence in the north east corner of the church, and any remedial actions required
- Repointing of churchyard wall
- Maintenance of masonry at roof level
- Development of kitchen and toilet facilities, with changes to the internal porches

Parish Rooms

- Redevelopment of the kitchen

The PCC believes that, at present, there are insufficient reserves available to cover all of these projects. Consequently, individual projects will commence only when adequate finance is available.

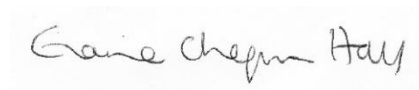
The reserves policy for St Gabriel's church was reviewed in 2016 and was amended to match that of St George's, i.e. the equivalent of three months general running costs. No major projects are envisaged in the near future, and the reserves are considered to be adequate.

The reserves are held on deposit with the church's bankers, or with CCLA Investment Managers.

Dr Andrew Regan
18th February 2024

Approval

The annual report was approved by the Parochial Church Council on 2nd April 2024 and signed on its behalf by:

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Gaire Chapman Hall". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned on a light-colored rectangular background.

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of the Parochial Church Council of St George, Stockport

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Parochial Church Council of St George, Stockport for the year ended 31 December 2023.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the Parochial Church Council ("PCC") 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 PCC's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 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.

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:

- accounting records were not kept in respect of the PCC as required by section 130 of the Act; or
- the accounts do not accord with those records; or
- 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.

Signed



Date 16-04-2024

Paul Clancy, BA (Hons), ACA, MBA
19 Rosemoor Gardens
Appleton
Warrington
WA4 4RF.