

Introduction to the Annual Report 2024

At the beginning of 2024 I spoke about how I sensed God was speaking to us about the need for 'growing in our relationship with Jesus'. As I now reflect on the year just gone, I so appreciate how we as a church community responded to that word. People have made commitments to Christ and been baptised, people have joined in with the reading of the Bible from cover to cover, have been engaging in prayer, doing the Alpha course or Bible Course, serving practically and giving generously.... The life and work of Jesus in our midst is very visible at the Martyrs!

As you will read in this annual report, so much has been going on at the Martyrs throughout 2024. We are passionate about encouraging each other in our faith and are especially thankful to everyone leading and speaking at our church services and those helping to lead our homegroups. I am also very grateful for people's willingness to pray for others, whether via the prayer-chain or with people on Sunday mornings and at other times. It has been so encouraging hearing about the many answered prayers for people throughout 2024 and how God continues to meet with people in all sorts of ways.

Also, throughout 2024 we have explored new ways of sharing the good news of Jesus to our local community. For a number of Saturday mornings, we tried 'Sofa-chat evangelism' – putting a couple of sofas out on the street and inviting people to stop for a while and chat! A number of very good conversations and opportunities to pray for people resulted.

Our connection and partnership with Shaftesbury Junior School has continued to grow throughout 2024. Irene and Phillippa regularly took assemblies at the school, and, with the help from others, also ran weekly craft groups. At other times, such as at Easter and Christmas, the whole school visits the church for special Christian productions (see report from Irene for more details).

Our student outreach has also continued to make an impact, and it is such an encouragement to see a number of students from different parts of the world having found a home at the Martyrs over the last year. A big thank you to Shobha and her team for their leadership in this, as well as our interns Sangeetha and Tom.

As most of you will know, social action and justice issues have been a key focus for us as a church for a long time. We are grateful for the ministries of Baby Basics and Mothers Union which in different ways are involved in helping with social issues and challenges both locally and further afield.

Whilst a good number of people have moved away from the Martyrs throughout 2024, mainly due to moving elsewhere in the UK, it has been wonderful to welcome a number of new faces into our church family. A big welcome to all of you have made Martyrs your spiritual home in 2024.

Alongside other churches in Leicester Diocese we have begun exploring the best way forward with the Diocesan Minster Community vision. Please continue to pray for wisdom for the PCC as we try to discern the best way forward for the Martyrs.

A few days ago, we also heard the good news that we have been granted a faculty for our long-awaited Nave Reordering Project! We will of course need to raise a large amount of money to do all the work we want to do. Please pray!

2024 was also a very challenging year for many of us. I was personally diagnosed with severe heart failure last summer and had to take 2 ½ months completely away from work. I have since been able to carry on with vicar duties but still have to be careful of not overdoing it. Other people in our congregation have equally had challenges regarding their physical or mental health whilst others have battled housing, employment or

financial challenges. I sincerely believe that the church can be at her best when responding to and coming alongside those with needs. This is certainly my testimony. Sue and I were so thankful about the way Martyrs responded to and supported us through the traumatic summer months last year... Thank you!

Finally, a special thank you to those in various leadership roles, whether serving on the PCC or the Leadership Group, lay readers, children and youth workers, homegroup leaders, ministry leaders and of course the staff team. A special thanks to our curate Phillippa Taylor for her hard work and skilled leadership. Also, a huge thank you to others of you who serve faithfully in all sorts of ways to help us 'be church'. Thank you for your hard work, commitment and friendship. It continues to be a great joy serving the Lord with you!!

I commend this annual report to you.

Lord let your Kingdom come and let your will be done!

Bertin



STATUTORY REPORTS

OVERVIEW OF THE PCC

Background

The Church of the Martyrs is situated on Westcotes Drive, Leicester. It has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent, Revd. Ole Bertin Hermo, in promoting in the parish, the whole mission of the church, pastoral, evangelistic, social, and ecumenical.

The PCC is a charity registered with the Charity Commission under registration number 1134668. Members of the PCC are either ex-officio or elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting in accordance with the Church Representation Rules. The number of elected members of the PCC is governed by the number of people on the electoral roll. In the case of The Martyrs, with over 100 members on the roll, it enables 12 elected places, with a 3rd of posts being due for re-election each year. Members stand for a term of 3 years. In the case of any member elected to a Deanery synod or General synod, they are part of the PCC in addition to the other elected places.

Existing PCC membership since the last APCM held on the 21st of April 2024 is shown below, with the year showing the end of their term in office in brackets:

Vicar:	Rev Ole Bertin Hermo
Curate:	Rev Phillippa Taylor
Pioneer Minister:	Mrs Shobha Gosa
Churchwardens:	Mr Richard Jaramba Mrs Lorraine Pointon
Deanery Synod:	Mrs Shayne Ardron (Ex officio as a member of General Synod) Mrs Liz Bamford (2026) (Vice Chair) Mrs Julie Shaw (2026) Mr Steven Ardron (2026) (PCC Secretary -resigned) (2026 Deanery)
Reader Representative:	Mrs Shayne Ardron (Also Gen Synod member)
Elected Members:	Mrs Guinevere David (2026) Mrs Florence Adediran (2026) Mr Ben Lawton (2025) (Electoral Officer) Mr Chris Roe (2025) Mr Daniel Pallet (2026) Mr Geoff Pollard (2026) (PCC secretary from 10/7/2024) Mrs Jo Pearce (2025) Miss Hannah Burden (2027) Ms Roz Burch (2027) Mr Ashok Panjagala (2027)
Co-Opted Member:	Mr Ed de Salis Young (Treasurer)

Proceedings of the PCC

The PCC is a legal body of the church established to consult on matters of general concern and importance to the parish, to promote the mission of the church (pastoral, evangelical, social, and ecumenical) and has the responsibility for the maintenance of the church buildings, assets and managing church finances. It has met approximately once every 2 months.

There continues to be much to discuss on a range of issues, and the minutes of the previous meetings are available at the back of the church or on request during the year.

There are many topics covered at each meeting. However, as a matter of course the agenda will always include time to discuss matters arising from past meetings, health and safety obligations and responses, the PCC's safeguarding and safer recruitment obligations and any required training, as well as regular financial and budgetary matters. With a very active church, there are also regular reports from our own Intercultural Worshipping Community (IWC) steering group, and discussion items that come forward in relation to projects such as Money Matters and Baby Basics.

At a Leicester Diocese and National Church level there are also some key topics that continue to be discussed. The first is the way in which the Diocese is addressing its ministry and a shortfall in funding, by the introduction of Minster Communities, how this may affect the Martyrs and its working links with other churches. Secondly will be the discussions required to the national debate on "Living in Love and Faith" (LLF) and our responses to identity, sexuality and marriage in that context.

Of major discussion this year has continued to be the Nave re-ordering project, where a small team of the PCC have continued to work on the presentation material to the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC). A detailed application explaining the works was submitted in Nov 2023, and positive responses have since continued to be received. A formal Chancel faculty has been submitted alongside any DAC recommendations. This has led to more in depth costing options for PCC to debate and to contemplate the next steps as we move into 2025.

The Nave re-ordering project is still very much a journey, and it should be noted that this piece of work has not centred on any single issue, such as pew removal, but seeks to address the overall comfort of the building and its flexibility of usage in future years. This encompasses considering heating options (and heat loss issues) against the backdrop of sustainability advice and targets set by National Church, lighting improvements, flooring repair and maintenance, audio requirements, storage etc.

Inevitably there will be costs for the current and future PCC to consider, and how any such funds should be raised. Even if no changes were being considered, it is apparent that some of our heating and lighting is failing and raising such additional lump sums will be a necessity soon. The larger projects discussed at PCC potentially offer some economies of scale and could also be a prudent way of dealing with outstanding maintenance.

2024 was a year in which we had our 5 yearly inspection of the Church, which involved an independent architect reviewing the fabric of the building and bringing matters of any concern to the notice of the PCC for them to address during the next 5-year cycle. The report has been finally received and is being acted on.

As in previous years, the PCC and other leaders have continued to participate in an away day, to give more time to think about the Church in a setting other than a typical business meeting. This was facilitated by Matt Long, the Youth Engagement and Intergenerational Communities Enabler for the Diocese, and was a valuable time to help to explore and reflect on the mission and ministry of our church and community.

Geoffrey Pollard
PCC Secretary

LEADERSHIP GROUP REPORT

During the year January to December 2024 the following people served on the Leadership group: Bertin Hermo, Phillippa Taylor, Shobha Gosa, Richard Jaramba, Lorraine Pointon, Ed de Salis Young, Liz Bamford and Liz Lawton.

The leadership group function is to act as a support for the clergy and staff team, to seek God's direction and vision for the Martyrs and it is the standing committee of the PCC; so, we set the agenda for PCC meetings and deal with any urgent business between PCC meetings.

As a consequence, our meetings are varied and wide ranging, with discussions covering a multitude of topics! We always start with a Bible reading and a time of reflection and prayer.

In 2024 recurring subjects for discussion were Minster Communities, Living in Love and Faith and nave re-ordering. The setting up of Minster Communities is an important initiative as the Diocese considers how best to resource parishes into the future. It is an ongoing project and will be the subject of meetings into the future. The PCC are also involved in this work and the congregation will also need to consider the proposals being put forward, probably later in 2025.

The nave re-ordering discussions at PCC and Leadership group have resulted in an application being made to the Chancellor for a faculty. We are awaiting the result of this application.

Discussions around the Living in Love and Faith proposals and prayers are currently 'on hold' as we wait for further guidance from the national Church of England.

Other business has included planning for and reviewing services and other events for Lent, Easter and Christmas, amongst other special and one-off sermon series and services. This also included ensuring support for Phillippa, Shobha and the staff team during Bertin's absence due to ill-health through the summer and into the autumn. Everyone did an amazing job to work together and support each other although we were delighted to welcome him back in October!

Also on the agenda at every meeting are updates and discussion about our Intercultural work, the work with children, youth and families as well as safeguarding, pastoral updates and finance.

This is just a brief overview of the year! If you would like to know more, please do speak to one of us. And please do continue to pray for our clergy and staff team.

Thank you.

Lorraine Pointon, Church Warden

ELECTORAL ROLL REPORT

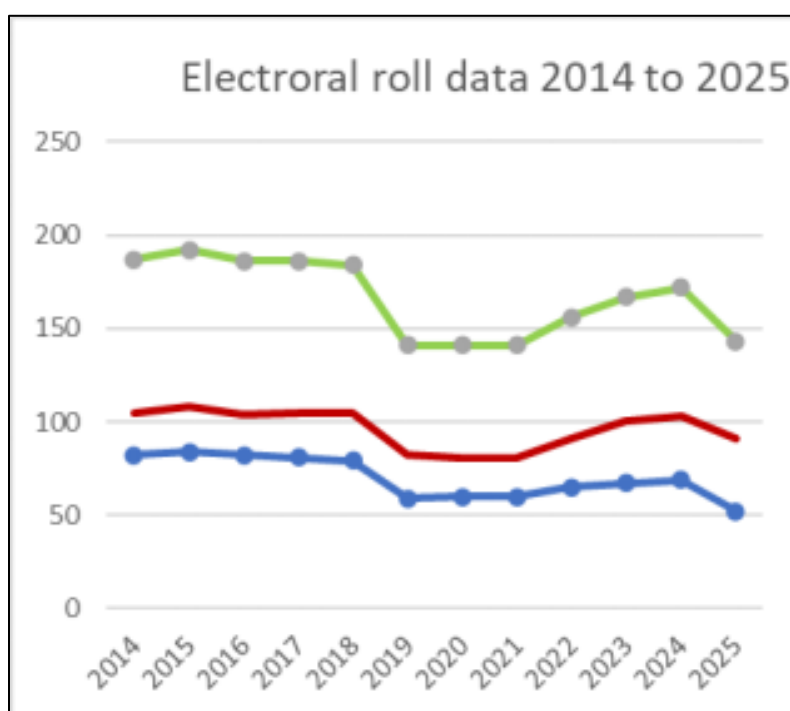
The electoral roll is a list of names and addresses of every person who can vote in the annual parochial church meeting. The number of electors reported at the 2024 annual parochial church meeting was 172. The electoral roll rules require the roll to be fully updated every 6 years. As 2025 is the 6th year since the last revision, this year the roll has been revised. All names on the 2024 roll have been removed and the new roll issued for this report are those persons who have reapplied or applied for the first time.

Total number of electors upon the church electoral roll as of 23rd March 2025 is 143

The electoral roll consists of 52 people who are residents of the parish and 91 are non-residents of the parish.

During the revision of the roll 63 people have not reapplied to join the new roll, 109 people have reapplied, and 34 new people have joined the electoral roll.

Church of the Martyrs electoral roll summary												
Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Resident	82	84	82	81	79	59	60	60	65	67	69	52
Non-Resident	105	108	104	105	105	82	81	81	91	100	103	91
Total	187	192	186	186	184	141	141	141	156	167	172	143
Added	9	11	1	1	0	29	0	2	17	12	7	34
Rem oved	0	6	7	1	2	72	0	2	1	1	2	63



Any person who wants to join the electoral roll and is eligible can apply at any time during the year.

Ben Lawton
Electoral roll officer

ATTENDANCE REPORT

Introduction

This report indicates the church attendance at The Church of the Martyrs over the 2024 calendar year. Please note the information does not reflect the increased diversity of our church family. The report issued is based on numbers and broad age groups as requested for the yearly diocese report "Statistics for mission". These are below 16 years of age and above 16 years of age. This report does not give a detailed breakdown of age ranges or ethnic background. However, there are some details for the under 16 years included in the Sunday club details

Sunday Clubs

We have had a full year of Sunday clubs except for the summer holiday period and school holidays throughout the year. The following information relates to each group.

Ark Club met on Sunday mornings on 31 occasions with an average attendance of 3 children and 3 adults over the 31 occasions. The maximum number of children is 10.

Rainbows met on Sunday mornings on 29 occasions with an average attendance of 6 children and 4 adults over the 29 occasions. The maximum number of children is 11.

Ketchup Club met on Sunday mornings on 29 occasions with an average attendance of 9 children and 3 adults over the 29 occasions. The maximum number of children is 17.

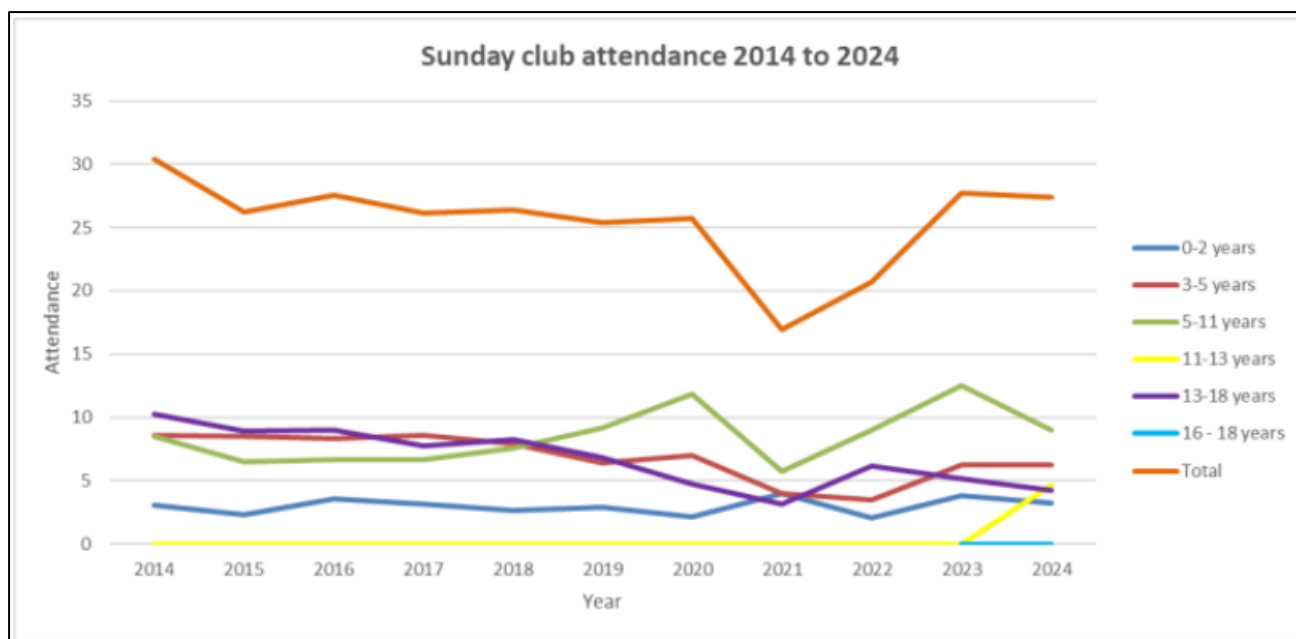
Wonder was a new group meeting from September 2024. Wonder met on Sunday mornings on 12 occasions with an average attendance of 5 children & 2 adults over the 12 occasions. Maximum number of children 6.

Fuel Cells met on Sunday mornings on 28 occasions with an average attendance of 4 children and 2 adults over the 28 occasions. The maximum number of children is 7.

Torch group finished in summer 2024. No data of numbers attending is available.

Average Junior church/Sunday clubs

Year	Crèche Ark	Rockets Rainbows	Explorers Ketchup	Wonder	Fuel Cells	Torch	Total
	0-2 years	3-5 years	5-11 years	11-13 years	13-18 years	16 - 18 years	Total
2014	3	9	9	0	10		30
2015	2	9	7	0	9		26
2016	4	8	7	0	9		28
2017	3	9	7	0	8		26
2018	3	8	8	0	8		26
2019	3	6	9	0	7		25
2020	2	7	12	0	5		26
2021	4	4	6	0	3		17
2022	2	3	9	0	6		21
2023	4	6	13	0	5	0	28
2024	3	6	9	5	4	0	27



Sunday 10:30hrs service

We had a full year of Sunday morning services, and we met on 52 occasions during 2024.

The average attendance over the 52 services was 86 adults and 13 under 16 years giving a combined average of 99. The highest attended service was 31st March 2024 with 172 people attending. Note that these numbers do not include those attending Sunday clubs.

Year		10.30am		Comments
		Adults	Under 16s	
2014	Average	117	16	
2015	Average	106	14	
2016	Average	104	13	
2017	Average	102	12	
2018	Average	96	13	
2019	Average	91	13	Pre covid 19 period
2020	Average	72	6	Covid 19 period
2021	Average	68	11	Covid 19 period
2022	Average	86	13	Post Covid 19 period
2023	Average	96	13	
2024	Average	86	13	

Sunday 18:15hrs service

We had a full year of 18:15hrs services, and we met on 45 occasions during 2024.

The average attendance over the 45 services was 18 adults and 1 under 16 years giving a combined average of 19. The highest attended service was on 28th April 2024 with an attendance of 50 people.

Year		Evening services		Comments
		Adults	Under 16s	
2014	Average	8	0	
2015	Average	8	0	
2016	Average	8	0	
2017	Average	18	2	
2018	Average	16	2	
2019	Average	15	1	Pre covid 19 period
2020	Average	12	1	Covid 19 period
2021	Average	25	0	Covid 19 period
2022	Average	20	0	Post Covid 19 period
2023	Average	23	0	
2024	Average	18	1	

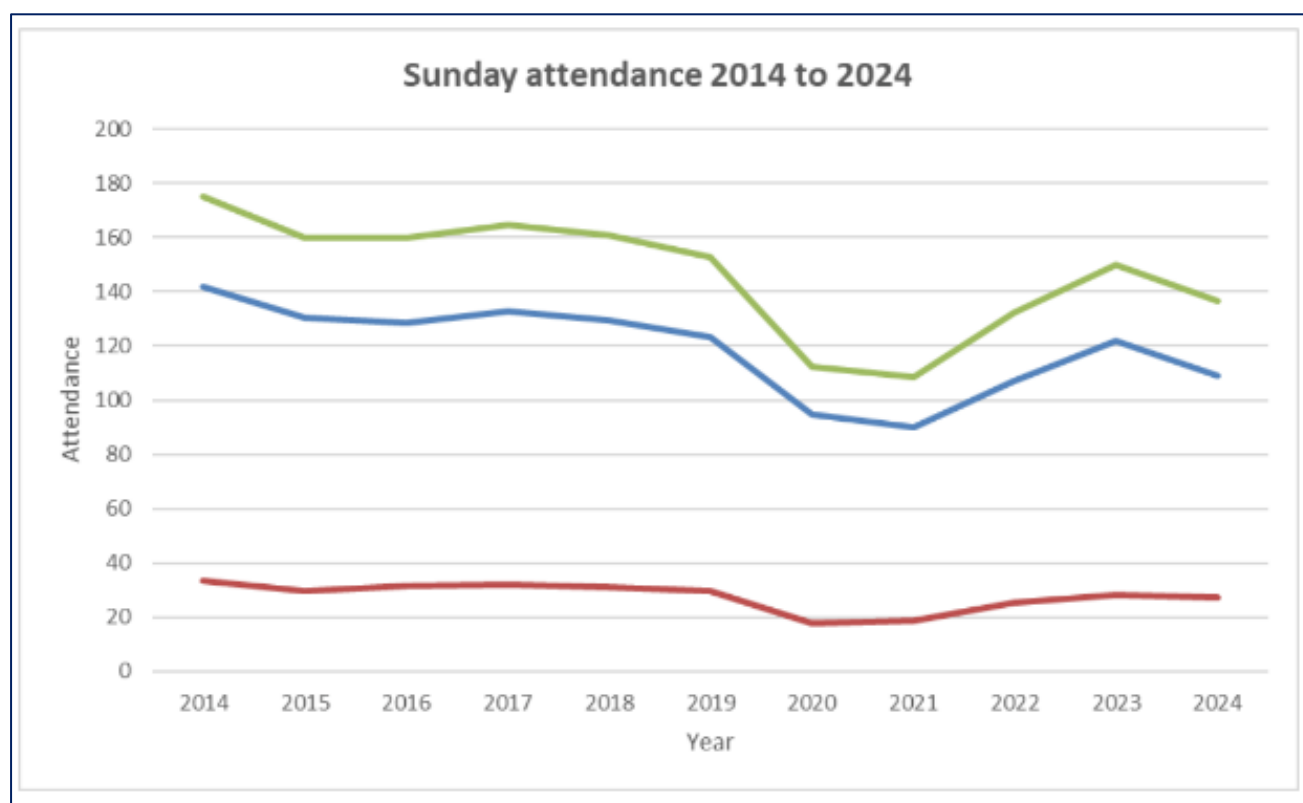
Average Sunday attendance at all services and Sunday clubs

The total average attendance at all Sunday services was 137 people per Sunday during 2024.

Year	10.30am and 06:15pm			Comments
	Adults	Under 16s	Total	
2014	142	34	175	
2015	131	29	160	
2016	129	32	160	
2017	133	32	165	
2018	130	31	161	
2019	123	30	153	
2020	95	18	112	Only 19 week attendance
2021	90	19	109	Only 36 week attendance
2022	107	25	132	
2023	122	28	150	
2024	109	27	137	

Average Sunday attendance at all services and Sunday clubs. Continued:

Red line under 16 years, blue line over 16 years, and green line total attendance.



Wednesday 11:00hrs service

We had a full year of Wednesday morning services, and we met on 50 occasions during 2024. The average attendance over the 50 services was 24 adults. The highest attended service was on 14th February 2024 with an attendance of 47 people.

Year		Sunday 9am		Wednesday AM service		Comments
		Adults	Under 16s	Adults	Under 16s	
2014	Average	12	0			
2015	Average	12	0			
2016	Average	12	0			
2017	Average	11	0			
2018	Average	10	0			
2019	Average	9	0			Pre covid 19 period
2020	Average	8	0			Covid 19 period
2021	Average			18	0	Covid 19 period
2022	Average			20	0	Post Covid 19 period
2023	Average			24	0	
2024	Average			24	0	

Special Services

Christian festivals celebrated at The Church of The Martyrs in 2024. All were well attended.

Year	Easter Sunday		Cristingle		Carols by candle		Crib Service		Christmas eve communion		Christmas day		Comments
	Adults	Under 16s	Adults	Under 16s	Adults	Under 16s	Adults	Under 16s	Adults	Under 16s	Adults	Under 16s	
2014	174	37	161	58	128	15	91	45	107	13	144	25	
2015	198	41	152	55	160	10	50	60	89	2	117	22	
2016	181	5	156	70	105	27	84	55	72	4	111	31	
2017	208	34	117	57	112	13	78	41	86	1	89	15	
2018	162	30	136	61	131	22	60	25	65	0	127	18	
2019	138	24	128	5	136	9	65	40	58	0	95	19	Pre covid 19 period
2020													Covid 19 period
2021													Covid 19 period
2022	125	36	116	49	116	21	42	22	53	1	119	24	Post Covid 19 period
2023	183	34	144	42	146	16	60	35	55	2	88	14	
2024	139	33	126	33	131	19	59	32	61	0	82	18	

Ben Lawton

FABRIC REPORT

As noted last year, the 5 yearly quinquennial inspection was completed by a qualified architect, Richard Brooks, in June 2023. However, due to unforeseen circumstances the full report was not received by us until the spring of 2024. The report provides a description of the condition of the building, described as generally good with the building being well maintained. The report recommends work that should be carried out as soon as possible, work to be carried out within the next year, next two years and next five years. The report was considered in full at the PCC meeting in September 2024 and a schedule of works is being worked on and kept under review by the PCC. A number of items can be grouped together which will hopefully help with costs. The logbook and inventory are being updated as works occur.

The inventory has been checked. There are some minor amends approved by the PCC but all items are accounted for.

GAS and ELECTRICS

The annual gas maintenance check took place in August 2024.

The 5 yearly inspection of fixed electrical installations is next due in November 2028.

ONGOING

During 2024 a faculty application was made by the PCC for a nave re-ordering project. We are still awaiting the outcome of this. A number of ongoing concerns such as the chancel lighting and the carpet at the back of church will be addressed once we know the outcome of the faculty application.

Lorraine Pointon, Churchwarden

FINANCE REPORT 2024

The Martyrs finances are split into a number of different funds which represent different areas or projects relating to church work. These are accounted for separately and each is described here.

General Fund

First, I should note that the accounts are skewed by a large one-off donation in 2023 which was intended to cover 3 years. When looking at the General Fund income and surplus I have adjusted the figures shown here to include 1/3 of that donation in 2024, for more realistic comparisons.

With these adjustments, in 2024, the **General fund** had a deficit of £4,200 which compares to a budgeted deficit of £9,200. The General fund reserves are now £81,427 which represents 7 months of 2024 expenditure.

Our overall donation income was 2% below the budget for 2024. Parish Giving Scheme and Cash Collections were below budget but credit card giving, and other regular giving were over budget. Interest income increased again, with better rates and more of our reserves in a high interest account, and overall, our income was exactly as budget. Additional to the budget, we had significant grants relating to the both the IWC project and our interns Sangeetha and Tom on the Ministry Experience Scheme.

Against this, our general expenditure, including transfers to other funds, was around 1% under budget. While some areas were over budget or had unexpected purchases, others were under budget. Limited Quinquennial inspection spend was done in 2024 and it is expected that more will be needed in 2025. The General fund also needed to subsidise the Children and Family Worker fund by £4,200, as discussed below. As with the income, additional to the budget we had spending relating to IWC and our interns, although in 2024 this was less than the grants received, as some spend will be in 2025.

In September 2024, PCC approved a draft 2025 budget for the General fund which has a deficit of almost £27,000. This is based on a similar level of donations to 2024, some expenditure increases including salary, maintenance and Quinquennial work, and particularly a transfer of almost £15,000 to the Children and Families worker fund to allow this work to continue. A deficit of this size would significantly reduce our reserves, and we are looking to find ways to reduce the deficit, including new grants and increased donations.

The **Children and Families Worker fund** pays for the work of our Children and Families worker, Irene Hart. We started the year with reserves of £1,253. Income was from individual donations, plus £8,500 which was the final year of a 3-year grant. Overall, this gave a deficit of £5,360, leaving reserves negative and so a transfer of £4,200 was made from the General fund to subsidise this fund. Currently we have no new grant for 2025, meaning the 2025 budget is a deficit of £14,750, which will require a very large subsidy from the General fund. Finding new grant income for this fund must be a priority for 2025 and 2026.

The **Hall fund** has had a very good year in 2024, with significantly increased income once again from both regular and one off lets, leading to a surplus of £7,750 for the year which compares to the deficit of £3,100 in 2023. Once again this is primarily due to the sterling work of Martin Clarke.

The **Church Development fund** has received some donations in 2024 and spent money on surveys relating to the faculty for the reordering project. It is expected that this project will move forward in 2025 with much larger fundraising and spending.

The **Mission Partnership fund** was set up to fund Mission Partnership events and expenses. This was closed in 2024 and the balance returned to the various churches who had donated money to it.

The **Money Matters fund** covers the Money Matters Leicester debt counselling service. Money Matters closed in 2024 and the remaining funds, less an amount to cover limited ongoing insurance, has been donated to their previous satellite centre Hope67 based at New Life Church in Coalville.

The **Baby Basics fund** has continued to grow and support an increase in referrals and donations, with income increasing again to £94,362 (including the Martyrs tithe donation), primarily due to significant new grants. With the first full year of the new premises and employment of a new administrator, spend was slightly higher than 2023. Overall, there was a large surplus, and reserves increased to £58,335, or 10 months of 2024 spending. Additional grant funding is continually sought to ensure that Baby Basics can survive through and beyond the current office lease term.

The **Organ fund** holds and depreciates the cost of the Organ, current value £2,340.

The **Hardship fund** had its first full year of operation in 2024. 21 separate hardship donations were made from the fund in the year, which was £7,056 in all. Around £2,500 of donations were received into the fund, plus the tithe, leaving reserves of £7,021 at the end of the year.

The **Tithe fund** is no longer used, and tithe donations were paid out, or transferred to other funds, directly from the General fund. The tithe donations made in 2024 were as follows:

- £1633 to the Diocese of Kiteto
- £833 to The Children's Society as a general donation
- £833 to A Rocha as a general donation
- £833 to support the work of Bruce and Louise Nadin as they return from South Africa
- £833 to the Woodgate Food Bank
- £833 to Reach all Nations for Church Planting projects in India
- £833 to Baby Basics
- £833 to the Hardship Fund

Finally, I'd like to thank again the Finance team for their continued support: Martin Clarke in the Church Office; Mike Dampier doing the banking with Martin; Nina de Salis Young who administers Gift Aid; Malcolm Greenwood who administers envelopes; and the wardens and collection counters.

Edward de Salis Young, Treasurer

WEST LEICESTER MISSION PARTNERSHIP

Our main contact throughout 2024 has been the weekly Zoom Morning Prayer every Thursday mornings.

These times have provided genuine support and encouragement for clergy and other church leaders, especially during times of prayers for personal challenges and church life in general. Whenever there is a 5th Thursday in the month we have met in person for breakfast.

We have also been able to provide Clergy and Reader support by conducting services at each other's churches and chapels.

The 7 churches and ministries in the Mission Partnership are Holy Apostles, Martyrs, St. Anne's with St. Paul's, St. Margaret's, St. Peter's and Wyggestons.

Bertin Hermo

CITY OF LEICESTER DEANERY SYNOD

The March Deanery Synod explored 'Making Church Accessible for All' focusing on the experience of SEND Children (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) and a Curate with physical disabilities leading a church community.

After opening worship led by Tony Leighton the Master of Wyggestons, Nadine Weedall, SEND Chaplain at Learn Academies Trust gave us some background into the crisis in SEND support in schools, and explained how her part time role as SEND Chaplain was to support the 19 schools in the multi academies trust with their SEND provision. Nadine works strategically across the trust offering pastoral support to teachers, identifying opportunities for funding and support for SEND students and particularly working with SEND-Co Teachers (teachers who have leadership responsibility). Nadine shared her vision (from Hosea) of the desert blooming, and asked for our prayers for the work of SEND support in schools.

Rachel Hunter and Yvonne O'Donoghue are both SEND teachers and shared practical examples of how churches can create welcoming environments for SEND children. This included providing hands on activities, visual representations of parts of worship, creating quite opportunities for SEND children to explore churches and making sure explanations are literal, e.g. not showing grapes and bread for holy communion, when you use wine and wafers.

After an opportunity for questions, Cecilia Adjadje, Curate at St Mary's Knighton shared some of her experiences of becoming a curate and the adaptations put in place to ensure that she could undertake her training and help to lead her church community.

The July Deanery Synod invited five faith practitioners to share something of their academic research that they are currently or have recently undertaken. Riaz Ravat, Deputy Director of the St Philip's Centre, spoke about 'Faith Mapping' a forthcoming piece of research that he will be undertaking mapping the faith practices of the city. This will build upon research that he undertook ten years ago and is designed to explore how faith practice has changed across the city and the impact that faith communities have on the city beyond being a place of worship, e.g. in the areas of social justice, community care and partnership working.

Phillippa Taylor shared her recent MA dissertation on 'A Theological Reflection on the Christian Experience of Miscarriage'. Phillippa explained that there is very little academic research in this area, so she took an auto ethnographic approach to her research, based upon her own experience of miscarriage and undergoing fertility treatment. As she shared some personal reflections, she also encouraged churches to speak more openly about the experience of pregnancy loss affecting the whole family and practical steps that could be taken. The value of her talk was very much reflected in the personal testimony shared in the Q&A. Next

Denis Walsh offered reflections on his MA dissertation on 'The Pastoral care of gay Christians in Anglican Churches', research that was undertaken with 6 church leaders, 3 who considered themselves to be 'inclusive' and 3 who would identify themselves as 'orthodox' in terms of their LGBTQ theology. He shared with Synod the results of his research and some recommendations.

Mary Ann Lund shared her academic research on 'John Donne', as a staff member of University of Leicester. Mary shared some aspects of Donne's poetry and verse and his impact on Theology and worship.

Anthony Lees-Smith reflected on 'A Practical Theology of Religious Difference: the lived experience of Anglican Christians in a religiously plural UK context' the subject of his D Prof thesis. He shared his experience of the process of research, what he had learned and how it had transformed his practice as a Christian minister, particularly understanding his power and privilege as a white male priest in the established church. The variety of the presentations was much appreciated by Synod and there was general agreement that a similar opportunity for colleagues to share their academic research in the future was desired.

The November Deanery Synod was an Open meeting on the subject of 'Parish Contributions and Diocesan Finances.' Simon Wilson and David Palmer from the Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF) presented. With the aid of slides, we were able to see a decade long picture of how diocesan operating finances have mainly increased, and Parish Contributions have decreased.

The reasons for the drop in Parish Contributions centre around parish incomes being cut, and they are not inflation proofed. Money is needed for projects. Parishes that can contribute more are being asked to do so. The Leicester diocese wishes to maintain contributions via its Gift system, with mutual respect and support.

The National Insurance changes in the budget for 2025 will have a significant impact to the tune of £120,000 plus. At the current rate, the diocese will run out of money in five years' time.

David explained that in his experience, the two hundred parishes that make up the Leicester diocese are collectively, in a far worse situation than any other diocese he had knowledge of. There are no easy solutions, and it is difficult to balance the books. Clergy costs make up 60% of the budget and St. Martin's House costs have reduced by £1/1.5 million. Targets are a £1.5 million cut in the deficit 2024, £1 million in 2025 and £500,000 the year after. Holy Trinity currently makes the largest contribution, but their attendance is high, making the giving average per person, lower.

The floor was then opened to attendee's questions. A great deal of concern was expressed on issues raised, which included:

Linc Funding – intended for poor parishes but little of it seen by those parishes yet, despite being promised it for a long time! Why? It is a question of justice for people in such parishes. What is the timescale for how

quickly churches might get Linc Funding? It influences thinking around who we want to go into Minster Communities with.

Is it necessary to keep St. Martins House? What purpose does it serve? Simon explained that it does generate income but costs more than the DBF are comfortable with. But it is a headquarters for DBF and Cathedral staff too! The DBF are looking at the finances related to it.

Union for Clergy and Lay people – have not been consulted on the budget which they have a right to be. They are a voice in the finance conversation and want that enabled.

Ephesians Scheme is a restricted gift fund given for a certain type of Ministry a parish receiving it, wants. It is better than nothing, but its use isn't encouraged. Two parishes currently use it, but it is the source of some division amongst individuals.

We are growing in faith and praying that the Kingdom comes. The meeting closed with some Notices and Prayer.

Qyan Arnachellum, Leicester City Deanery Administrator

HALL REPORT

This report covers the calendar year 2024.

Our regulars for the year were

Sunday Clubs

Torch

Armonia (Annexe)

Hopscotch

Leicester Mothers Union

Guides

Brownies

Rangers

Rainbows

Black Annis Women's Morris

GKR Karate

Red Fox Ceilidhs

Leicester West Seventh Day Adventist Church (£4,858 income in 6 months, £11,133 budgeted for 2025)

All Nations Assemblies of God

Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar Young People's Bible Study

New Life Assembly (£1,025 income in 9 months, £2,024 budgeted for 2025)

One-off Hires

2022 12

2023 41

2024 129

The largest qualitative improvement was the replacement of all neon lights with LEDs in the upper hall.

From the Treasurer's Finance Report above, the 2023 deficit of **£3,100**, has been turned to a surplus of **£7,750** in 2024. That positive trajectory will continue in 2025, due in large part to the Leicester West Seventh Day Adventist Church and New Life Assembly, above.

All **Health and Safety** items for the Hall are up to date, including the annual gas safety inspection, firefighting equipment annual servicing, bi-annual fire alarm and annual emergency lighting inspections. The smoke detectors are to be replaced this year.

I could not do this work without the guidance of Bertin, with whom I have weekly meetings and constantly liaise, and the rest of the hall management group; Ed de Salis Young (with whom I also frequently liaise), Julie Shaw, Ruth Inman and our superb, now retired, secretary, Liz Coopey. I am led by Ed and Mike Dampier in banking and benefit from the tireless work of the administrators of Gift Aid, and collection envelopes; Nina de Salis Young and Malcolm Greenwood respectively, and the wardens and collection counters.

Martin Peter Clarke, Church & Community Hall Administrator and Premises Officer

HEALTH & SAFETY REPORT

It is important to remember that all church users are individually responsible for their own safety and the safety of others.

Our policies, so far as is reasonably practicable, is that our activities are carried out safely and do not pose a risk to the health of our employees, volunteers, congregation, visitors, contractors and others who may use the church, church grounds and the Community Hall. The policies are based on comprehensive risk assessments and a separate Fire Risk.

The Parochial Church Council accepts that it has overall responsibility for all policies and will ensure that adequate resources and training are made available for their implementation. In order to ensure that health and safety matters are kept constantly under review, an item on health and safety is on the agenda for all meetings of the PCC.

The PCC are confident that appropriate measures are in place to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all who use the church, church grounds and Community Hall.

Unfortunately, this year we have had an accident which involved reporting it to an outside body. The person hurt had to be off work for several days. The offending item which caused the accident has been removed and an alternative has been installed with approval by the outside body.

All scheduled checks for gas, electrics, fire alarms, fire extinguishers and the lightning conductor have taken place. The metal cage around the cellar steps continues to be very effective in completely reducing discarded drug taking equipment and the gathering of people who use drugs.

Policies and risk assessments are under review at the present time and will be sent for approval by the PCC and published in due course.

Geoff Pollard on behalf of the Health and Safety Working Group

SAFEGUARDING REPORT

SAFEGUARDING IS A WHOLE CHURCH RESPONSIBILITY.

Safeguarding continues to be a major issue for the Church of England both nationally and locally. All PCCs are required to regularly monitor their work with safeguarding by updating the Parish Dashboard which generates either an Action Plan or a summary of Action Points. Keeping the dashboard up to date is the responsibility of the Safeguarding Coordinator (Pete Coopey) who needs to consult others to have all the information needed. The PCC at The Martyrs has opted to have the Dashboard and Action Points updated before each PCC meeting. The PCC has also established a Safeguarding sub-committee to support the Safeguarding Coordinator – Hannah Burden, Lorraine Pointon and Shayne Ardrone.

All members of the PCC and Pastoral Team are up to date with DBS checks and the required training. The records for volunteers with children and young people are 95% up to date.

Pete Coopey is a member of the Diocesan Safeguarding Oversight Group (DSOG) which takes and overview of national and local developments and practice.

It is appropriate to recognise the contribution made by Phillippa Taylor to the safeguarding work of the church.

Pete Coopey

PASTORAL TEAM REPORT

The Pastoral Team continued to meet regularly either face to face or by zoom. The 2024 team was: Bertin, Phillippa, Lorraine, Shobha, Jane Berridge and Pete and Liz Coopey. All matters discussed by the Pastoral Team are confidential and team members are mutually accountable to each other. Angela Gordon is a Pastoral Visitor, and the team are most grateful for her support.

Members of the team respond to known needs in a variety of ways – visiting, phone calls, lifts to hospital or the GP surgery, shopping and general support.

The Pastoral Team is only one way that people are given support – much is done through friendship and is private and probably unnoticed. Support is also given through Home Groups and the Mother's Union.

Pete Coopey, on behalf of the Pastoral Team

BABY BASICS REPORT



As you can see from the figures on the left, we had had an extremely busy year in 2024. At times we wondered how we were going to fulfil the referrals and get them out in time. But we managed it with great teamwork, wonderful donations and funding from grants and trust funds to help us along the way.

New volunteers In 2024 we welcomed new regular volunteers to our team and now have 20 regular weekly volunteers. This has meant we have changed the structure a little and it needs a bit more guidance to steer the ship, but we work well together, and we are very grateful for a lovely variety of volunteers. We have also begun good relationships with local companies and organisations such as NEXT, Centrica and Enderby Police headquarters who come and have volunteer days, donate items off our wish list or raise money.

Donations We now have quarterly deliveries of brand-new donations from Baby Basics UK. This includes items such as cots, toys and books, toiletries, buggies and much more. These are donated by big British brands such as silver cross, Mamas and Papas, Marks and Spencer and John Lewis. During the year we often ran out of Moses baskets! Items like these are always needed so our essential funds help us top up when we need to. Otherwise, we always have a steady flow on second hand items coming through the door to sort and check.

Safer sleep This year we have seen in the news more and more stories of bed poverty across the county and the need for safer places for babies and young children to sleep. We have always had a waiting list for cots; no matter how much funding we have received from grants or rehomed donated cots we regularly had 65 people on our waiting list for a cot. The fantastic news is (and this should appear on next year's report as it happened in early 2025!) is that the City Council have offered us early 25k to spend on cots and mattresses until April 2026! Wow, God does answer prayers in amazing ways.

Finances As always, running a big baby bank comes with lots of financial aspects to cover for rent, wages, bills, items and so on. We have been successful with a few grants and trust funds as well as Leicester City Council who have also started supporting more by paying towards Laura and Jo's wages. We continue to do fundraising events to each year which you are all welcome to join in with. Thanks for everyone's continued support!

Laura Hutchinson

YOUNG CHILDREN'S AND FAMILIES' WORK REPORT

Our Children's and families work 2024 has been exciting, encouraging and sometimes challenging. Our Martyrs Children's Team has continued to focus on family discipleship, encouraging children to grow in their faith, reaching out to our local community and fostering a sense of belonging.

Ketchup Club Our Y1-Y5 kids have been continuing to grow in their faith, friendships and belonging. Our team have been using the Energize material from Urbans Saints which leaders have found a helpful resource. Phillippa and I took 5 of our older children on a weekend away with HTL. They made new friends, went to Twinlakes, praised God together and spent time exploring passages from the Bible. There was yummy food, campfire, adventure playground and games.

At the beginning of the summer term Y6 and any older kids in Ketchup Club moved up to Wonder, our new younger youth group. They are an amazing bunch who are enthusiastic to join in, have fun, ask questions and explore and encourage each other in their faith. We miss them in Ketchup Club!

Ketchup Club enjoyed their Christmas Activity Day with Wonder at the beginning of advent, where we made crafts, played games, sang songs, prayed and had lots of fun based on the Nativity. We explored what it means for Jesus to be our Emmanuel and prepared for the children and youth takeover service. We also had a chip shop lunch and movie time. It was a fun time of friendship and exploring what the Christmas story means for us.

Our Ketchup Club Team are amazing and help the kids engage well with topics, activities and each other. We always have lots of fun. Thank you to Robin, Dave and Sophie.

Rainbow Club (F1&F2) Rainbow Club has been very well run by the experienced leaders in this group. It is a lively group, growing in numbers. The children who attend regularly know that Jesus is their friend and God loves them. They have fun and have a session tailored to the needs of the group as much as possible.

Thank you to Liz, Katherine, Liz, Guinevere, Kathy, Cathy, Sangeetha and all our other helpers for all you do for our Rainbow Club children and families.

The Ark The Ark (0-3's) has been hard to find regular leaders for and is currently without a team.

Shake Shake continues to thrive and grow, mainly through word of mouth. There are regularly 15-17 children attending with their grownups. Most children are between 1&3. Many of our children don't have a garden. Some weeks there is not enough space to encourage being active which is essential to the children's development. This is particularly tricky in the winter. Some Shake families are coming to church for events or to try church. A group of families who attend go together to other groups in the area during the week. We continue to be a welcoming group who have a Bible story, praise songs and linked activities. Our Shake Team is committed and works well together. We were sad to see Phillippa go, who has been supporting Irene when able. Thank you to Ruth, Jean, Patricia, Claire and Tom for all you do.

Holiday Club The Good News Café Holiday Club was a brilliant time for the children who attended and our Holiday Club Team. Phillippa and I led a week of foody fun about meals Jesus had with his friends. The children were from our church family, friends and family, and the local community. Most children engaged well with the activities and together times. Different team members shared stories from the bible and helped the children explore what they mean for us today and what they tell us about Jesus. They asked and explored some great questions. We enjoyed our theme song Ask, Seek, Knock, plate decorating, pizza making, ice cream design and water games in the garden. Tom got very wet! Children were encouraged and seem to grow in their faith and belonging.

We had a fun movie night for all the holiday club families during the week with hotdogs and popcorn. Grown up took it in turn to keep the sunlight off the screen with a bin bag banner. Some parents said they felt part of it and it was a lovely community event as they helped hold the banner. We tried another couple of family events during the week.

We celebrated and shared what we had done at The Good News Café in our Holiday Club Family Service. It was great for others to experience the fun and messages the children had enjoyed during the week. Thank you to everyone on the team who made it such a wonderful week. We're looking forward to holiday club in 2025!

Light Party Our annual Light Party at the end of October has been a chance for our children to invite their friends to have fun while finding out about Jesus, The Light of the World. We used it as a reunion for Holiday Club and to give children the opportunity to explore or grow in their friendship with Jesus. We invited Brownies and SJS (Shaftesbury Junior School) children and saw a good number of children attend.

Easter Family Event Our annual Easter Family Event helped our church families and those in our wider community celebrate and explore the meaning of Easter. We had a play dough kitchen, crafts, games and a together time followed by snacks and drinks. This continues to be a popular event.

Links with Shaftesbury Junior School MAKE it Club runs most weeks in term time. We swap the groups around, so all children have an opportunity to come over the time they're at school. We share a Bible Story, play a game and do some craft and art activities. We have run projects including 'I'm Special, You're Special', 'MAKE it a Better World' and some seasonal sessions.

MAKE it Family events are run termly where all 240 children and their families are invited to the church hall for our craft café. This has been very popular with children and their grownups. The adults are keen for us to do this more regularly. The school staff love us putting on things for the families and we are trying to see how we can better support families together.

We helped with the school Christmas fair.

We do an assembly about 6-8 times a year.

We continued to host the annual Christmas and Easter plays put on for schools by a team in our diocese led by HTL (Holy Trinity Leicester). At Easter 2024 the usual team couldn't come so Phillippa and I hosted an Explore Easter interactive presentation with the Easter story, talk, games, music, procession and thinking time. The children and staff enjoyed it very much.

Other Schools & Nurseries We continue to welcome schools and nurseries for visits to church. At Easter, Harvest and Christmas 3 nurseries visited where we shared about what we celebrate and had stories, games, songs and activities. The children and leaders have given great feedback on the sessions we run and look forward to coming. We are building some lovely links with the nurseries.

A primary school visited us for Christmas who had not visited The Martyrs before. We helped their F2's journey through the Christmas story with our story trail. The staff gave great feedback about their visit.

Please continue to pray for all aspects of the work we do with children and families that lives will be impacted by God's amazing and saving love. There are opportunities for our others to join our team on this amazing adventure.

Thank you to many of you for the great support and encouragement you give me and our team.

Irene Hart, Children's and Young Families' Worker

WONDER

Wonder was established in September 2024 to respond to the need to move a large cohort up from Ketchup Club. We have begun well with ten different young people aged 10-14 attending so far. The team, Wendy, Tom and myself, are so enjoying getting to know the fabulous young people that attend on Sunday mornings. A strong group identity and meaningful friendships are beginning to form. We are enjoying meeting in the new Children, Youth and Families Hub.

So far, we have had an overview of the Bible using the 'Six Beats' materials, taken a closer look at the Christmas Story and are currently working through some material from Urban Saints on 'Handling Emotions'. Our young people continue to challenge us with their curiosity and excellent questions as well as delight us with their enthusiasm and kindness to one another.

In September this group will officially become an 11-14's group. This year, with many 10 and 11-year-olds attending, members of the group have had the option to join in with various Children's activities such as Activity Days and United Kids. Wonder will also be invited to Holiday Club this year. From September Wonder will be a youth group and so extra work, and energy will need to be put into offering them more than just Sunday mornings. It would be helpful to expand the team significantly in order to continue to serve, engage and support our 11-14's in their journey of faith.

Hannah Burden

FUEL CELLS

Fuel Cells continue to meet on Sunday mornings for chat, games and activities to help our young people to engage with and grow their faith. With our group of 5-7 we try to create a safe space where we can share questions, opinions and biscuits with each other.

With the creation of Wonder we are now taking our young people in Fuel Cells through to 18 years old.

David Seaman

INTERCULTURAL WORSHIPPING COMMUNITY (IWC)

The year 2024 has brought an exciting array of events to our vibrant church community. We've celebrated graduation ceremonies, housewarming gatherings, and engaged in the Alpha course. We marked International Women's Day, witnessed the first baptisms of our young adults, and enjoyed a delightful barbeque gathering in the vicarage garden. Our congregation is flourishing as we embrace the rich intercultural tapestry of our UKME (United Kingdom Minority Ethnic) and GMH (Global Majority Heritage) members through multilingual worship and faith practices.

Community prayer and outreach In Feb 2024, Alpha Course week one started with a diverse group of 35 participants and continued after an Easter break. Many of the guests were for the first time visiting the

church or participating in a conversation about Bible and Jesus. The Alpha Course offered a welcoming space for non-Christians and new Christians to explore and grow in their understanding of Christianity.

Wednesday morning (coffee & croissant) community prayers continued to grow last year with more enthusiasm and devotion of many members from the church as well as visitors from within our parish. Having begun with four people we now have around a dozen people gathering every week. This is a time for bringing our community needs and intercede for our global Christians too. "I believe my medicine is prayer and good health, one of the biggest things for me, is my faith and prayer itself. I fight my illness with lots of prayer and I don't give up." - Tony Shelley

This year we continued our Bede Park community carols event. Despite of the cold weather many university students joined in the carol singing and some stopped by to have a hot chocolate and cookies.

UKME/GMH leadership



Women's Ministry We continued SISTERS, a monthly gathering for women from our church and community to connect over breakfast or brunch and engage in meaningful faith discussions. We watched the film "War Room" for International Women's Day, leading to insightful discussions and prayer in pairs. Our regular breakfast outings at cafés also strengthens our friendships. To promote spiritual growth, we launched "52 Weeks of Growing Together," a Bible-based journal for individual and group scripture study, deepening our faith and sense of community.



Last year's SISTERS' standout event was the TAKEOVER service in celebration of Black History Month. This inspiring event empowered women from GMH to lead uplifting worship, and impactful sharing.

"Sisters Group is a great opportunity for women to share their faith. For me it has been an exciting and enjoyable time more so in being involved and working alongside notable women like Shobha and Sangeeta to make the vision come to fruition. It's a time I look forward to and can be myself and free to share my vulnerabilities. I feel safe in the presence of my sisters." -Sammy

In March 2024, Sangeetha Malladi who is part of the Young Adults (YA) group was appointed as a MES participant to work along with our Pioneer Minister, and she has been focussing on networking with local universities, social media, 6.15 gathering, and various other ministries.

Several members of Martyr's attended the two-day ANIC conference last year, and some of us volunteered to assist with daily administrative activities. Bertin, Phillippa and Shobha led a session where they shared their IWC journey and learnings with others.



Bishop Meet & Greet In May twenty university students from local universities met +Martyn where they had an opportunity to share their hopes and dreams. It was a memorable experience of good food and conversation. (Here is a link to read more about our [Young Adults Meet and Greet with Bishop Martyn - Diocese of Leicester](#))



Easter Sunday morning Sandhya and Bijesh got baptised, and it was a real joy and encouragement to the whole YA group as they marked their journey with Christ. Many International students continue to visit Martyrs over dinner and are given welcome kits as part of their arrival in Leicester. Some of them attended YA and 6.15 gathering.

Discipleship day out Our YA group visited the WELL project in Kibworth for a day dedicated to learning about different aspects of Christian discipleship. It was a fruitful day filled with personal reflections, a delicious lunch at the café, meaningful conversations. We concluded the day with a prayer walk in Market Harborough.

6.15 gathering At our Sunday evening 6:15 gatherings we aim to provide a relaxed, welcoming and an interactive 'Café Style Church' to help people engage with God and with each other. We regularly welcome new Uni students & young adults, with several of them coming from a different faith or no faith background. Some of them have shared how these gatherings are providing them with the chance to deepen their understanding of the Bible by having meaningful conversations with people from different nationalities around the table.

Watch night service Over 50 members of the UKME and GMH families joined for a joyous New Year's Eve Watch Night Service. Combining Holy Communion with uplifting praise and the sharing of Bible promise cards, the evening celebrated the hope and blessings of the new year.



Martyrs IWC steering group (Erol, Geoff, Jo, Sammy, Sangeetha, Bertin, Phillippa and Shobha) met a few times for breakfast and a brainstorming time at the vicarage throughout 2024. Here we were reflecting at the overall vision of IWC, as well as how best to implement our 3/6/9 months goals and objectives. This group also attended the Community of Practice in June, where most IWC's in Leicester Diocese come together to share, explore and learn together.

"I think being part of the IWC is the most exciting thing to happen to the Martyrs in years. I want to thank our Global Majority Heritage (GMH) members of the congregation for helping my faith grow and helping me to see how vibrant the church of God is around the world. This is such an important mission and one that enriches and blesses us. I would encourage everyone to take this mission seriously and enjoy learning from one another." – Jo Pearce

Shobha Gosa, Intercultural Pioneer Minister

HOMEGROUPS

Home groups have continued to be an important way for us to build fellowship and faith in our church community throughout 2024. Our home groups have covered a variety of material including Bible studies and Bible courses as well as engaging with various other discipleship material.

Throughout 2024 there were six homegroups running at the Martyrs. People leading these groups were Trevor Worsfold, Liz Lawton and Arthur Deegan, Robin Pointon and Angela Gordon, Shobha Gosa, and Phillippa Taylor. Around 45 people have connected with the different groups in 2024.

Each homegroup decides the content of their sessions. However, from time to time we encourage our homegroups to use the same material for a season. Last autumn some of them were using the Bible Course material produced by the Bible Society, something which many people found very helpful.

We would like to develop our Homegroup ministry further in 2025, training more homegroup leaders, launching more homegroups and connecting more people to a home group.

Thank you to everyone who has helped to lead and participate in this important ministry.

Bertin Hermo, Vicar

WORSHIP GROUP

The worship team / music group has played an important part in our sung worship for over 40 years at the Church of the Martyrs with variety of musicians and singers taking part on a Sunday morning and evening. Whether it's been one man and a guitar or an ensemble with singers, guitarist, bassist, drummers, woodwind, strings, brass, organ and pianist we are here to help in the sung worship at the church. As usual we have new people joining us and some leaving for pastures new.

Over the years we have embraced a variety of styles and songs from around the world and will continue to do so as the dynamics of our church changes.

My thanks to those who continue to help in leading what we do on a Sunday morning / evening whether they are singers, musicians, or worship leaders as well as the sound and AV team each give their time, week in and week out.

Please pray for us as we continue to develop our own way of worship that is pleasing to God.

Erol Melbourne

ECO CHURCH

The Martyrs since 2022 has had a team of people focused on helping us as a church be good stewards of our resources and demonstrate good environmental practice. As Christians we are called to care for our planet. It's clear from what we see and hear locally and globally, we definitely could do a better job! The ecoMartyrs team consists of Chris Freeman, Shobha Gosa, Lorraine Pointon, Robin Pointon, Tom Bamford and Cathy Shelly. Phillippa Taylor was part of the group prior to her departure to Derby.

A key focus of the group is our Eco Church Award, a scheme run by A Rocha. It's great to report that we have now achieved Bronze status. The Award helps us to assess how our church demonstrates good environmental practice across the follow areas:

- Worship and teaching
- Management of church buildings
- Management of church land
- Community and global engagement
- Lifestyle

Over the last year, we've undertaken a number of initiatives to help us be good stewards. Here are some of the highlights:

- ecoCafé: offering practical help on recycling and measuring your carbon footprint
- Installing swift bird boxes on the community hall
- Raising funds for solar photovoltaic panels at the eye hospital in Kiteto, Tanzania
- Enjoying a vegan community lunch
- Having a pop-up Just fair-trade shop in church
- Supporting Shaftesbury Junior School with eco activities
- Running Generosity tables (led by others in the Martyrs)
- Having a herb planter box by the church entrance

For the next 12 months, here are some of our priorities:

- Assessing opportunity to move from Bronze to Silver Eco Church accreditation.
- Obtaining costings for solar photovoltaic panels on our church and community hall roofs
- Running a further ecoCafe
- Producing a video to assist with recycling
- Reducing our carbon footprint in how we travel to church and in our daily lives

Have you ideas of other activities we could do? Please share these with any members of the ecoMartyrs group.

Robin and Lorraine Pointon

SOCIAL TEAM

We have had a busy start to 2025 with events each month so far. We started the year with a Souper Sunday followed by intense games and dedicated jigsawing! February saw the return of family film night with the

screening of 'Sing' with hotdogs & popcorn and of course our shared lunch to say a fond farewell to Phillippa. March began with our Shrove Tuesday Pancake Party. This proved very popular with around 100 pancakes being served! Various other activities are being planned for this year including an Easter Bunny Drive, a trip to crazy golf, an evening at T20 cricket and maybe a Pimms & Praise event... watch out for details!

'Chips and Chat' continues on the last Wednesday of each month, after the communion service, with between 20 and 30 in regular attendance enjoying all that Frydales (who open up just for us!) have to offer.



Back in 2024 we also enjoyed a successful Saturday morning Lego Café, more shared lunches and picnics, a day trip to the seaside, a harvest quiz and, of course, a fabulous day trip to Rutland Water which was enjoyed by many.

Our aim, as the Social Team, is to organise events that help us to have fun, enjoy each other's company and help us to get to know one another better as a church family. We try to offer a varied programme that is accessible to all. We hope that there will be something, at some point during the year, which appeals to everyone. If there is something YOU would like to do/take part in/see organised please speak to one of the team, your suggestions would be very welcome!

At present we have 11 people on the 'official' social team but we always welcome additional support and ideas from others. If you would be interested in joining the team, then please speak to Julie Shaw. Thanks.

Julie Shaw

GUIDING

Girlguiding at the Martyrs continues to offer weekly activities for girls from the age of 5 to 18 in our Rainbow, Brownie, Guide and Ranger units. We are delighted that during the past year the number of girls has risen, particularly for those of Brownie age. Now between the two Brownie units, we have approximately 40 girls. These girls are from different schools and varied backgrounds, and it is great to see diversity again in our units. We now hope that Rainbow numbers will also start to increase.

Once again, we would like to thank the church for the support, we receive in being able to use the hall so frequently, in return for our annual donation. We try to be generous with our donations and accommodating if there are other users but recognise how fortunate we are to have the use of these facilities.

We are always grateful for the help and support that we receive from church members. We have a group of leaders and others -Martyrs Friends of Guiding or FoG, to organise our fundraising events. We are delighted that 3 extra people have joined this group to help us. Many people once again helped with and supported our Christmas Fair. It is a wonderful community event as well as raising £2000! Other fundraising events like our Shopping Evening and Chef and Spice are always well attended by church members, and we thank you for your support. As we have mentioned before, these fundraising activities help to ensure that Girlguiding is affordable for all.

We also held our annual Thinking Day service and breakfast, where current and past members from the Martyrs, other local leaders, as well as church friends joined together for a communion service and fellowship. Our units were also pleased to be involved with Harvest and Christingle Parade services, and we are grateful to service leaders for helping the girls to be involved in the services.

Every week we continue to work on our programme by doing activities, games, cooking and badge work and having fun. Across the groups we have also had days out, nights away, a cinema visit and a panto trip. We would welcome more girls to come and join us and would also welcome any adults or young leaders to help at our groups. Please have a word if you are interested.

Liz Bamford

MOTHERS UNION

Mothers' Union (MU) is a Christian organisation/charity with 4 million worldwide members, and everyone is welcome to join, not just mothers! Our Martyrs branch had 25 members in 2024, 3 of whom were men. Not all were able to attend the Wednesday afternoon meetings but by joining MU, everyone made a difference to the lives of people around the world and the UK, especially local (grass roots) concerns, hopefully, strengthening and preserving marriage and Christian family life, all with the aid of prayer.

The theme for 2024 continued as "Transformation Now" and a varied and interesting programme entertained us all, with speakers at some of our monthly meetings, to whom we offer our grateful thanks. The social contact and support with prayers are also an important part of MU.

Shirley Waterworth led the Branch, with Karon Price as Treasurer, and joint secretary with Shirley. Thank you to the committee members, Linda Tilley, Angela Sharp and Ruth Twaite; Ruth Fryer and all our generous and loyal branch members. Our thanks also extend to everyone at the Church of the Martyrs and their wonderful support. We wish Bertin continued good health and best wishes to Phillippa Taylor and husband Jim for their move to Derbyshire. Thank you to Phillippa for arranging a beautiful Church Communion Service in September and for your friendship.

We began 2024 with £80 in funds and start 2025 with £59.79. The total giving for the year was £750 which was quite an achievement. Our giving consisted of -

£135	to the Kiteto FGM fund, Ezereda's project to provide a safe place for talking to girls and encouraging all MU members to spread the word about the FGM project.
£70	to the Summer of Hope Appeal for literacy and numeracy projects in DR of Congo.
£110	to Leics Homeless.
£110	to Mary Sumner House (Charity Headquarters).
£100	to AFIA holidays (Away from it all holidays for families in need).
£80	to the hall funds (Martyrs).
£135	for Women's Aid – given to Kate Cooper (Leics MU Administrator).

We campaigned and supported Women's Aid with prayer during the 16 Days of Activism, The Prison Advice and Care Trust (PACT) with donations of Easter Eggs and Christmas gifts for prisoners to give to their children and Collections for Baby Basics. Ruth Fryer was an on-site helper at the AFIA caravan holiday for 10 families, in July.

We enjoyed a Spring lunch at Palmers Garden Centre and afternoon tea in church, in August, when we collected for the Summer Hope of Appeal. Our thanks to Rev. Susan Leighton for the moving Lenton Reflection and for playing her clarinet at our Christmas carols and readings. Sarah and David Shepherd spoke at the Leicestershire Diocesan MU Autumn Forum about their Kiteto visit and gave an update on the FGM campaign. Our branch sadly said goodbye to some of our African visitors, as they moved on. We were fortunate to learn so much about the work of MU in Africa.

Finally, our congratulations go to Ruth Fryer who was elected to serve as our new MU Leicestershire Diocesan President for the new triennial 2025- 2027, the theme of which is “Join Us and Join In”. If you are interested in becoming a member or would like to know more, please see Shirley or Karon.

Shirley Waterworth, Branch Leader

Martyrs CHURCH

Annual General Meeting of the Church of the Martyrs Leicester
Sunday 6th April 2025 at 12.00hrs in the Church

AGENDA

Annual Meeting of Parishioners

1. **Opening Prayer**
2. **Appointment of Clerk for Meetings**
3. **Apologies**
4. **Minutes of AMP 2024**
5. **Election of Church Wardens for 2025-26**

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

1. **Apologies**
2. **Minutes of 2024 APCM**
3. **PCC Reports**

a) **Mission and Ministry Reports**

Verbal reports

- Children's and Young Families' – Irene Hart
- Worship Group – Erol Melbourne
- Intercultural Worshipping Community – Shobha Gosa

Written reports

- Baby Basics
- Children's and Young Families' work
- Wonder
- Fuel Cells
- Intercultural Worshipping Community (IWC)
- Homegroups
- Worship Group
- Eco church
- Social Team
- Guiding
- Mothers Union

- b) **PCC Proceedings**
- c) **Leadership Group Report**
- d) **Electoral Roll and Attendance Report**
- e) **Church Fabric Report**

- f) Financial Report
- g) Mission Partnership
- h) Deanery Synod Report
- i) Church Hall Report
- j) Health and Safety Report
- k) Safeguarding Report
- l) Pastoral Team report

4. Elections & Appointments

- a) Election of 3 PCC Members to serve for 3 years
- b) Reader representation on PCC for 2025-26
- c) Note Appointment of Deputy/Assistant Wardens
- d) Appointment of Independent Examiner for 2025-26

5. Open Forum: an opportunity to ask questions about the life of the church; questions to be submitted **by Wednesday 2nd April** to Geoff Pollard (07958 359157) geoffpollard46@gmail.com

6. Closing Prayer.

Minutes of Annual General Meeting of the Church of the Martyrs Leicester Sunday 21st April 2024 at 12.00hrs in the Church

Annual Meeting of Parishioners

In Attendance:

Revd. Bertin Hermo, Revd. Phillippa Taylor, Liz Bamford, Pete Coopey, Liz Coopey, Julie Shaw, Sue Gammon, Les Gammon, Norman Banner, Ed de Salis Young, Erol Melbourne, Malcolm Greenwood, Chris Roe, Sarah Roe, Lorraine Pointon, Maureen Pointon, Patricia Woods, Linda Tilley, Ann Smith, Sue Hermo, Irene Hart, Margaret Wicks, John Riley, Pat Bailey, Robert Freeman, Chris Freeman, Michael Jawahar Ravuri, Trevor Worsfold, Liz Preston, Richard Jaramba, Sammy Jaramba, Guinevere David, Roz Burch, Ben Lawton, Liz Lawton, Dave Woodcock, Susan Woodcock, Karon Price, Shobha Gosa, Robin Pointon, Clare Pollard, Geoffrey Pollard, Janet Lenton, Sonia Kurian, Shaylesh Raja, David Shepherd, Sarah Shepherd, Steve Ardron, Shayne Ardron, Mick Pinney, Sue Seaman, Richard Burden, Pauline Burden, Hannah Burden, Martin Clarke, Elliot Lee, Tom Bamford, Liz Dampier, Mike Dampier, Katherine Hawker, John Sinclair, Kim Burley Jones, Florence Adediran, Moses Kagwi, Sangeetha Malladi, Sandhya Pasvathi Daela, Shenade Hall, Jo Pearce, Ashok Kumar P, Monica Benno.

Apologies:

Ann Raja, Ruth Fryer, Dave Seaman, Shirley Waterworth, Angela Sharp, Steve Bradley, Kathy Bradley, Angela Sharp, Judith Edwards, Jill Lapworth, Nina de Salis Young.

1. Opening Prayer

Bertin chairing the meeting opened the meeting with prayer at 12.00.

2. Appointment of Clerk for the Meetings

Steve Ardron was appointed as Clerk for the meetings.

3. Minutes of the AMP 2023

It was proposed from the chair that the minutes of the AMP held on 14th May 2023 were an accurate record of the previous meeting. This was accepted unanimously by the meeting and there were no matters arising.

4. Appointment of Church Wardens for 2024/25

Richard Jaramba and Lorraine Pointon had served as dedicated wardens for the past year. Both were willing to stand once more and the following formal nominations for the role of church wardens had been received.

Lorraine Pointon- proposed by Steve Bradley and seconded by Kathy Bradley

Richard Jaramba - proposed by Phillipa Bonny and seconded by Irene Hart

After a show of hands, both Lorraine Pointon and Richard Jaramba were duly declared elected to serve as Church Wardens for one year with full approval of the meeting. The thanks of the meeting were expressed to Lorraine and Richard for being willing to fulfil this role.

Meeting closed 12.15pm

Annual Parochial Church Meeting Commenced 12.16pm

1. Attendance & Apologies

Both as recorded for the AMP.

2. Minutes of the 2023 APCM

The minutes of the 2023 APCM, held on 14th May 2023 were accepted as a true record after an amendment on page 32 of the Church Report in the finance report section changing “The surplus has risen to £71,393....” To correctly read: - “The reserves have risen to £71,393...”

There were no matters arising.

3. PCC Reports

A range of reports had been produced for the year ended 31st Dec 2023 and circulated both on-line and by way of hard copy, which were also available at the meeting.

a) Mission & Ministry Reports:

Verbal Reports for this year were from the following 3 areas of Ministry to give some additional insight into each.

- **Homegroups** – Phillippa Taylor talked through a review of homegroups that had seen the launch of 3 new groups with new leaders and members. The introduction of a breakfast group and a Thursday evening. She shared that from her personal experience these times have been a source of constant encouragement in her faith. Time to be able to discuss and explore faith away from the “business” of a service.

Homegroups remain keen to grow, and there are people who would like to join, but not always possible to accommodate within current groups. This year all homegroups studied the “life on the frontline” series and all came together at the beginning and end for a much larger session, however during the course each group looked at the course very much in their own individual ways. The course had helped people share through conversations that they maybe would not have done otherwise.

- **Girl Guiding** – Liz Bamford gave some greater insight into group, explaining that it is the largest organisation for girls between ages 4-18. It started in 1928 at the Martyrs. Across Rainbows, Brownies, Guides and Rangers there are around 60 girls. Some spaces are available in all the groups.

There is a mix of activity with weekly badge work and mixing with others that is different to what is experienced in a school setting. Girl guiding is not a “faith organisation” but is an important aspect of the Martyrs witness. Around 10 families are members of the Martyrs as they have come along from within the Guiding contact.

Fundraising brings lots of community to the hall and helps people engage with the Martyrs. It has also helped contribute £600 to the hall funds.

Fund raising is also necessary for the organisation has a £50 membership levy for each girl.

- **Baby Basics** – Pete Coopey (on behalf of Laura Hutchinson who was unwell)

The key things for people to understand about Baby Basics which is different to other groups, is that whilst it is one of the sub-committees of the PCC and operates under the Church charity number, it is self-funded.

Its aim is to support disadvantaged families, and this comes through referrals from Council and healthcare professionals in the City and County. Where there was a Council projection of 8-10 families per month perhaps requiring assistance, BB is currently experiencing 55-60 requests per month showing the increasing number of people falling into the disadvantaged criteria.

The notable changes have been the increase in:

1. Families where domestic abuse and violence has been present.
2. The increase in homeless expectant mums.

Baby Basics is fortunate to be linked with the national Baby Basics organisation, and Companies will donate items to the organisation such as cots, push chairs, prams etc. Items are always required and there is currently a 30-40 long waiting list in respect of cots and buggies.

Leicester has a higher than UK average rate of teenage pregnancy and higher rates of under 16's in poverty.

Baby Basics Leicester has grown to a team of 17 regular volunteers and 2 part time staff, who have coped with some 900 referrals in the last year. Thanks specifically should be expressed to Laura Hutchinson and all the others in the team whether that is in preparing or receiving donations, working in finance, being points for drop off locations for donations etc. There are a vast number of people involved at all levels, which is far wider reaching than Martyrs members.

Written Reports

Bertin thanked all those who had written reports which showed the breadth of engagement and that we had much to be thankful for. He briefly highlighted the following –

- **Money Matters: It was confirmed that this would be closing.** Led by Nina De Salis Young, it has been a significant ministry and has had a huge impact in our community since 2016 and thanks were expressed to Nina for her dedication and hard work over the years. Hope 67 will be continuing. We can praise God for the many stories of hope.
- **Families and Children's Work** continues to be at the heart of what we do at The Martyrs, and we are grateful to Irene and all those involved in this work, with Sunday Clubs, Summer clubs, Shake, & Light party continuing to develop. We can celebrate the growing links with Shaftsbury Junior School with half term assembly and craft club involvement.

We would like to grow Fuel Cells from 1 to 2 groups, and we would want to thank all those in leadership roles who week after week work with our young people.

- **IWC** Thanks were expressed to Shobha for her lead along with the steering group. Bertin is particularly encouraged by the number of students making Martyrs their home. He introduced Sangeetha and welcomed her to the Martyrs as our new intern.
- **The Worship Group** It is essential for us to explore how the group reflects our IWC congregation. Singing in different languages has continued to develop. Thanks to Erol Melbourne for heading up and organising rotas, and to Steve Bradley in respect to Sound. There is a continued requirement for AV operators and presentation.
- **Eco Church** It is one of our 5 strands of Mission at the Martyrs. The installation of Swift Boxes at the Hall had been undertaken.
- We are fortunate to have an active **Social Team** headed up by Julie Shaw. There have been a good variety of events and we benefitted from the time spent together with others on the Church holiday. Thanks were expressed to all those who helped with the planning, gave financially and participated to make this a success.
- **Mothers' Union** We are grateful for the ongoing work of our Mothers Union. Many thanks to Shirley Waterworth and Karon Price for their leadership.
- In an update to the **Nave Reordering Project** Bertin confirmed that the PCC had voted unanimously for a faculty application to be prepared and submitted. We will keep everyone informed as this moves forward. Bertin expressed thanks to the working group.

Bertin thanked everyone for giving their time in such a selfless voluntary manner, and whilst not all got mentions in the report there were so many to thank, from Counting money, Gardening, Cleaning etc, etc.

Other more formal Reports

These were run through, allowing times for any queries, especially in respect to the Finance report that follows:

- a) Proceedings of the PCC Report** The report as printed on pages 6&7 of the Annual Report document was presented to the meeting. Bertin publicly wanted to thank those in the committees and sub-committees for all the wisdom that they brought to the various meetings.
- b) Leadership Group Report** The report on the workings and membership of the group was printed on page 7 of the Annual Report document and was presented to the meeting. There were no questions asked.
- d) Electoral Roll Report** The Electoral Roll Report was presented, noting that the list had increased to a total of 172 members on the Electoral Roll with 7 new being added and 2 removed. The report was received by the meeting and Ben Lawton was thanked for his work in managing the Roll and attendance figures.

It was encouraging that both the Wednesday Communion and 6:15 had grown numerically as they had found their own shape and flavour.

e) Fabric Report & Inventory The Fabric Report as printed on page 12 of the Annual Report was presented to the meeting. Thanks to Richard Jaramba for its compilation.

It was noted that the nave reordering project is proceeding with a required faculty application having been submitted. We should pray during 24/25 for the project, which if approved will give people an opportunity to give towards its fulfilment.

f) Finance Report Ed de Salis Young presented the Finance Report (Pg 13) in graphs and charts form, and the accounts to the meeting as printed in the Annual Report. He started by giving some context.

Q: Why do we have a finance team?

- We are dealing with large sums of money.
- Need to ensure it is correctly recorded.
- To be able to report to others and give advice and recommendations on whether we can spend the money.
- Because funds are split into different funds and accounts.

These were commented on as follows:

- General Fund** As “general” suggests this is the account that incorporates the main income and expenditure. This year has seen Income over budget and expenditure under budget. It should however be noted that the Quinquennial building inspection will give rise to some fabric repairs, and some of these necessary repairs will not all be in the same financial year. (A chart was shown to the meeting to illustrate how the fund has moved over time)
- Hall** There have been signs of a turnaround with the Hall lettings thanks to some hard work by Martin. There is still a degree of subsidy to the hall from Church general funds that has an impact on reserves.
- Hardship Fund** This is a new fund that has been set up because of a specific large donation and a portion of Church Tithe. It has a balance of £11,000 and it is for donations to assist individuals where appropriate criteria exists.
- Church Development Fund** This is specifically in place to allow donations to be made towards church fabric, with the Nave re-ordering project falling into this category.
- Children and family worker fund** This element supports the work of our employed worker, Irene Hart, and is made up of both grant income and donations made specifically from individuals. This still does not meet all expected funds required, so PCC would need to take money from general funds where required. Whilst sources of funding continue to be sought, individuals can give directly to this fund if they should so wish.
- Money Matters** As this is closing, any residual funds will be returned or transferred on to Hope 67 who will be continuing their debt advice work.
- Baby Basics** The major move to new premises in 2022 has benefited the work, but increased costs, and reserves will have been reduced.

Some general comments regarding the budget looking forward were shared as like personal finances, the church faces challenges:

- We are projecting a Deficit budget currently.
- The Diocese are looking at increased costs and are requesting prayerful giving from parishes. PCC will need to consider the level of giving in the coming months.
- There may yet be subsidies required for the Hall, despite the increased in lettings.
- Income and expenditure are both projected to rise.

In summary Ed concluded by reminding people about the many ways that they can give, envelopes, cash, QR codes, standing order, etc. If you pay tax, the church can claim gift aid if a suitable declaration form is signed.

He thanked the rest of the team: Malcolm Greenwood, Nina De Salis Young, Martin Clarke, Mike Dampier and all the money counters of cash, and our independent examiner Colin Wood.

Questions

Q: David Shepherd - Could any spare tithes be considered for a Kiteto Project?

A: The PCC would need to consider this and decide where any unallocated tithes are sent in due course. Ed further explained that the PCC tried to have a mix of local and international recipients of the tithe. If anyone had ideas on groups to support, they should mention this to a PCC member.

Q: Are we able to claim back gift aid when using the tap machine?

A: Only some was eligible.

It was proposed by David Shepherd and seconded by Robin Pointon that Ed's verbal financial report along with the preceding written reports of the Annual Report Document plus the accounts as stated at the rear of the document pg.36 onwards be accepted. This was unanimously agreed by a show of hands by the meeting.

Remaining reports formal

- **West Leicester Mission Partnership Pg 15**
- **City of Leicester Deanery Synod Pg 15**
- **Church Hall Report Pg 16.** We want the hall to be a community resource, and it is good to see an increase in its usage. Intentional advertising and banners, Martyrs website and social media advertising etc has assisted. Thanks were expressed to Martin Clarke.
- **Health & Safety Report Pg 17** Thanks to Geoff Pollard for Reviewing the H&S policy.
- **Safeguarding Report Pg 17-18**
- **Pastoral Team Report Pg 15**

Note that the Health and Safety, Safeguarding, Pastoral Team, West Leicester Mission Partnership, Hall, and Deanery Synod Reports were all received by the meeting.

4. Elections and Appointments

a) Parochial Church Council

Thanks to those due to retire this year from PCC. They are:

Wendy Bebbington & Ben Lawton.

In addition:

Osas Uhunamure was standing down early and
Helen Pinney had stepped down earlier in the year.

Bertin declared that nominations had been received as follows:

- Hannah Burden proposed by Sue Seaman and seconded by Lorraine Pointon
- Roz Burch proposed by Patricia Woods and seconded by Trevor Worsfold
- Ashok Panjagala proposed by Michael Ravuriand seconded by Liz Lawton
- Ben Lawton proposed by Guinevere David and seconded by Robin Pointon

In the absence of any other nominations, there was no requirement for a vote and the abovementioned were duly elected to the PCC. It had been agreed at the last PCC meeting that the formal election of officers for the new PCC would be at the beginning of their first meeting.

b) PCC Reader Representative

Shayne Ardron was willing to stand again as the Reader representative on PCC and was duly accepted.

c) Deputy/ Assistant Wardens

Whilst not being formal church appointments the valuable work of Deputy Wardens was recognised. Eileen Melbourne was standing down this year and appreciation was expressed for her service. Liz Bamford had agreed to continue for a further year and would be joined by Robin Pointon.

d) Independent Examiner

Ed de Salis Young proposed that Colin Wood be appointed as Independent Examiner for the forthcoming year once again. This was seconded by Liz Lawton and unanimously agreed by the meeting unanimously.

5. Open Forum

It was noted that no questions had been received prior to the meeting for Open Forum discussion, however the following were asked:

Q: As a best guess, when could the Nave r e-ordering start?

A: The faculty application needs to happen first and then fund raising would need to commence if faculty approved. 2025 may give a better indication.

Q: Is there a plan for intergenerational representation on the PCC?

A: The PCC can Co-Opt members, so not essential that younger representation has to stand at the AGM.

6. Votes of thanks

Bertin expressed his appreciation for the help and support he receives. There are of course ups and downs, but it is good to be community “together “in worshipping God.

In response Phillippa thanked Bertin for his thoughtful leadership.

Final Prayer

Lorraine Pointon closed the meeting with a final prayer.

The meeting ended at 1.25pm

CHURCH OF THE MARTYRS LEICESTER

Registered Charity no 1134668

ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER 2024

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Page 4	Statement of Financial Activities
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CHURCH OF THE MARTYRS, LEICESTER
Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31st December
2024

Note 1:

Accounting Policies

These Accounts have been prepared in accordance with Church Accounting Regulations 2006 together with applicable Accounting Standards and the Charities SORP 2005.

The Financial Statements have been prepared in accordance with the historical cost convention and on an Accruals basis.

Scope of the Accounts

The Accounts combine the results of the Church, Hall and associated funds for the year. The Accounts include monetary transactions, assets and liabilities for which the PCC can be held responsible.

Funds

Unrestricted funds [general fund] represent the funds of the PCC that are not subject to any special restrictions regarding their use.

Restricted funds represent income and donations from individuals or groups which, may be expended only on the specific object for which they were given. Any balance remaining unspent at the end of each year must be carried forward as a balance on that fund. At the start of 2024 there were 6 active Restricted Funds: Children and Families Worker Fund, Money Matters fund, Baby Basics fund, Organ fund (donations for the church organ), Mission Partnership fund, and Hardship Fund. During the year the Mission Partnership fund was closed and the money distributed back to the various churches that had originally donated it.

Designated Funds have been designated by the PCC and as such could be 'undesignated' in the future. At the start of 2023 there were 3 active Designated Funds: the Hall fund, Buildings Development fund and Tithe fund (to hold unspent tithe monies). As the tithes are now all directly spent, the Tithe fund was not used in 2024.

The Accounts include all transactions, assets and liabilities for which the PCC is responsible in law. They do not include the Accounts of Church groups that owe their main affiliation to another body or those that are informal gatherings of church members.

Incoming Resources

- Collections are recognised when received by or on behalf of the PCC
- Planned giving is recognised only when received
- Income Tax recoverable on Gift Aid donations is recognised when the income to which it relates is received.
- All funds raised from events are accounted for gross
- Interest is accounted for as it is paid
- Grants and legacies are accounted for when the PCC is legally entitled to the amounts due.

Resources used

Outgoing donations made are accounted for when paid. The Parish Share is accounted for when paid, although any unpaid amount at 31st December is provided for in these financial statements as an operational (though not legal) liability and as such would be shown as a creditor in the balance sheet. All other expenditure is recognised when it is incurred and is accounted for gross.

Fixed Assets

Consecrated and beneficed property is not included in the accounts in accordance with s96(2)(a) of the Charities Act 1993. Movable church furnishings held by the vicar and churchwardens on special trust of the PCC and which require a faculty for disposal are inalienable property, listed in the church's inventory, which can be inspected (at any reasonable time).

Items acquired before 2000 are not included in the accounts either because there is insufficient cost information available or the value is considered too low. The expenditure on individual items and equipment under £1,500 is written off when incurred.

The church does record 5 fixed assets, which are over the £1,500 threshold. Depreciation is applied on a 'straight line' basis over the likely lifespan of each item, based on advice from suppliers. The 5 items are the electronic organ (25 years lifespan), and the main audio visual (AV) projector, sound desk (now zero value), photocopier and church chairs (all 10 years lifespan).

The church (rather than the Diocese) also owns the Martyrs' Community Hall which was built later than the church and paid for by parishioner fundraising. This is noted here, but not shown as a fixed asset in the accounts as the value is uncertain.

Salaries

During the year the PCC employed an Administrator and Premises Officer, a Cleaner, a Children and Families Worker, and for Baby Basics a Manager and an Administrator, making a total of 5 employees at the end of 2024, who were all part-time. The payroll is administered by the Diocese of Leicester, and wages for all employees have had appropriate PAYE and NI deductions made. Pension contributions have been made for the Administrator, the Children and Families Worker and the Baby Basics Manager and Administrator; all employees now have the option to join the pension scheme, which is with NEST.

Payments to PCC Members

A small immaterial portion of the expenses paid to the clergy may relate to their services to the PCC. The only payments made to any other PCC member, persons closely related to them or related parties, were direct reimbursements for items bought for the church.

Church of the Martyrs, Leicester – Statement of Financial Activities – Year Ending 31st December 2024

Statement of Financial	Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	Designated	Restricted	Restricted	PCC Total	PCC Total
Activites	General Fund	Ch Dev	Ch&Fam	Hall	Money Matters	Baby Basics	2024 (£)	2023 (£)
			Organ, Hship		MP			
Incoming Resources								
Voluntary income (note 2a)	124,604	3,750	15,793	1,670	62	84,845	230,724	235,265
Investment income (note 2b)	3,526	-	-	-	-	-	3,526	1,029
Income from Charitable Activities (note 2c)	1,376	-	-	49,806	-	8,391	59,573	50,047
Other Incoming Resources (note 2d)	159	-	-	-	-	292	451	1,982
Total Incoming Resources	129,666	3,750	15,793	51,476	62	93,529	294,276	288,323
Resources Expended								
Cost of Generating Funds (note 3a)	283	-	2	-	-	301	586	467
Grants (note 3b)	8,378	-	7,056	-	12,019	14,718	42,171	30,783
Activities directly related to Church Work (3c)	128,710	2,931	19,099	44,720	895	44,862	241,217	238,895
Total Resources Expended	137,370	2,931	26,157	44,720	12,914	59,882	283,974	270,144
Net incoming resources	(7,704)	819	(10,364)	6,756	(12,852)	33,647	10,302	18,179
Transfers between funds (note 4 below)	(5,496)		5,033	1,000	(1,370)	833	-	-
Net movement in funds	(13,200)	819	(5,331)	7,756	(14,222)	34,480	10,302	18,179
Total funds brought forward	94,627	3,753	14,785	91	15,572	23,855	152,684	134,505
Total funds carried forward	81,427	4,572	9,454	7,847	1,350	58,335	162,986	152,684

Church of the Martyrs, Leicester – Balance Sheet for the year ended 31st December 2024

Balance Sheet	Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	PCC Total	PCC Total
	Church	Church Dev, Hall, Tithe	Organ, MP, MM, BB, CH&Fam	2024 (£)	2023 (£)
Fixed Assets - Equipment (note 5)	1,515	1,078	2,340	4,933	6,438
Current Assets					
Cash at bank and hand	74,828	8,946	62,522	146,295	144,567
Debtors - Tax reclaimable (note 6)	4,825	500	1,082	6,407	6,802
Debtors - general (note 6)	985	3,732	4,150	8,867	3,103
Total	80,637	13,178	67,754	161,569	154,472
Current Liabilities (note 7)					
Creditors and Agency Collections	(726)	(1,836)	(954)	(3,517)	(8,228)
Total	(726)	(1,836)	(954)	(3,517)	(8,228)
Total Net Assets	81,427	12,419	69,140	162,986	152,684
Represented by Funds					
Unrestricted					
General fund	81,427			81,427	94,627
Designated					
Hall Fund		7,847		7,847	91
Church Development Fund		4,572		4,572	3,753
Restricted					
Hardship Fund			7,021	7,021	10,724
Children & Families Worker Fund			93	93	1,253
Money Matters Leicester Fund			1,350	1,350	13,350
Baby Basics Fund			58,335	58,335	23,855
Mission Partnership Fund			0	0	2,222
Organ Fund			2,340	2,340	2,808
Balances at 31 December	81,427	12,419	69,140	162,986	152,684

Approved on behalf of the PCC

Name: Bertin Hermo, Vicar

Date:

CHURCH OF THE MARTYRS, LEICESTER.

Church of the Martyrs, Leicester – Notes to the Accounts for the year ended 31st December 2024

Note 2:

Incoming Resources Detail	Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	Designated	Restricted	Restricted	PCC Total	PCC Total
	Church	Church	Church	Hall	Money Matters	Baby Basics	2024 (£)	2023 (£)
	General Fund	Buildings	Ch&Fam		MP			
			Organ, Hship					
2a Voluntary Income								
Regular donations Gift Aid	27,010.07		3,735.00			315.00	31,060.07	32,159.35
Donations gross via CAF	1,025.00						1,025.00	10,900.00
Donations via PGS	41,367.13						41,367.13	42,858.39
Income tax recoverable on Gift Aid and GASDS	16,670.63	750.00	1,203.25		12.25	268.47	18,904.60	27,968.89
Credit Card or online donations	11,532.70		150.00			757.00	12,439.70	11,628.47
Regular donations non Gift Aid	5,913.80		120.00			6,255.00	12,288.80	14,622.66
Cash Collections	1,577.10		444.87			80.00	2,101.97	4,722.75
Special or one off Donations Gift Aid	400.00	3,000.00	1,000.00		50.00	250.00	4,700.00	30,139.44
Special or one off Donations non Gift Aid	2,959.58		640.00	1,670.00		4,554.85	9,824.43	5,190.91
Grants & Legacies	10,000.00		8,500.00			72,365.00	90,865.00	42,018.45
Grants - IWC	6,148.13						6,148.13	13,055.33
Total	124,604.14	3,750.00	15,793.12	1,670.00	62.25	84,845.32	230,724.83	235,264.64
2b Investment Income								
Bank/CBF Interest	3,526.19						3,526.19	1,029.17
Total	3,526.19	-	-	-	-	-	3,526.19	1,029.17
2c Income from Charitable Activities								
PCC Fees (Weddings, Baptisms, Funerals)	766.00						766.00	768.00
Hire/Lettings of buildings				49,805.99			49,805.99	30,800.33
Trading Income and Cost Reimbursement	10.00					8,391.41	8,401.41	3,943.98
Church Trips and Holidays	600.04						600.04	14,534.60
Total	1,376.04	-	-	49,805.99	-	8,391.41	59,573.44	50,046.91
2d Other								
Social and Fundraising Events	159.39					292.00	451.39	1,881.56
Miscellaneous Income							-	100.00
Insurance Claims							-	-
Total	159.39	-	-	-	-	292.00	451.39	1,981.56
Total Incoming Resources	129,665.76	3,750.00	15,793.12	51,475.99	62.25	93,528.73	294,275.85	288,322.28

Note 3:

Resources Expended Detail	Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	Designated	Restricted	Restricted	PCC Total	PCC Total
	Church	Church	Church	Hall	Money Matters	Baby Basics	2024(£)	2023(£)
	General Fund	Buildings	Ch&Fam		MP			
		Tithe	Organ, Hship					
3a Cost of Generating Funds								
Social Events, Envelopes, fees	283.06		1.73			301.47	586.26	467.40
Total	283.06	-	1.73	-	-	301.47	586.26	467.40
3b Grants								
Tithes paid out to external organisations	6,665.00						6,665.00	8,774.00
Other Donations	1,712.67		7,055.98		12,019.34	14,718.36	35,506.35	22,008.79
Total	8,377.67	-	7,055.98	-	12,019.34	14,718.36	42,171.35	30,782.79
3c Activities directly related to Church Work								
Parish Contribution	72,600.00						72,600.00	66,000.00
Remuneration Costs (inc temporary and interns)	15,742.35		18,428.95	20,365.64		18,681.19	73,218.13	60,138.75
Clergy and Staff Expenses	1,701.96		154.08	140.00		134.59	2,130.63	1,431.06
IWC Staff and Event Spending	4,583.73						4,583.73	3,846.58
Mission: Church Trips and Holidays	962.50						962.50	19,693.56
Mission: Children and Youth inc Holiday Club	2,874.96						2,874.96	1,651.64
Mission: Other events, Alpha etc	1,372.70						1,372.70	1,442.46
Staff Training and Conferences	738.94				594.51		1,333.45	737.55
Printing, Stationery, Phone, Broadband, Postage	2,072.38		48.00	271.07	109.74	5,744.66	8,245.85	8,389.46
External Printing, Publicity, Website	625.00					46.13	671.13	1,060.42
Consumables and Cleaning Equipment	595.31			2,546.00		15.99	3,157.30	2,452.18
Insurance Premiums	3,608.71			2,624.59	103.63		6,336.93	6,464.17
Fees: Subs, Licenses, Membership, PRS	1,253.48			420.96		300.00	1,974.44	3,341.10
Equipment: Computers, furniture etc	1,381.73			626.13	12.47	3.60	2,023.93	3,622.50
Equipment: Worship (PA etc)	-						-	866.65
Worship and Service Resources, Manuals, Books	3,436.38				74.50		3,510.88	4,563.25
Fixed Asset Depreciation	500.15	537.00	468.00				1,505.15	1,507.94
General Maintenance	5,165.89			6,130.37		84.00	11,380.26	11,574.91
Premises: Rental, Rates, legal and valuations	-					17,026.00	17,026.00	16,411.59
Utilities	8,162.54			11,594.99		2,825.56	22,583.09	21,454.63
PCC Expenses and Governance Costs	395.06						395.06	186.84
Major or Quinquennial Work	630.00	2,394.00					3,024.00	1,732.72
Bank Charges	305.85						305.85	325.80
Other Expenses	-						-	-
Total	128,709.62	2,931.00	19,099.03	44,719.75	894.85	44,861.72	241,215.97	238,895.76
Total Resources Expended	137,370.35	2,931.00	26,156.74	44,719.75	12,914.19	59,881.55	283,973.58	270,145.95

Notes to the Accounts for the year ended 31st December 2024

Note 4: For details of Fund transfers, see Note 4 on the summary SOFA page.

Note 5: Fixed Assets

(a) Tangible	Electric Organ	A/V system	Sound Desk	Copier	Church Chairs	Total
Actual Cost						
At 1 January 2024	11,700	19,150	3,600	2,907	5,374	42,731
Additions						0
Disposals						0
At 31 December 2024	11,700	19,150	3,600	2,907	5,374	42,731
Depreciation						
At 1 January 2024	8,892	18,301	3,600	1,740	3,759	36,292
Additions	468	210	0	290	537	1,505
Disposals						
At 31 December 2024	9,360	18,511	3,600	2,030	4,296	37,797
Net Book Value at 31 December 2024	2,340	639	0	877	1,078	4,934
Net Book Value at 31 December 2023	2,808	849	0	1,167	1,615	6,439

Note 6:

Debtors consist of Gift Aid tax recoverable and general debtors (for example Hall users). The stated Gift Aid tax owing at the end of 2024 matches the tax claim made in February 2025.

Note 7: Liabilities consist of Agency collections (those collected for others but not yet paid over), invoices not yet paid, deposits held (including for Hall users), and accruals.

The total Parish Contribution offer the Martyrs made for 2024 was £72,600, which was fully paid during the year.

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

**Report to the trustees/
members of**

Charity Name
Church of The Martyrs, Leicester

**On accounts for the year
ended**

31st December 2024

**Charity no
(if any)**

1134668

Set out on pages

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/12/2024

**Responsibilities and
basis of report**

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

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

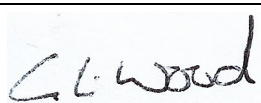
**Independent
examiner's statement**

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination

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.

** Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.*

Signed:



Date:

08.03.25

Name:

Colin Wood

**Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):**

Member of the Association of Accounting Technicians

Address:

16 Wordsworth Rd

Loughborough

Leics LE11 4LQ

Section B**Disclosure**

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.