

THE ECUMENICAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ST. MARY, WEAVERHAM

England & Wales · Charity number 1135093

Details

Other names	ST. MARY'S, WEAVERHAM
Status	Registered
Legal form	Previously excepted
Registered	2010-03-22
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	Stable Court 20a Leigh Way Weaverham Northwich CW8 3PR
Phone	01606852872
Email	jjcfreeman37@gmail.com
Website	www.stmarysweaverham.org

Activities

Objects: The purpose of the Charity is to advance the Christian faith in the Area of Benefit in accordance with the principles and practices of the Participating Churches. In achieving its purpose, the Charity will engage in a range of activities, either on its own or with others, including (but not restricted to): a) the celebration of public worship; b) the teaching of the Christian faith; c) mission and evangelism; d) pastoral work, including visiting the sick and the bereaved; e) the provision of facilities with a Christian ethos for the local community, including (but not restricted to) the elderly, the young and other groups with special needs; and f) the support of other charities in the UK and overseas.

Activities: To maintain and promote the spiritual teaching of the Church of England and the Methodist Church.

Classification

- **How:** Makes Grants To Organisations, Provides Buildings/facilities/open Space, Provides Services
- **What:** Religious Activities, Human Rights/religious Or Racial Harmony/equality Or Diversity, Other Charitable Purposes
- **Who:** Children/young People, Elderly/old People, People With Disabilities, Other Charities Or Voluntary Bodies, The General Public/mankind

Geography

- **Area of benefit:** UNDEFINED. IN PRACTICE, LOCAL
- Cheshire West & Chester

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2024-12-31	£146,670	£154,187	-	-
2023-12-31	£184,620	£129,392	-	-
2022-12-31	£108,436	£113,157	-	-
2021-12-31	£102,960	£107,086	-	-
2020-12-31	£108,650	£103,427	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Carol Johnson		2020-09-15
Christine Weeks		2022-02-20
Colin Weeks		2016-04-28
David Martin Whitfield		2015-04-26
Gillian Edwards		2016-04-28
Gillian Latham		2020-09-15
JOHN JEREMY COLLIER FREEMAN		
Jerry Marshall		2022-02-20
Jonathan Charles Gore		2022-02-20
Jules Sanders		2015-04-26
Kathryn Burgess		2025-08-11
Linda Jones		2015-04-26
Lindsay Hough		2022-02-20
Louise Parry		2015-04-26
MICHAEL HUBERT SANDERS		
MR MIKE HORNBY		
Marion Vera Wilson		2022-02-20
PAMELA THOMSON		
Rev Janet Aspey		2022-09-12
Rev Paul Martin Withington		2018-11-15
Robert Hough		2022-02-20
Susan Winnington		2017-05-22
Vicky Rushton		2017-04-22

THE ECUMENICAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ST. MARY, WEAVERHAM

England & Wales - Charity number 1135093

Accounts

**Anglican Diocese of Chester – Middlewich Deanery
Mid Cheshire Circuit of the Chester and Stoke-on-Trent District of the Methodist Church**

St Mary's Church, Weaverham



**Annual Report and Financial Statements of the Ecumenical Church Council
for the year ended 31 December 2024**

Incumbent

Reverend Paul Withington, The Vicarage, Church Street, Weaverham, NORTHWICH.
CW8 3NJ

Minister

Reverend Janet Aspey, 38 Earls Way, Kingsmead, Northwich. CW9 8GQ

Secretary

Pam Thomson, 4 Barley Castle Close, Appleton Thorn, WARRINGTON. WA4 4SA

Treasurer

John J C Freeman, Stable Court, 20a Leigh Way, Weaverham, NORTHWICH. CW8 3PR

Banks

Santander, Bridle Road, BOOTLE. L30 4GB
CCLA Investment Management Ltd., POBox 12892, Dunmow, Essex. CM6 9DL

Honorary Independent Examiner

Kevin D Pickering, 5 Withens Close, Weaverham, NORTHWICH. CW8 3JJ

Registered Charity Number: 1135093

**ST. MARY'S CHURCH, WEAVERHAM ANNUAL REPORT FOR
THE ECUMENICAL CHURCH COUNCIL [ECC] FOR THE YEAR ENDED
31st DECEMBER 2024**

St. Mary's Church is situated in Church Street, Weaverham. It is a Local Ecumenical Partnership (LEP) between the parish church of the Church of England in the parish of St Mary in the Middlewich Deanery and Chester Diocese and the Methodist Church within the Mid Cheshire Circuit of the Chester and Stoke-on-Trent District. The partnership looks for support, encouragement, advice and overview to the relevant denominations, the Diocese and the Methodist District. The correspondence address is St Mary's Lighthouse Centre, Church Lane, Weaverham, NORTHWICH, CW8 3NN.

ECC members who have served in the year are: -

<i>Incumbent:</i>	Revd. Paul Withington	Chairman
<i>Methodist Minister:</i>	Revd. Janet Aspey	
<i>Wardens:</i>	Robert Hough Colin Weeks	Elected 2024 ACM
<i>Representatives on the Deanery Synod:</i>	Pam Thomson John Freeman	Secretary Treasurer
	David Whitfield John Freeman	Elected 2023 ACM Elected 2023 ACM 1 vacancy
<i>Methodist Stewards:</i>	David Whitfield Mike Hornby	
<i>Representatives from lay church roles:</i>	Gilly Latham Linda Jones Jules Sanders Mike Sanders	
<i>Elected members:</i>		
Jerry Marshall (<i>elected 2022</i>) Pam Thomson (<i>elected 2022</i>) Gillian Horth (née Edwards <i>re-elected 2023</i>) Lindsay Hough (<i>elected 2024</i>) Christine Weeks (<i>elected 2024</i>) Sue Winnington (<i>re-elected 2023</i>) 11 current members 1 vacancy	Jonathan Gore (<i>re-elected 2024</i>) Mike Hornby (<i>re-elected 2024</i>) Vicky Rushton (<i>re-elected 2024</i>) Denise Mitchell (<i>elected 2024</i>) Sue Cameron (<i>elected 2024</i>)	

Structure, governance and management

The method of appointment of ECC members (trustees) is set out in the Constitution of the Local Ecumenical Partnership signed in November 2009. All Church attendees are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the ECC.

Objectives and activities

St Mary's ECC has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent, the Revd. Paul Withington and Methodist Minister the Revd. Janet Aspey in promoting the whole mission of the Church: pastoral, evangelical, social and ecumenical in the ecclesiastical parish. It also has maintenance responsibilities for the buildings associated with the church.

St Mary's is fully integrated as an LEP between the Anglican and Methodist Churches in Weaverham. We worship at the Anglican Church building with our services varied between Anglican and Methodist styles and leadership.

The vision statement for St Mary's Ecumenical Church, Weaverham is as follows:

St Mary's Church Weaverham, sharing the light and hope of Jesus in our community.

Achievements and performance

Church attendance

The current electoral roll has 128 members. We have a duality of Anglican and Methodist members; members can be either or both. Attendance varied during the year, with an average attendance on a usual Sunday at 84 [76 adults and 8 children].

18 Funerals and 2 weddings were conducted and 3 baptisms took place during the year.

Safeguarding

The safeguarding committee has met in the last 12 months to ensure our Safeguarding Policy remains up to date and complies with the Church of England Requirements, and those of the Methodist Church. As an Ecumenical Church we must follow the policies of one of the denominations and at St Marys we follow the policies of the Church of England. This includes displaying posters which include relevant information and contact details which we do. A copy of our policy is available to anyone who may want to see it. The policy has been approved by the ECC which has complied with the duty imposed under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 (duty to have regard to House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults).

23 members of the parish attended a Basic Awareness safeguarding training course in October 2024.

Review of the year

The ECC met nine times during the year with Standing Committee meetings between when needed. The ACM was held on the 29th April 2024.

Café Church, held in The Lighthouse, has become a regular feature on the first Sunday of the month. This is a more informal service aimed mainly at young families and an average of 75 adults and 12 children attend every month. The service pattern for other services remains the same (average attendance of 76 adults and 7 children), and a "United Service" held on the four Sundays during the year which include a fifth Sunday, (average attendance of 52 adults and 6 children). The Lent Course this year utilised the Home Group meeting times plus an extra session. There is always difficulty finding a time which suits most people. Using existing times did have the advantage that people were available but possibly prevented many discussions which are possible with larger groups. There was a Sunrise Service at Easter, held jointly with The Stronghold Church, which was well supported. The Easter celebration at St Mary's was attended by 129 people with 75 taking Holy Communion.

Harvest was celebrated in October with the harvest gifts donated to the Northwich Foodbank which we continued to support throughout the year. We were back to a normal format for our

Remembrance Day services held in November, with uniformed groups filling the church in the afternoon.

The services at Christmas were very well attended with 397 people attending the Christmas services and 61 taking Holy Communion. The Carol Service was again very well attended with the music being provided by Weaverham Community Choir and a brass ensemble. "Experience Christmas" was repeated in 2024 and it was as successful as it had been the previous year. Children from Weaverham Forest Primary School and Weaverham Primary Academy came to St Mary's during the first week of December to visit different "stations" depicting the Christmas Story. Older students from Weaverham High School came to help. School Carol Services were also held at St Mary's.

John Freeman, our long-standing treasurer was made a Lay Canon of Chester Cathedral for his work on Diocesan and General Synod. John was Instituted by the Bishop and Installed into his seat by the Dean on Sunday 28th July 2024.

The Lighthouse Café on Tuesdays continues to be very well attended by both church members and a significant number of people who don't come to church but find a warm welcome.

The Wednesday food distribution continues in the Lighthouse in partnership with Northwich Community Support.

We supported the community playscheme in the summer holidays providing crafts activities, games and stories.

During the year several faithful members of the congregation died and they will be greatly missed.

ADDENDUM

The following are our church groups and some have submitted reports.

Sticky Fingers - Toddlers group that runs every Monday during term time.

YPF - Young People's Fellowship [YPF] met on Sunday evenings and is aimed at children in school years 7 to 11. Unfortunately this is currently not meeting in 2025.

Home Groups are rightly recognised as an important aspect of St Mary's Church. They are places where fellowship, pastoral care, bible study, and prayer take place in an informal and small group setting. Sadly, the number of groups has dropped from 5 to four during the year, mainly due to health issues. The total membership of remaining groups is 32. Each group has a different flavour and meets at different times, locations, and frequencies, as follows:

Vicky Rushton is nominally the leader of a women-only group which has seven members. They meet on Monday mornings 9:30 – 11am at various locations but most often in Long Meadow. Any member is free to lead a session of bible study, but the dominant flavour is fellowship, pastoral support and prayer.

Jerry Marshall leads a men-only group that meets alternate Thursday evenings, 8 to 9:30pm in Sandy Lane. It has a strong missional flavour with plenty of socials, in addition to bible study and prayer. Of its six members, two do not yet attend church regularly and another is a member of another church.

Stephen Wilson leads a group every Tuesday afternoons from 2:00 to 4:00pm on Green Park. Of its ten members, one attends another church. A distinctive flavour of the group is that members can attend via Zoom – at least two do so regularly (from Watford and even Amsterdam!) It is noteworthy that one member is a regular at our 8:30am HC service. The emphasis is on bible study and application. For much of the year we looked at the lectionary readings of upcoming Sunday services – going deeper and discussing application more than is possible in the context of Sunday worship. We also tackle difficult scriptures or those unvisited in Sunday worship.

Jules Sanders leads a group of nine that meets weekly on a Tuesday evening. They have enjoyed great fellowship with both laughter, tears and plenty of cake. They have studied and wrestled with many questions while engaging with a broad range of scriptures during the year, culminating in the letters of John. Their focus is how they live out their faith in their everyday lives.

All groups use some of the many published bible study guides. We have accumulated quite a range. They are stored on the shelves of two bookcases in the PCSO office in the Lighthouse. All credit and thanks to Jules, our great Administrator, they are catalogued and can be used by anyone – but please sign them out if you do so.

Finally, we believe everyone who attends a home group would say "Amen" to this statement from Jules. "Knowing that you have the support of the group as you go out into the world to live your Christian life can be a great encouragement, whether that's work, family, home or neighbourhood."

The Mothers Union Branch of St Marys has had a fruitful and inspiring year, filled with fellowship, service, and spiritual growth. Guided by our motto, "Family Life at the Heart of the Church," we have continued to support our church community, strengthen families, and engage in outreach activities that reflect our faith and values.

This year, we are grateful to have 8 active members who have faithfully attended our now quarterly meetings. Our gatherings have been a time for prayer, Bible study, and discussion on topics relevant to family life and faith. Our prayer chain has been a cornerstone of our ministry, offering intercessory prayers for families, the church, and the wider community.

Each year, we put together bunches of daffodils for all females to receive at all services on Mothering Sunday. For the second year running, we have arranged a successful library lunch bag collaboration with Weaverham Library in both the Easter and Summer holidays which has been

well received by residents. We organised the teas following the Annual Remembrance Service in Church, an opportunity for fellowship. We supported the Church activities including the steam rally and harvest supper. We have enjoyed visiting other Branches in the deanery for their events and also the deanery festival. Our annual Summer Outing was a canal boat trip – with lots of entertainment! We have supported and promoted the Mothers Union “Away From It All” Holiday scheme. Members visited the sick and elderly in hospitals and care homes, offering comfort and companionship.

We organised our annual Strawberry Tea and also a Rainbow Fair both of which were very successful and have raised funds to help support Mothers Union projects.

We participated in the global Mothers Union Day of Prayer, joining with members worldwide to pray for families and communities. We also contributed to the Mothers Union global projects, such as supporting literacy programs.

While we have faced challenges such as low membership, we have been sustained by God’s grace and the support of our church family. We are especially grateful to Paul, Janet and all the leadership team and all the congregations for your encouragement and assistance.

In the coming year, we aim to:

- Expand our outreach programs to reach more families in need.
- Strengthen our partnerships with other community groups.
- Continue to grow spiritually through prayer, study, and fellowship

The Mothers Union remains committed to serving God, our church, and our community. We are thankful for the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of families and to witness God’s love in action. As we move forward, we ask for your continued prayers and support as we strive to uphold our mission and values.

St Mary’s Choir continue to lead congregational singing at the Sunday 6.30pm evening service, enhancing the worship experience and encouraging the congregation to lift their voices in praise. We sang at Christmas Eve Midnight Communion where the choir presented a moving selection of carols which helped usher in the celebration of Christ’s birth.

We have welcomed 1 new member to the choir this year, enriching our sound and bringing fresh energy to our group, we aspire to return to pre-Covid numbers.

Like many ministries, we faced challenges such as attendance which has sadly impacted on our ability to participate in special services and festivals within the church which we previously would have done. However, these challenges also provided opportunities for growth, teamwork, and reliance on God’s grace.

We have condensed our 2 robe cupboards in the Choir Vestry into 1 to enable the children’s group to utilise it for storage.

We currently are not holding regular choir practises and therefore are unable to learn new anthems. We extend our heartfelt thanks to Margaret, Bob, Henry and Marion who play our magnificent organ each week for their dedication, leadership, and musical expertise. We are grateful to the church leadership and congregation for their ongoing support, encouragement, and prayers. A special thank you to all choir members for their commitment, hard work, and willingness to serve through their gifts.

As we look to the coming year, we are excited to:

- Continue growing musically and spiritually as a choir
- Explore new ways to enhance worship through music.
- Strengthen our outreach efforts to share God’s love through song.
- Encourage more members of the congregation to join our ministry.

Rambling Group - Meets for occasional Saturday morning walks of 3-4 miles.

Upcycling Shed and Crafts - Meets on Thursdays in the Lighthouse Annexe.

Bell Ringing – we have a thriving band of all ages who ring regularly for Sunday services, weddings and other special services and national events. We practice on a Tuesday evening. During 2024 work has been done on our clappers, the clapper hangs inside the bell, swinging back and forth to make it ring. The clappers were removed and taken to the bell foundry in Loughborough to have some work done on them. They were then refitted and will last for many more years. Work was also done on the oak louvres, some were renewed and some repaired and again hopefully, these will last for many more years. Most of the work was done by the ringers with help from Bob Hough and a Little Budworth ringer, thus keeping the costs down.

Fund Raising - The fund raising campaign “Raising the Roof” was started in the last quarter of 2022 to undertake a programme to pay for necessary repairs to the fabric of the building. The work on the roof and stonework has been completed and paid for. Since the start of the project approximately £43,000 has been raised from donations, grants and events and £35,648 has been paid out for the work. We also made donations of approximately £1,000 to the groups and their charities who performed in the concerts which we have hosted. During 2024 we held several concerts in church and the Lighthouse, we had a barn dance, an evening with Adrian Plas and helped with the catering for the History Society’s World War 1 book launch event and they kindly donated the proceeds to the fund. But the highlight of the year was the steam event in September. Thanks to contacts of some of our congregation and the power of social media advertising, several steam engines, a fairground organ and several old vehicles arrived on St Mary’s car park. Inside church, several model railways were set up alongside a giant Scalextric track where children (and grown-ups) could test their driving skills. Not satisfied with all this, the bellringers ran a Teddy Bear Zip Wire challenge from the tower roof. These different attractions together with cakes and refreshments provided by the Mothers Union attracted many villagers to St Mary’s and helped us raise over £1,000.

“Raising the Roof” has now become “Building the Future”. We are still raising money to improve our green credentials by reducing our carbon footprint. This essentially means changing our old gas boiler for a greener alternative for heating.

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE ECUMENICAL CHURCH
COUNCIL OF ST MARY THE VIRGIN, WEAVERHAM**

This report on the accounts for the year ending 31 December 2024 is in respect of an examination carried out in accordance with the Accounting Regulations (the Regulations) and the Charities Act 1993 (the Act) As members of the ECC you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts; you consider that the audit requirements of the Regulations and Section 43(2) of the Act do not apply. It is my responsibility to issue this report on those accounts in accordance with the terms of the Regulations.

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

In accordance with my examination, no matter has come to my attention which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 41 of the Act, to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the Act and the Regulations have not been met; or to which in my opinion attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Kevin D Pickering – Hon Independent Examiner – January 2025

FINANCIAL REVIEW

There was an overall excess of expenditure over income of £7412 due to expenditure on the church roof and pointing. Expenditure was helped by 2 grants, one from the Diocese of Chester for £7000 and the other a conditional grant from the National Churches Trust of £4496. These were part of the “Raise the Roof” campaign which is continuing to raise funds towards making the church carbon neutral.

Looking ahead there is a need to increase our levels of regular giving as costs have followed the general national inflation trends. This will enable us to keep the church in a good state of repair over the coming years.

Energy usage for the year was as follows, 2023 figures in brackets gas Church 82 106 kWh (58 229 kWh) Lighthouse 14 194 kWh (20 563 kWh) and electricity Church 3783 kWh (4027 kWh) Lighthouse 9410 kWh (7183 kWh).

RESERVES POLICY

The policy is to hold at least £25 000 to cover the next three months of normal expenditure and £10 000 in the case of any emergencies. The policy will need reviewing as there is a need to build funds up to achieve carbon neutrality as some funding will be needed towards any projects. There are likely to be some funds available, but we need to determine what will be necessary from our resources.

ACCOUNTING POLICY

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Church of England Accounting Regulations taking into account the SORP 2005 revisions on a receipts and payments basis including as far as possible most Church activities being reported on a gross basis. Movable church furnishings are held on trust for the Council by the Churchwardens and would require faculty approval before removal.

ACCOUNTS FOR THE 12 MONTHS ENDING 31 DECEMBER 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total £	2023 £
RECEIPTS					
Voluntary income	A	117680		117680	146383
Church activities	B	17414		17414	16836
Fund raising		7139		7139	19779
Investment income	C	<u>4437</u>	<u>105</u>	<u>4542</u>	<u>1701</u>
TOTAL		146670	105	146775	184699
PAYMENTS					
Church activities	D	151129		151129	125734
Fund raising		1652		1652	1842
Salaries		<u>1406</u>		<u>1406</u>	<u>1816</u>
TOTAL		154187		154187	129392
NET INCOMING FUNDS		-7517	105	-7412	55307
Gains on investments			<u>46</u>	<u>46</u>	<u>137</u>
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		-7517	151	-7366	55444
BALANCES AT 1 JANUARY		<u>802584</u>	<u>2757</u>	<u>805341</u>	<u>749849</u>
BALANCES AT 31 DECEMBER		795067	2908	797975	805293

BALANCE SHEET AT 31 DECEMBER

FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible asset- Lighthouse		684440		684440	684440
Investment assets			1711	1711	1665
CURRENT ASSETS					
Short term deposits		87641	1196	88837	84316
Cash at banks		<u>22986</u>		<u>22986</u>	<u>34870</u>
TOTAL		795067	2907	797974	805291

The notes A to E form part of the accounts

A Voluntary income					
Gift aid		68109		68109	68801
Tax recovered		25339		25339	40730
Other		7602		7602	6259
Collections		2840		2840	4364
Donations	general	1294		1294	2519
	Curate				410
Grants	Diocese	7000		7000	2300
National Churches Trust		4496		4496	3000
Legacy		<u>1000</u>		<u>1000</u>	<u>18000</u>
		117680		117680	146383
B Church activities					
Lighthouse		12752		12752	9244
Food sales					1233
Fees		<u>4662</u>		<u>4662</u>	<u>6359</u>
		17414		17414	16836

C Income from investments

Deposit account	4417		4417	1602
Wayleave	20		20	20
War Memorial		<u>105</u>	<u>105</u>	<u>79</u>
	<u>4437</u>	105	4542	1701

D Church activities**Giving**

Overseas missions	1100		1100	1000
Overseas development	2500		2500	3000
Home missions	2500		2500	3025

Ministry

Parish share	68169		68169	64923
Circuit fee	5970		5970	5834
Other ministries costs	6857		6857	7051
Curate				3426
Church heat, light and water	6747		6747	5757
Church running and maint.	13819		13819	11723
Lighthouse	11172		11172	7588
Major projects	29803		29803	10206
Training	349		349	
Administration	<u>2143</u>		<u>2143</u>	<u>2201</u>
	151129		151129	125734

During the year the Council employed a verger and relied on casual organists. The organists deal with their own tax liabilities and the payments to the verger are too small to attract social security payments. Reimbursement of out of pocket expenses were made to some members of the Council, all supported by the necessary receipts

E Cash balances at 31 December

Current account	3454		3454	18529
Deposit account	87641		87641	83224
Lighthouse	19532		19532	16341
War Memorial deposit		1196	1196	1092
War Memorial 74 CBF shares		<u>1711</u>	<u>1711</u>	<u>1665</u>
	<u>110627</u>	2907	113534	120851

Approved by the Ecumenical Church Council at its meeting held on 17th February 2025.



Reverend Paul M Withington
Incumbent



Canon John J C Freeman
Hon treasurer

THE ECUMENICAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ST. MARY, WEAVERHAM

England & Wales - Charity number 1135093

Accounts

Anglican Diocese of Chester – Middlewich Deanery
Mid Cheshire Circuit of the Chester and Stoke-on-Trent District of the Methodist Church
St Mary's Church, Weaverham



Annual Report and Financial Statements of the Ecumenical Church Council
for the year ended 31 December 2023

Incumbent

Reverend Paul Withington, The Vicarage, Church Street, Weaverham, NORTHWICH,
 CW8 3NJ

Minister

Reverend Janet Aspey, 38 Earls Way, Kingsmead, Northwich, CW9 8GQ

Secretary

Pam Thomson, 4 Barley Castle Close, Appleton Thorn, WARRINGTON, WA4 4SA

Treasurer

John J C Freeman, Stable Court, 20a Leigh Way, Weaverham, NORTHWICH, CW8 3PR

Banks

Santander, Bridle Road, BOOTLE, L30 4GB
 CCLA Investment Management Ltd., Senator House, 85 Queen Victoria Street, LONDON, EC4V 4ET

Honorary Independent Examiner

Kevin D Pickering, 5 Withens Close, Weaverham, NORTHWICH, CW8 3JJ

Registered Charity Number: 1135093

**ST. MARY'S CHURCH, WEAVERHAM ANNUAL REPORT FOR
THE ECUMENICAL CHURCH COUNCIL [ECC] FOR THE YEAR ENDED
31st DECEMBER 2023**

St. Mary's Church is situated in Church Street, Weaverham. It is a Local Ecumenical Partnership (LEP) between the parish church of the Church of England in the parish of St Mary in the Middlewich Deanery and Chester Diocese and the Methodist Church within the Mid Cheshire Circuit of the Chester and Stoke-on-Trent District. The partnership looks for support, encouragement, advice and overview to the relevant denominations, the Diocese and the Methodist District. The correspondence address is St Mary's Lighthouse Centre, Church Lane, Weaverham, NORTHWICH, CW8 3NN.

ECC members who have served in the year are: -

<i>Incumbent:</i>	Revd. Paul Withington	Chairman
<i>Curate</i> <i>Methodist Minister:</i>	Revd. Phil Bishop Revd. Janet Aspey	To June 2023
<i>Wardens:</i>	Vicky Rushton Colin Weeks	
<i>Representatives on the Deanery Synod:</i>	Pam Thomson John Freeman David Whitfield John Freeman	Secretary Treasurer Elected 2023 ACM Elected 2023 ACM 1 vacancy
<i>Methodist Stewards:</i>	David Whitfield Mike Hornby	
<i>Representatives from lay church roles:</i>	Gilly Latham Linda Jones Jules Sanders Mike Sanders	
<i>Elected members:</i>		
Gillian Horth (né Edwards re-elected 2023) Jonathan Gore (elected 2021) Mike Hornby (elected 2021) Sue Winnington (re-elected 2023) Jerry Marshall (elected 2022) 9 current members 3 vacancies	Marion Wilson (elected 2022 resigned Sept 2023) Pam Thomson (elected 2022) Bob Hough (co-opted 2023) Lindsay Hough (co-opted 2023) Christine Weeks (co-opted 2023)	

Structure, governance and management

The method of appointment of ECC members (trustees) is set out in the Constitution of the Local Ecumenical Partnership signed in November 2009. All Church attendees are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the ECC.

Objectives and activities

St Mary's ECC has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent, the Revd. Paul Withington and Methodist Minister the Revd. Janet Aspey in promoting the whole mission of the Church: pastoral, evangelical, social and ecumenical in the ecclesiastical parish. It also has maintenance responsibilities for the buildings associated with the church.

St Mary's is fully integrated as an LEP between the Anglican and Methodist Churches in Weaverham. We worship at the Anglican Church building with our services varied between Anglican and Methodist styles and leadership.

The vision statement for St Mary's Ecumenical Church, Weaverham is as follows:

St Mary's Church Weaverham, sharing the light and hope of Jesus with our community.

Achievements and performance

Church attendance

The current electoral roll has 128 members. We have a duality of Anglican and Methodist members; members can be either or both. Attendance varied during the year, with an average attendance on a usual Sunday at 87 [79 adults and 8 children].

25 Funerals and 4 weddings were conducted and 10 baptisms took place during the year.

Safeguarding

The safeguarding committee has met in the last 12 months to ensure our Safeguarding Policy remains up to date and complies with the Church of England Requirements, and those of the Methodist Church. As an Ecumenical Church we must follow the policies of one of the denominations and at St Marys we follow the policies of the Church of England. This includes displaying posters which include relevant information and contact details which we do. A copy of our policy is available to anyone who may want to see it. The policy has been approved by the ECC which has complied with the duty imposed under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 (duty to have regard to House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults).

Review of the year

The ECC met eight times during the year with Standing Committee meetings between when needed. The ACM was held on the 13th February 2023.

2023 saw the continuation of Café Church, held in The Lighthouse on the first Sunday of the month. This is a more informal service aimed mainly at young families and has been successful. The service pattern for other services remains the same with a "United Service" held whenever there was a fifth Sunday.

The Lent Course was initially well supported but attendance dropped off as the weeks progressed so for 2024 it was decided to run multiple courses at different times and locations in the hope of encouraging more people. At Easter we joined with The Stronghold Church who organised an outreach event called "EasterFest" which attracted many people.

The coronation of King Charles III took place in May. St Mary's joined with the other village churches in a special service at the Community Centre to celebrate the event.

In June we said goodbye to Rev Phil Bishop as he became Vicar of Burley in Wharfedale. A coach party from Weaverham travelled to Yorkshire on a very wet Sunday in July but we were met with a warm welcome at Phil's Installation Service, we wish him well in his new ministry.

Harvest was celebrated in October with the harvest gifts donated to the Northwich Foodbank which we continued to support throughout the year. We also enjoyed a Harvest Supper provided by The Mother's Union. We were back to a normal format for our Remembrance Day services held in November, with uniformed groups filling the church in the afternoon.

The services at Christmas were very well attended with an increase in numbers compared to 2022 at almost all services. A new event this year was "Experience Christmas". Children from Weaverham Forest Primary School and Weaverham Primary Academy came to St Mary's during the first week of December to visit different "stations" depicting the Christmas Story, complete with props and volunteers to provide help and explanations. Older students from Weaverham High School came to help and the whole event was very successful and hopefully it will be repeated in 2024. School Carol Services were also held at St Mary's.

Baptism preparation/enquirers' courses - Initial requests come through the church office or from the vicar and contact is made with the parents to arrange the preparation sessions, eligibility etc. Café Church enables personal contact to be made. The enquirers' courses have proved to be more effective on Zoom as parents do not need to leave home on a weekday evening or find a babysitter/childcare. Alpha course material has been used and it has been found to be engaging and accessible for all. Attendance was good, six weeks with two short sessions per week was better than one long session per week. The families are still in regular attendance at Café Church.

The Lighthouse Café on Tuesdays continues to be very well attended by both church members and a significant number of people who don't come to church but find a warm welcome.

The Wednesday food distribution continues in the Lighthouse in partnership with Northwich Community Support.

The following groups have all continued to thrive during 2023.

Sticky Fingers - Toddlers group that runs every Monday during term time.

YPF - Young People's Fellowship [YPF] meets on Sunday evenings and is aimed at children in school years 7 to 11.

Home Groups - We have a good number of Home Groups who meet around the village on different days, times and places.

Rambling Group - Meets for occasional Saturday morning walks of 3-4 miles.

Upcycling Shed and Crafts - Meets on Thursdays in the Lighthouse Annexe.

Mothers' Union - Meet every second Thursday of the month in the Lighthouse

Men's Breakfasts – 8.00am on occasional Saturday mornings – Full English and a speaker on a variety of topics.

Bell Ringing – we have a thriving band of all ages who ring regularly for Sunday services, weddings and other special services and national events. We practice on a Tuesday evening.

We supported the community playscheme in the summer holidays providing crafts activities, games and stories.

During the year several faithful members of the congregation died and they will be greatly missed.

Fund Raising

Urgent work needed to repair part of the roof and some of the pointing was reported last year. When the work began we anticipated the following costs-

Roofing £13,000: the roof work consists of lead weathering to copings and sills, parapet gutters, refix loose flashings and patch repairs to the tower roof.

Pointing £15,000: pointing is needed to large areas of the external wall.

Contingency £2,000: estimates and prices only ever go up! We need to allow for inevitable extra work and overruns. **TOTAL: £30,000**

The fund-raising activities began in earnest in 2023 with a launch concert in May featuring the Weaverham Community Choir and Cheshire Music for Life Jazz Band and it was a great success. Several other successful and enjoyable concerts have taken place in church and more are planned. Other events included a "Promise Auction" and the highlight of the year was the abseil down the tower. 57 people completed the abseil and £4,500 was raised in that one event on a wonderfully sunny day in September. During the year we have raised almost £18,000. On top of this we have received grants from the Garfield Weston Foundation of £3,000 and the Benefact Trust of £2,300. The work repairing the roof has now been completed but unfortunately more damage to some of the timbers was found and had to be included in the repair. We will continue fund raising to meet these extra costs and the forthcoming pointing work, which hopefully will be completed in 2024. Support has come from the village and beyond as well as St Mary's congregation and we are very grateful for this. We still have more work to do, so thank you to everybody who has contributed so far and we look forward to raising more funds to keep the building in good order for the future.

Finally

We have come through the pandemic and are making a good recovery with increased numbers at some services and more social events and with the help of God we look forward with hope and optimism to the next year.

INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS'S REPORT TO THE ECUMENICAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF SAINT MARY THE VIRGIN, WEAVERHAM

This report on the accounts of the ECC for the year ended 31 December 2023 is in respect of an examination carried out in accordance with the Church of England Accounting Regulations 2006 (the Regulations) and Section 3 of the Charities Act 1993 (the Act). As members of the ECC you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts; you consider that the audit requirements of the Regulations and Section 43(2) of the Act do not apply. It is my responsibility to issue this report on those accounts in accordance with the terms of the Regulations.

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

In accordance with my examination, no matter has come to my attention which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 41 of the Act, to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the requirement of the Act and the Regulations have not been met; or to which, in my opinion attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Kevin D Pickering – Hon Independent Examiner – February 2024

FINANCIAL REVIEW

There was an overall excess of income over expenditure of £55 307 helped by catching up with our Gift Aid claims, a kind bequest of £18 000 and the Raise the Roof Appeal. The latter has received 2 grants, one from the Benefact Trust of £2300 and the other from the Garfield Weston Trust of £3000. Our modest investment made a gain of £137.

There was a welcome increase in tax efficient giving. The Lighthouse again made an operating surplus on the year as activities continue to increase. The fund raising group has become the “Raise the Roof Appeal” so far apart from grants raised £19 779. Unfortunately, as work has started on roof repairs more work has been found necessary costing a further £8000, raising the original target to over £30 000. Work on roof repairs to date has cost £9721.

Energy usage for the year was as follows, 2022 figures in brackets. gas, church 58 229 kWh (77 580 kWh), Lighthouse 20 563 kWh (14 997 kWh) and electricity, church 4027 kWh (3852 kWh), Lighthouse 7138 kWh (7284 kWh).

RESERVES POLICY

Reserves policy remains to hold at least £25 000 to cover three months of normal church activities and £10 000 against any urgent repairs. The potential VAT liability is now time expired. Given the large amount of repair work to the Church following the last quinquennial report that is being helped by the Raise the Roof Appeal it is planned to review the policy on completion of the repair work and upgrades to the sound systems in the Church and the Lighthouse.

Looking ahead the need to increase income including voluntary giving, encouraging legacies and supporting the Raise the Roof Appeal are ever with us. Keeping the Church in a good state of repair remains a priority, it has been agreed to increase charitable giving and our 4 energy contracts all come to the end of their 3 year terms during the year and are likely to increase.

ACCOUNTING POLICY

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Church of England Accounting Regulations taking into account the SORP 2005 revisions on a receipts and payments basis including as far as possible most Church activities being reported on a gross basis. Movable church furnishings are held on trust for the Council by the Churchwardens and would require faculty approval before removal. The Mothers Union accounts are not included as they respond to their headquarters for accounting purposes.

ACCOUNTS FOR THE 12 MONTHS ENDING 31 DECEMBER 2023

	Notes	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	2022
		£	£	£	£
RECEIPTS					
Voluntary income	A	146383		146383	93248
Church activities	B	16836		16836	14509
Fund raising		19779		19779	
Income from investments	C	<u>1622</u>	<u>79</u>	<u>1701</u>	<u>679</u>
TOTAL		184620	79	184699	108436
PAYMENTS					
Church activities	D	125734		125734	111982
Fund raising		1842		1842	
Salaries		<u>1816</u>		<u>1816</u>	<u>1175</u>
TOTAL		129392		129392	113157
NET INCOMING RES.		55228	79	55307	-4721
Gain on investments		<u> </u>	<u>137</u>	<u>137</u>	<u>-202</u>
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		55228	216	55444	-4923
BALANCES AT 1 JANUARY		<u>747308</u>	<u>2541</u>	<u>749849</u>	<u>754772</u>
BALANCES AT 31 DEC		802536	2757	805293	749849

BALANCE SHEET 31 DECEMBER 2023

FIXED ASSETS

Tangible asset – Lighthouse		684440		684440	684440
Investment assets			1665	1665	1529

CURRENT ASSETS

Short term deposits	E	83224	1092	83224	45635
Cash at banks	E	<u>34870</u>	<u> </u>	<u>34870</u>	<u>18245</u>
TOTAL		802534	2757	805291	749849

The notes A to F form part of the accounts

A Voluntary income

Planned giving					
Gift aid		68801		68801	66562
Tax recovered		40730		40730	
Other		6259		6259	5247
Collections		4364		4364	3780
Donations	general	2519		2519	7443
	Curate	410		410	3160
Grants	Benefact Trust	2300		2300	300
	Garfield Weston	3000		3000	1089
Legacy		<u>18000</u>		<u>18000</u>	<u>5667</u>
		146383		146383	93248

B Church activities

Lighthouse		9244		9244	6377
Food sales		1233		1233	1409
Fees		<u>6359</u>		<u>6359</u>	<u>6723</u>
		16836		16836	14509

C Income from investments	£	£	£	£
Deposit account	1602		1602	601
Wayleave	20		20	20
War Memorial		<u>79</u>	<u>79</u>	<u>58</u>
	1622	79	1701	679
D Church activities				
Giving				
Overseas missions	1000		1000	1000
Overseas development	3000		3000	2000
Home missions	3025		3025	2025
Ministry				
Parish share	64923		64923	62991
Circuit fee	5834		5834	5738
Other ministry costs	7051		7051	6082
Curate	3426		3426	5962
Church heat, light and water	5757		5757	7310
Church running and maint.	11723		11723	10505
Training				353
Lighthouse	7588		7588	5747
Major projects	10206		10206	
Administration	<u>2201</u>		<u>2201</u>	<u>2269</u>
	125734		125734	111982

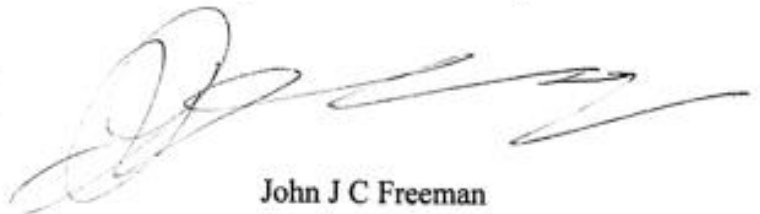
During the year the ECC employed a verger and relied on casual organists. The organists deal with their own tax liabilities and payments to the verger are too small to attract social security payments. Reimbursement of out of pocket expenses were made to some members of the ECC, all supported by the necessary invoices.

E Cash balances at 31 December				
Current account	18529		18529	6153
Deposit account	83224		83224	44622
Lighthouse	16341		16341	12092
War Memorial deposit		1092	1092	1013
War Memorial 74 CBF shares		<u>1665</u>	<u>1665</u>	<u>1529</u>
	118094	2757	120851	65409

Approved by the Ecumenical Church Council at its meeting held on 12th February 2024



Reverend Paul Withington
Incumbent



John J C Freeman
Hon treasurer

THE ECUMENICAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ST. MARY, WEAVERHAM

England & Wales - Charity number 1135093

Accounts

Anglican Diocese of Chester – Middlewich Deanery
Mid Cheshire Circuit of the Chester and Stoke-on-Trent District of the Methodist Church

St Mary's Church, Weaverham



CHARITY COMMISSION
FIRST CONTACT

27 APR 2023

ACCOUNTS
RECEIVED

**Annual Report and Financial Statements of the Ecumenical Church Council
for the year ended 31 December 2022**

Incumbent

Reverend Paul Withington, The Vicarage, Church Street, Weaverham, NORTHWICH,
CW8 3NJ

Minister

Reverend Chris Pritchard 38 Earls Way, Kingsmead, Northwich, CW9 8GQ
Reverend Janet Aspey, [as above]

Curate

Reverend Phil Bishop, 272 Chester Road, Hartford, Northwich CW8 1QW

Secretary

Jules Sanders, 2 Valley Road, Weaverham, NORTHWICH, CW8 3PP

Treasurer

John J C Freeman, Stable Court, 20a Leigh Way, Weaverham, NORTHWICH, CW8 3PR

Banks

Santander, Bridle Road, BOOTLE, L30 4GB
CCLA Investment Management Ltd., Senator House, 85 Queen Victoria Street, LONDON, EC4V 4ET

Honorary Independent Examiner

Kevin D Pickering, 5 Withens Close, Weaverham, NORTHWICH, CW8 3JJ

Registered Charity Number: 1135093

**ST. MARY'S CHURCH, WEAVERHAM ANNUAL REPORT FOR
THE ECUMENICAL CHURCH COUNCIL [ECC] FOR THE YEAR ENDED
31st DECEMBER 2022**

St. Mary's Church is situated in Church Street, Weaverham. It is a Local Ecumenical Partnership (LEP) between the parish church of the Church of England in the parish of St Mary in the Middlewich Deanery and Chester Diocese and the Methodist Church within the Mid Cheshire Circuit of the Chester and Stoke-on-Trent District. The partnership looks for support, encouragement, advice and overview to the relevant denominations, the Diocese and the Methodist District. The correspondence address is St Mary's Lighthouse Centre, Church Lane, Weaverham, NORTHWICH, CW8 3NN.

ECC members who have served in the year are: -

<i>Incumbent:</i>	Revd. Paul Withington	Chairman
<i>Curate</i>	Revd. Phil Bishop	
<i>Methodist Minister:</i>	Revd. Chris Pritchard	To July 2022
	Revd. Janet Aspey	from September 2022
<i>Wardens:</i>	Vicky Rushton	
	Colin Weeks	
<i>Representatives on the Deanery Synod: elected 2020</i>	John Freeman	Treasurer
	David Whitfield	
	Gillian Edwards	from APCM
<i>Methodist Stewards:</i>	David Whitfield	
	Mike Hornby	
<i>Representatives from lay church roles:</i>	Gilly Latham	
	Linda Jones	
	Jules Sanders	Secretary
	Mike Sanders	
<i>Elected members:</i>		
Carol Johnson – (elected 2020)	Mike Hornby – (elected 2021)	
Chris Hornby – (elected 2022)	Sue Winnington – (elected 2020)	
Gillian Edwards (elected 2020)	Jerry Marshall – (elected 2022)	
Jonathan Gore (elected 2021 from APCM)	Marion Wilson (elected 2022)	
William Travis (elected 2021 from APCM) Deceased 14 th May 22	Pam Thomson (elected 2022)	

Structure, governance and management

The method of appointment of ECC members (trustees) is set out in the Constitution of the Local Ecumenical Partnership signed in November 2009. All Church attendees are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the ECC.

Objectives and activities

St Mary's ECC has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent, the Revd. Paul Withington and Methodist Minister the Revd. Janet Aspey in promoting the whole mission of the Church: pastoral, evangelical, social and ecumenical in the ecclesiastical parish. It also has maintenance responsibilities for the buildings associated with the church.

St Mary's is fully integrated as an LEP between the Anglican and Methodist Churches in Weaverham. We worship at the Anglican Church building with our services varied between Anglican and Methodist styles and leadership.

The vision statement for St Mary's Ecumenical Church, Weaverham is as follows:

St Mary's Church Weaverham, sharing the light and hope of Jesus with our community.

Achievements and performance

Church attendance

The current electoral role has 132 members. We have a duality of Anglican and Methodist members; members can be either or both. Attendance varied during the year.

Funerals 35

Baptisms 7

Weddings 4

Review of the year

The ECC met eight times during the year with Standing Committee meetings between when needed. The ACM was held on the 29th March 2022

The New Year started with some Covid restrictions still in place. All Covid restrictions were finally lifted in May but we continued to take precautions eg. in the distribution of Holy Communion.

The church started a review of all its activities to help us make a new start after the last two years disruption. This took the form of a process known as the 7 Marks of a Healthy Church, which in fact is still ongoing. This process aims to give the church new priorities for the future with every member getting the opportunity to contribute. One of the outcomes was a look at improving our welcome and facilities for children in the service at 10.30.

The Lent course this year was called Talking Jesus and was well attended.

Another outcome of the church review was the start of Café Church on the first Sunday of the month at 10.15am in the Lighthouse. This consists of much less formal approach including drinks and breakfast food before and during the service. This new service started in July and has been a great success which will be reviewed in January.

The Lighthouse Café on Tuesdays continues to be very well attended by both church members and a significant number of people who don't come to church but find a warm welcome.

The Queens Jubilee celebrations included a combined churches service which would have been on Lakehouse Field in the centre of the village but had to be moved into the Community Centre due to bad weather. The church was opened for tours with queues for tower tours, and stalls on Lakehouse Field supporting the dog show and family fun day. This also deepened our ecumenical links – prayer walking and working with both St Bede's and the Stronghold during the year, including supporting the Rose Fete.

The Revd Chris Pritchard left us in July for a new post and was replaced by the Revd Janet Aspey who arrived in September.

The Wednesday food distribution continues in the Lighthouse in partnership with Northwich Community Support

During the year various church activities have returned and these are summarised as follows:-

Sticky Fingers - Toddlers group that runs every Monday during term time.

YPF - Young People's Fellowship (YPF) meets on Sunday evenings and is aimed at children in school years 7 to 11.

Home Groups - We have a good number of Home Groups who meet around the village on different days, times and places.

Rambling Group - Meets for occasional Saturday morning walks of 3-4 miles.

Upcycling Shed - Meets on Thursdays in the Lighthouse Annexe.

Mothers' Union - Meet every second Thursday of the month in the Lighthouse

Men's Breakfasts - 8.00am on occasional Saturday mornings - Full English and a speaker on a variety of topics.

Bell Ringing - Ring regularly for most Sunday services, weddings and other special services and national events.

We ran 3 courses for Baptism preparation/enquirers' courses during the year: 2 x Start and 1 x Alpha both on Zoom and in person.

At Easter we offered a combination of reflective, formal and innovative services and interactive prayer stations.

We supported the community playscheme in the summer holidays providing crafts activities, games and stories.

The church also holds various social activities for church members and the wider community.

Active
The ECC formed an ECO team to look at ways of making the church and its congregation more aware of and to take action work towards the goal of being carbon neutral. Having made changes in the operation of the church we achieved a Bronze Standard Award from A Rocha [which provides a framework to support to churches and its leadership to take practical action on caring for God's earth]. During December a specialist Energy Survey was carried out and we await the report which should inform our future decisions and actions.

Following the Quinquennial Inspection in June 2021 there are two problems that need addressing with some urgency, part of the roof and some of the pointing. The church needs to raise additional funds for this purpose and the ECC have formed a small Fundraising Group for this purpose.

Harvest was celebrated in October and there was a with a Service of Light held at the end of the month for which Bishop Julie joined us.

We were back to a normal format for our Remembrance Day services was held in November. with uniformed groups filling the church in the afternoon.

Various Christmas services were held from the start of Advent. Christmas without a Loved One was well attended as was the Carol Service with a Brass group consisting of local students and their tutors. Sticky Fingers held their Nativity before they finished for the holidays, and Simply Nativity was held on Christmas Eve afternoon. Lots of local people came to this. Midnight Communion was followed by Family Worship on Christmas Day. We have renewed links with local schools so that

FINANCIAL REVIEW

There was an overall excess of expenditure of £4721 and an investment loss of £202 that were exasperated by us being behind with our gift aid repayments otherwise a surplus would have been made on the year. Work progresses with catching up with our gift aid claim. There was a welcome increase in pledged giving at the year end, however most of it was one off gifts. We received donations of £6000 towards PA improvements in the Church and Lighthouse of which around half remains to be spent. We received 2 grants during the year of £300 for the Queen's Jubilee book and the other from the Diocese of £1089 towards heating costs. The Lighthouse produced an operating surplus on the year, the first since the Covid epidemic as activities increased. The Men's Society ceased operating during the year and its modest remaining funds were donated to the Church. It has been succeeded by periodic Men's Saturday morning breakfasts.

Looking ahead a Fund Raising group has been set up with the aim of increasing usage of the Church and Lighthouse to produce a new income generating stream. None the less giving from our existing congregation and users still need to carry on increasing. Our energy contracts are not due for renewal until 2024. It is likely there will be a significant increase going forward.

Energy usage for the year was as follows, 2021 figures in brackets. Gas, church 77 580 kWh (81 136), Lighthouse 14 997 kWh (14 315 kWh) and electricity, church 3852 kWh (3631 kWh), Lighthouse 7284 kWh (3703 kWh). An energy survey of the Church was carried out in December with the results expected in early 2023.

RESERVES POLICY

Reserves policy remains to hold at least £25 000 to cover three months of normal church activities and £10 000 against any urgent repairs. They are currently above this as some money is held against the Lighthouse Annexe project completion and a possible VAT liability of £29 677. They are currently below plan but should recover on receipt of gift aid repayment.

ACCOUNTING POLICY

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Church of England Accounting Regulations taking into account the SORP 2005 revisions on a receipts and payments basis including as far as possible most Church activities being reported on a gross basis. Movable church furnishings are held on trust for the Council by the Churchwardens and would require faculty approval before removal. The Mothers Union accounts are not included as they respond to their headquarters for accounting purposes.

there were 2 x Weaverham High School Christmas Services and 1 x Forest School Nativity plus visits to church or assemblies with Weaverham Academy, Russet and Forest schools

The Children's Space at the back of church is growing in popularity.

During the year several faithful members of the congregation died and they will be greatly missed.


As a church we look forward in the new year to new beginnings led by God, as we come out of the last year that has seen a slow, but steady recovery from the pandemic.

INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS'S REPORT TO THE ECUMENICAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF SAINT MARY THE VIRGIN, WEAVERHAM

This report on the accounts of the ECC for the year ended 31 December 2022 is in respect of an examination carried out in accordance with the Church of England Accounting Regulations 2006 (the Regulations) and Section 3 of the Charities Act 1993, (the Act). As members of the ECC you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts; you consider that the audit requirements of the Regulations and Section 43(2) of the Act do not apply. It is my responsibility to issue this report on those accounts in accordance with the terms of the Regulations.

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

In accordance with my examination, no matter has come to my attention which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 41 of the Act, to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the requirement of the Act and the Regulations have not been met; or to which, in my opinion attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Kevin D Pickering – Hon Independent Examiner – January 2023

ACCOUNTS FOR THE 12 MONTHS ENDING 31 DECEMBER 2022

	Notes	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total £	2021 £
RECEIPTS					
Voluntary income	A	93248		93248	94148
Church activities	B	14509		14509	8732
Fund raising					
Income from investments	C	621	58	679	80
TOTAL		108378	58	108436	102960
PAYMENTS					
Church activities	D	111982		111982	105006
Fund raising					
Salaries		1175		1175	2080
TOTAL		113157		113157	107086
NET INCOMING RES.		-4779	58	-4721	-4126
Losses on investments			-202	-202	217
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		-4779	-144	-4923	-3909
BALANCES AT 1 JANUARY		752087	2685	754772	758681
BALANCES AT 31 DEC		747308	2541	749849	754772

BALANCE SHEET 31 DECEMBER 2022

FIXED ASSETS

Tangible asset – Lighthouse	684440	684440	684440
Investment assets		1529	1529
			1731

CURRENT ASSETS

Short term deposits	E 44622	1013	45635	52976
Cash at banks	E 18245		18245	15625
TOTAL	747307	2542	749849	754772

The notes A to F form part of the accounts

A Voluntary income

Planned giving

Gift aid		66562	66562	63295
Tax recovered				14363
Other		5247	5247	6365
Collections		3780	3780	1771
Donations	general	7443	7443	2054
	Curate	3160	3160	4300
Grants	Jubilee book	300	300	
	Fuel	1089	1089	
Legacy		5667	5667	2000
		93248	93248	94148

B Church activities

Lighthouse		6377	6377	2267
Food sales		1409	1409	785
Fees		6723	6723	5680
		14509	14509	8732

C Income from investments	£	£	£	£
Deposit account	601		601	27
Wayleave	20		20	20
War Memorial	<u> </u>	<u>58</u>	<u>58</u>	<u>33</u>
	621	58	679	80
D Church activities				
Giving				
Overseas missions	1000		1000	1000
Overseas development	2000		2000	3000
Home missions	2025		2025	2025
Ministry				
Parish share	62991		62991	61653
Circuit fee	5738		5738	4340
Other ministry costs	6082		6082	5663
Curate	5962		5962	4850
Church heat, light and water	7310		7310	3702
Church running and maint.	10505		10505	11001
Training	353		353	470
Lighthouse	5747		5747	4618
Food				14
Administration	<u>2269</u>		<u>2269</u>	<u>2670</u>
	111982		111982	105006

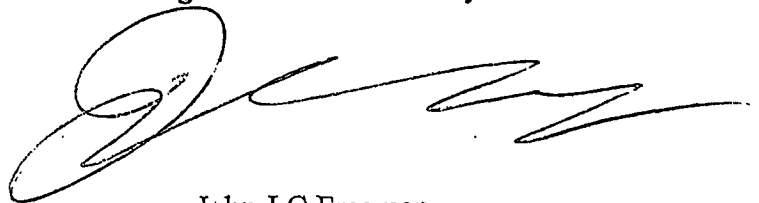
During the year the ECC employed a verger and relied on casual organists. The organists deal with their own tax liabilities and payments to the verger are too small to attract social security payments. Reimbursement of out of pocket expenses were made to some members of the ECC, all supported by the necessary invoices.

E Cash balances at 31 December

Current account	6153		6153	6439
Deposit account	44622		44622	52022
Lighthouse	12092		12092	9186
War Memorial deposit		1013	1013	954
War Memorial 74 CBF shares	<u> </u>	<u>1529</u>	<u>1529</u>	<u>1731</u>
	62867	2542	65409	70332

Approved by the Ecumenical Church Council at its meeting held on 20th February 2023

Reverend Paul Withington
Incumbent

John J C Freeman
Hon treasurer

THE ECUMENICAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ST. MARY, WEAVERHAM

England & Wales - Charity number 1135093

Accounts

**Anglican Diocese of Chester – Middlewich Deanery
Mid Cheshire Circuit of the Chester and Stoke-on-Trent District of the Methodist Church**

St Mary's Church, Weaverham



**Annual Report and Financial Statements of the Ecumenical Church Council
for the year ended 31 December 2021**

Incumbent

Reverend Paul Withington, The Vicarage, Church Street, Weaverham, NORTHWICH,
CW8 3NJ

Minister

Reverend Chris Pritchard, 36 Earls Way, Kingsmead, NORTHWICH, CW9 8GQ

Secretary

Jules Sanders, 2 Valley Road, Weaverham, NORTHWICH, CW8 3PP

Treasurer

John J C Freeman, Stable Court, 20a Leigh Way, Weaverham, NORTHWICH, CW8 3PR

Banks

Santander, Bridle Road, BOOTLE, L30 4GB

CCLA Investment Management Ltd., Senator House, 85 Queen Victoria Street, LONDON, EC4V 4ET

Honorary Independent Examiner

Kevin D Pickering, 5 Withens Close, Weaverham, NORTHWICH, CW8 3JJ

Registered Charity Number: 1135093

**ST. MARY'S CHURCH, WEAVERHAM ANNUAL REPORT FOR
THE ECUMENICAL CHURCH COUNCIL FOR THE YEAR ENDED
31st DECEMBER 2021**

St. Mary's Church is situated in Church Street, Weaverham. It is a Local Ecumenical Partnership (LEP) between the parish church of the Church of England in the parish of St Mary in the Middlewich Deanery and Chester Diocese and the Methodist Church within the Mid Cheshire Circuit of the Chester and Stoke-on-Trent District. The partnership looks for support, encouragement, advice and overview to the relevant denominations, the Diocese and the Methodist District. The correspondence address is St Mary's Lighthouse Centre, Church Lane, Weaverham, NORTHWICH, CW8 3NN.

ECC members who have served in the year are: -

<i>Incumbent:</i>	Revd. Paul Withington	Chairman
<i>Curate</i>	Revd. Phil Bishop	
<i>Methodist Minister:</i>	Revd. Chris Pritchard	
<i>Wardens:</i>	Vicky Rushton Colin Weeks	
<i>Representatives on the Deanery Synod:</i>	John Freeman David Whitfield Gillian Edwards Peter Wilkinson	Treasurer from APCM ex officio
<i>Methodist Stewards:</i>	David Whitfield Mike Hornby	
<i>Representatives from lay church roles:</i>	Gilly Latham Linda Jones Jules Sanders Mike Sanders	Secretary
<i>Elected members:</i>		
Carol Johnson – (elected 2020)	Yvonne Williams- (elected 2018 to APCM)	
Chris Hornby – (elected 2019)	Louise Parry (elected 2018 to APCM)	
Gillian Edwards (elected 2020)	Mike Hornby – (elected 2018)	
Jonathan Gore (elected 2021 from APCM)	Robert Owens – (elected 2019)	
William Travis (elected 2021 from APCM)	Sue Winnington – (elected 2020)	
Marion Wilson (elected 2021 from APCM)		

Structure, governance and management

The method of appointment of ECC members (trustees) is set out in the Constitution of the Local Ecumenical Partnership signed in November 2009. All Church attendees are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the ECC.

Objectives and activities

St Mary's ECC has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent, the Revd. Paul Withington and Methodist Minister the Revd. Chris Pritchard in promoting the whole mission of the Church: pastoral, evangelical, social and ecumenical in the ecclesiastical parish. It also has maintenance responsibilities for the buildings associated with the church.

St Mary's is fully integrated as an LEP between the Anglican and Methodist Churches in Weaverham. We worship at the Anglican Church building with our services varied between Anglican and Methodist styles and leadership.

The vision statement for St Mary's Ecumenical Church, Weaverham is as follows:

St Mary's Church Weaverham, sharing the light and hope of Jesus with our community.

Achievements and performance

Church attendance

The current electoral roll has 138 members. We have a duality of Anglican and Methodist members; members can be either or both. Attendance varied during the year starting as normal then falling to zero during some lockdown periods and about 74 when the Church was able to open for services, rising to 90 by the end of the year.

Review of the year

The year started off with a national lock-down after we had held just one service. While we were unable to meet in the church building, our worship continued with 35-40 attending the Sunday Zoom Service through the lockdown at the start of the year, and that the "At Home" service was delivered weekly to around 150 people by hand or email.

We returned in stages from the end of March with full restrictions in place. Using every other row and two metre spacing we returned always using face masks. Services continued to be available on zoom for some time.

Funerals had continued with restricted numbers and full covid clean afterwards. There were 3 baptism preparation courses and 5 children were baptised.

Family activities continued on zoom and by Good Friday we started limited activities outside. By Harvest we were able to have a picnic following the service and by Christmas Eve the Simply Nativity was well attended.

The Ecumenical Church Council met 9 times during the year, three times on zoom during the lock-down. The Annual Church meeting was held on the 11th May.

During the shut-down the church continued to be active. The church was open for individual prayer on Wednesday mornings.

Food distribution continued with numbers of people helped steadily rising.

Though we were unable to celebrate Easter in church a trail of reflective activities was created outside called Explore Easter. The trail was enjoyed by some of the many people who regularly walk through the churchyard.

Sticky Fingers was able to reopen in May with restrictions which by September were lifted completely. The average attendance is now 12-15 little ones each week with mums, grannies, aunties, and a couple of dads.

In June the Architects Quinquennial Inspection was carried out which confirms that the church building does not have any serious defects but need some maintenance work.

We were asked to help at the Community Centre Summer Holiday Club for which we provided a range of activities. The leaders of the holiday club were once again very grateful for our support and we pray it was helpful for building St. Mary's relationship with the community and sowing seeds of faith.

Curate Phil was ordained at Chester cathedral on the 19th June. Also, in June the 65th and last issue of the Weekly Newsletter was published that had been a continuous source of information and comfort to over 140 people during this period of covid.

In July we held a service to mark the 100th anniversary of the War Memorial after it had been cleaned by volunteers.

Caroline Bishop was licensed to the parish as a Lay Pioneer in a service at Chester Cathedral.

The Lighthouse is slowly beginning to be used by the community after the lock downs forced its closure.

During October the church formed an eco-team to look at all aspect of the church and Lighthouse to try and meet the targets of being a registered eco church. The Church of England's General Synod has set targets for all parts of the church to work to become carbon 'net zero' by 2030.

There was a welcome start of a new venture in November with the opening of the Lighthouse Café which is aimed at the community and has been successful from the start.

The Remembrance service was held on the 14th November.

A range of Christmas services was held but with restrictions still in place attendance was lower than expected.

As a church we look forward in the new year to new beginnings led by God, as we come out of the last year that has once again been dominated by Covid.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The continuing Covid pandemic is still reducing activities in Church and at the Lighthouse with the result that there was an excess of expenditure over income of £4159 partly offset investment income of £250. Giving qualifying for Gift Aid made a welcome increase. Trouble with the heating system in Church led to greater expenditure than planned otherwise most items came close to budget. The overspend was somewhat ameliorated by the heating engineer not charging for his labour costs.

Looking ahead there remains a need to increase people attending and using the Lighthouse. We are again anticipating an overspend in the coming year as a number of essential items are expected to increase in price in the coming year.

Energy usage for the year was as follows, 2020 figures in brackets. Gas, church 81 136 kWh (74 697), Lighthouse 14 315 kWh (10 863 kWh) and electricity, church 3631 kWh (3203 kWh), Lighthouse 3703 kWh (4070 kWh). Covid continues to reduce consumption. The Council has agreed to carry out an energy audit and has formed a group to plan for the Church of England's target of being carbon neutral by 2030.

RESERVES POLICY

Reserves policy remains to hold at least £25 000 to cover three months of normal church activities and £10 000 against any urgent repairs. They are currently above this as some money is held against the Lighthouse Annexe project completion and a possible VAT liability of £29 677.

ACCOUNTING POLICY

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Church of England Accounting Regulations taking into account the SORP 2005 revisions on a receipts and payments basis including as far as possible most Church activities being reported on a gross basis. Movable church furnishings are held on trust for the Council by the Churchwardens and would require faculty approval before removal. Accounts of the Men's Society, Hope Café, Men's and Ladies breakfasts are small and make no call on Council funds. The Mothers Union accounts are not included as they respond to their headquarters for accounting purposes.

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS'S REPORT TO THE ECUMENICAL CHURCH
COUNCIL OF SAINT MARY THE VIRGIN, WEAVERHAM**

This report on the accounts of the ECC for the year ended 31 December 2021 is in respect of an examination carried out in accordance with the Church of England Accounting Regulations 2006 (the Regulations) and Section 3 of the Charities Act 1993 (the Act). As members of the ECC you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts; you consider that the audit requirements of the Regulations and Section 43(2) if the Act do not apply. It is my responsibility to issue this report on those accounts in accordance with the terms of the Regulations.

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

In accordance with my examination, no matter has come to my attention which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 41 of the Act, to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the requirement of the Act and the Regulations have not been met; or to which, in my opinion attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Kevin D Pickering – Hon Independent Examiner – January 2022

ACCOUNTS FOR THE 12 MONTHS ENDING 31 DECEMBER 2021

	Notes	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	2020
		£	£	£	£
RECEIPTS					
Voluntary income	A	94148		94148	100921
Church activities	B	8732		8732	7443
Fund raising					
Income from investments	C	<u>47</u>	<u>33</u>	<u>80</u>	<u>286</u>
TOTAL		102927	33	102960	108650
PAYMENTS					
Church activities	D	105006		105006	101085
Fund raising					
Salaries		<u>2080</u>		<u>2080</u>	<u>2342</u>
TOTAL		107086		107086	103427
NET INCOMING RES.		-4159	33	-4126	5223
Gains on investments			<u>217</u>	<u>217</u>	<u>76</u>
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		-4159	250	-3909	5299
Transfer between acc.		-11	11		
BALANCES AT 1 JANUARY		<u>756257</u>	<u>2424</u>	<u>758681</u>	<u>753382</u>
BALANCES AT 31 DEC		752087	2685	754772	758681

BALANCE SHEET 31 DECEMBER 2021

FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible asset – Lighthouse		684440		684440	684440
Investment assets			1731	1731	1514
CURRENT ASSETS					
Short term deposits	E	52022	954	52976	52905
Cash at banks	E	<u>15625</u>		<u>15625</u>	<u>19822</u>
TOTAL		752087	2685	754772	758681

The notes A to F form part of the accounts

A Voluntary income					
Planned giving					
Gift aid		63295		63295	58786
Tax recovered		14363		14363	16780
Other		6365		6365	6580
Collections		1771		1771	1140
Donations – general		2054		2054	1908
- Grant from Diocese					2000
- Covid lunches/food					2586
- curate		4300		4300	11141
Legacy		<u>2000</u>		<u>2000</u>	<u>100921</u>
		94148		94148	
B Church activities					
Lighthouse		2267		2267	2407
Food sales		785		785	

Fees	<u>5680</u>		<u>5680</u>	<u>5036</u>
	8732		8732	7443

C Income from investments	£	£	£	£
Deposit account	27		27	220
Wayleave	20		20	20
War Memorial	<u>47</u>	<u>33</u>	<u>33</u>	<u>46</u>
		33	80	286

D Church activities

Giving

Overseas missions	1000		1000	2000
Overseas development	3000		3000	2000
Home missions	2025		2025	2025

Ministry

Parish share	61653		61653	61184
Circuit fee	4340		4340	3171
Other ministry costs	5663		5663	5713
Curate	4850		4850	2486
Church heat, light and water	3702		3702	3142
Church running and maint.	11001		11001	8390
Training	470		470	621
Lighthouse	4618		4618	5813
Food	14		14	1291
Administration	<u>2670</u>		<u>2670</u>	<u>3249</u>
	105006		105006	101085

During the year the ECC employed an organist and verger. The organist deals with his own tax and payments to the verger were too small to attract social security payments. Together they equate to less than one full time employee. Reimbursement of out of pocket expenses were made to some members of the ECC, all supported by the necessary invoices.

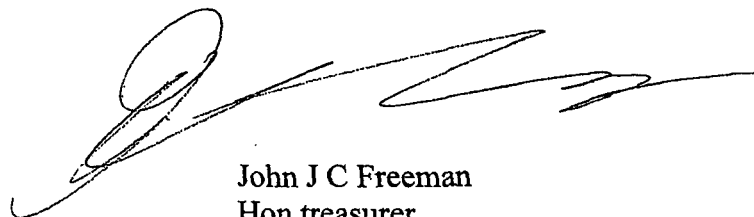
E Cash balances at 31 December

Current account	6439		6439	10103
Deposit account	52022		52022	51995
Lighthouse	9186		9186	9719
War Memorial deposit		954	954	910
War Memorial 74 CBF shares	<u>67647</u>	<u>1731</u>	<u>1731</u>	<u>1514</u>
		2685	70332	74241

Approved by the Ecumenical Church Council at its meeting held on 15th February 2022



Reverend Paul Withington
Incumbent



John J C Freeman
Hon treasurer

THE ECUMENICAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ST. MARY, WEAVERHAM

England & Wales - Charity number 1135093

Accounts

**Anglican Diocese of Chester – Middlewich Deanery
Mid Cheshire Circuit of the Chester and Stoke-on-Trent District of the Methodist Church**

St Mary's Church, Weaverham



CHARITY COMMISSION
FIRST CONTACT
27 APR 2023
ACCOUNTS RECEIVED

**Annual Report and Financial Statements of the Ecumenical Church Council
for the year ended 31 December 2020**

Incumbent

Reverend Paul Withington, The Vicarage, Church Street, Weaverham, NORTHWICH,
CW8 3NJ

Methodist Minister

Reverend Chris Pritchard, 36 Earls Way, Kingsmead, NORTHWICH, CW9 8GQ

Secretary and Treasurer

John J C Freeman, Stable Court, 20a Leigh Way, Weaverham, NORTHWICH, CW8 3PR

Banks

Santander, Bridle Road, BOOTLE, L30 4GB

CCLA Investment Management Ltd., Senator House, 85 Queen Victoria Street, LONDON, EC4V 4ET

Honorary Independent Examiner

Kevin D Pickering, 5 Withens Close, Weaverham, NORTHWICH, CW8 3JJ

Registered Charity Number: 1135093

**ST. MARY'S CHURCH, WEAVERHAM ANNUAL REPORT FOR
THE ECUMENICAL CHURCH COUNCIL FOR THE YEAR ENDED
31st DECEMBER 2020**

St. Mary's Church is situated in Church Street, Weaverham. It is a Local Ecumenical Partnership (LEP) between the parish church of the Church of England in the parish of St Mary in the Middlewich Deanery and Chester Diocese and the Methodist Church within the Mid Cheshire Circuit of the Chester and Stoke-on-Trent District. The partnership looks for support, encouragement, advice and overview to the relevant denominations, the Diocese and the Methodist District. The correspondence address is St Mary's Lighthouse Centre, Church Lane, Weaverham, NORTHWICH, CW8 3NN.

ECC members who have served in the year are: -

<i>Incumbent:</i>	Revd. Paul Withington	Chairman
<i>Curate</i>	Revd. Phil Bishop	
<i>Methodist Minister:</i>	Revd. Chris Pritchard	
<i>Wardens:</i>	Ted Smith	until APCM
	Vicky Rushton	
	Colin Weeks	
<i>Representatives on the Deanery Synod:</i>	John Freeman	
	Peter Wilkinson	
	David Whitfield	
	Gillian Edwards	from APCM
<i>Methodist Stewards:</i>	David Whitfield	
	Mike Hornby	
<i>Representatives from lay church roles:</i>	Gilly Latham	
	Linda Jones	
	Jules Sanders	
	Mike Sanders	
<i>Elected members:</i>		
Carol Johnson – (elected 2020)	Yvonne Williams- (elected 2018)	
Cath Henshall – (until APCM)	Louise Parry (elected 2018)	
Chris Hornby – (elected 2019)	Mike Hornby – (elected 2018)	
Ruth Kunzi – (until APCM)	Robert Owens – (elected 2019)	
	Sue Winnington – (elected 2020)	

Structure, governance and management

The method of appointment of ECC members (trustees) is set out in the Constitution of the Local Ecumenical Partnership signed in November 2009. All Church attendees are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the ECC.

Objectives and activities

St Mary's ECC has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent, the Revd. Paul Withington and Methodist Minister the Revd. Chris Pritchard in promoting the whole mission of the Church: pastoral, evangelical, social and ecumenical in the ecclesiastical parish. It also has maintenance responsibilities for the buildings associated with the church.

St Mary's is fully integrated as an LEP between the Anglican and Methodist Churches in Weaverham. We worship at the Anglican Church building with our services varied between Anglican and Methodist styles and leadership. United services began this year, members of all four services meeting at one service to worship together.

The vision statement for St Mary's Ecumenical Church, Weaverham is as follows:

St Mary's Church Weaverham, sharing the light and hope of Jesus with our community.

Achievements and performance

Church attendance

The current electoral role has 141 members. We have a duality of Anglican and Methodist members; members can be either or both. Attendance varied during the year starting as normal then falling to zero during some lockdown periods and about 50 when the Church was able to open for services,

Review of the year

The year started as normal, however the outbreak of Covid 19 in March led to the closure of the Church building. It was opened for prayer in July followed by a single 10 am service on Sunday from late August. We were once again reduced to opening for prayers on Wednesdays and Sundays following lockdown in November. It was possible to hold a Christmas Eve Communion service and a family Communion service on Christmas Day in the church building. Cleaning was reorganized and weekly cleaning took place augmented by a contracted clean following funerals, once they were permitted again in church. Revd Phil Bishop joined as curate in July.

The ECC met six times during the year. The Annual Church Meeting was postponed to September when Ted Smith stood down as church warden. Paul led tributes and thanks to Ted. The Fabric and Standing Committees met as required in what was a far from normal year. Health and Safety and Safeguarding remain standing items at each ECC meeting. Any issues or incidents are recorded in ECC minutes.

The main church building remains in very good condition and maintenance has been ongoing with the next quinquennial inspection due in the coming year.

The ECC thank the commitment and dedication of those members who give of their gifts, talents, time and finances to the church especially during these more trying times. Also, thanks for the increased cleaning that has been necessary and marshalling of the congregation when services have been possible.

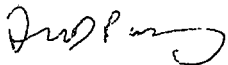
The Church continued supporting a wide range of groups and events that are aimed at meeting the social, spiritual and practical needs of our members and the wider village community at the start of the year. With lockdown in March a significant number had to cease including the Upcycling Shed, face to face House Groups and the Lunch and Leg Clubs in the Lighthouse. Instead, Bob and Lindsay Hough stepped into the breach leading a group of volunteers preparing and distributing a hot meal to parishioners who had found themselves having to isolate. Once lockdown had eased they ceased and in their place there has been a scheme introduced in co-operation with a new charity, Northwich Community Support, to distribute leftover supermarket food items to members of the parish each week which has been well received. This was augmented by distribution of toys donated by members of the community for Christmas.

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE ECUMENICAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF SAINT
MARY THE VIRGIN, WEAVERHAM**

This report on the accounts of the ECC for the year ended 31 December 2020 is in respect of an examination carried out in accordance with the Church of England Accounting Regulations 2006 (the Regulations) and Section 43 of the Charities Act 1993 (the Act). As members of the ECC you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts; you consider that the audit requirements of the Regulations and Section 43(2) of the Act do not apply. It is my responsibility to issue this report on those accounts in accordance with the terms of the Regulations.

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

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 41 of the Act, to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the requirements of the Act and the Regulations have not been met; or to which, in my opinion attention, should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Kevin D Pickering – Hon Independent Examiner – February 2021

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The normal revenue activities of the Church for the year indicate an excess of receipts over payments of £5177. This was better than the anticipated deficit. It was partly due to strange events of the year. The main positive items were having received donations earlier than expected towards the cost of the curate of around £5000, a donation from the Diocese of £2000, a net contribution from Covid lunch activities of £1300 and savings on utilities. They were offset by losses of income from the Lighthouse due to lockdown. This was slightly offset by an increase of £122 in the value of the War Memorial investment shares.

2021 is going to be a challenging year. With the continued closure of the Church and Lighthouse for many activities we are likely to see a significant reduction of income in the coming year. This is despite having no planned project and the Parish Share being kept at 2020 levels until April and then only increasing by 1%. None the less the Circuit Fee is likely to increase by 5% during the year.

To meet the Church's ambition of significantly reducing our net energy consumption the possibility of making St Marys carbon neutral is to be investigated either through solar panels or ground source heating.

Energy usage for the year was as follows, 2019 figures in brackets. Gas, church 74 697 kWh (74 306), Lighthouse 10 863 kWh (19 960) and electricity church 3203 kWh (4945), Lighthouse 4070 kWh (8632).

Gas consumption was similar in church this year due to Covid and the previous year due to a period when the boiler was out of service. Electricity was down due to Covid. At the Lighthouse both fell to around 50% of normal usage due to Covid.

RESERVES POLICY

Long term reserves policy agreed by the Church Council is to have a minimum amount of cash for 3 months' normal activities of £25 000 plus around £10 000 to provide funds for unexpected repairs to the Church, a Grade 1 listed building. We effectively dipped into this money during the year with the costs of the boiler repair and the fitting of an automatic tower clock winder. We continue to hold an amount of £29 677 against a possible VAT liability.

ACCOUNTING POLICY

The accounts of the Council have been prepared in accordance with the Church of England Accounting Regulations taking into account the SORP 2005 revisions on a receipts and payments basis. Movable church furnishings are held on trust for the Council by the Church Wardens and would require faculty approval before removal. Accounts of the Men's Society, Hope Café, Men' and Ladies' breakfasts and activities with pre-school children are not included as they are small and make no direct call on Council funds. The Mothers Union accounts are not included as they respond to their headquarters for accounting purposes.

ACCOUNTS FOR THE 12 MONTHS ENDING 31 DECEMBER 2020

	Notes	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total £	2019 £
RECEIPTS					
Voluntary income	A	100921		100921	90759
Church activities	B	7443		7443	13802
Fund raising					
Income from investments	C	<u>240</u>	<u>46</u>	<u>286</u>	<u>492</u>
TOTAL		108604	46	108650	105053
PAYMENTS					
Church activities	D	101085		101085	113916
Fund raising					
Salaries		<u>2342</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>2342</u>	<u>2520</u>
TOTAL		103427	—	103427	116436
NET INCOMING RESOURCES					
Gains/losses on investment assets		<u>5177</u>	<u>46</u>	<u>5223</u>	<u>-11383</u>
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		5177	122	5299	-11120
BALANCES 1 JANUARY		<u>751080</u>	<u>2302</u>	<u>753382</u>	<u>764502</u>
BALANCES 31 DECEMBER		756257	2424	758681	753382

BALANCE SHEET 31 DECEMBER 2020

FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible asset – Lighthouse	E	684440		684440	684440
Investment assets	F		1514	1514	1438
CURRENT ASSETS					
Short term deposits	F	51995	910	52905	52639
Cash at banks	F	<u>19822</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>19822</u>	<u>14865</u>
TOTAL		756257	2424	758681	753382

The notes A to E form part of the accounts

A Voluntary income

Planned giving					
Gift aid		58786		58786	59728
Tax recovered		16780		16780	15990
Other		6580		6580	8307
Collections		1140		1140	4082
Donations - General		1908		1908	1779
- grant from Diocese		2000		2000	
- Covid lunches		2586		2586	
- Curate		<u>11141</u>		<u>11141</u>	<u>873</u>
		100921		100921	90759

B Church activities

Lighthouse		2407		2407	7764
Fees		<u>5036</u>		<u>5036</u>	<u>6038</u>
		7443		7443	13802

			2020	2019
	£	£	£	£
C Income from investments				
Deposit account	220		220	424
Wayleave	20		20	20
War Memorial		<u>46</u>	<u>46</u>	<u>48</u>
	240	46	286	492

D Church activities

Giving

Overseas missions	2000		2000	1000
Overseas development agencies	2000		2000	2000
Home missions	2025		2025	2411
Others				1000

Ministry

Parish share	61184		61184	59693
Circuit fee	3171		3171	8368
Other ministry costs	5713		5713	5736
Curate	2486		2486	
Church running and maintenance	11532		11532	17888
Clock winder				4266
Covid lunches	1291		1291	
Training	621		621	1451
Lighthouse	5813		5813	7973
Administration	<u>3249</u>		<u>3249</u>	<u>2130</u>
	101085		101085	113916

During the year the ECC employed an organist and verger. The organist deals with his own tax and payments to the verger were too small to attract social security payments. Together they equate to less than one full time employee. Reimbursement of out of pocket expenses were made to some ECC members all supported by the necessary invoices.

E The Lighthouse and its Annex are currently valued at £684 440.

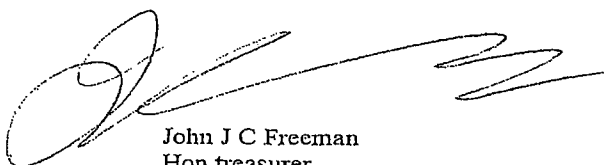
F Cash balances at 31 December

			2020	2019
Current accounts	10103		10103	3563
Deposit account	51995		51995	51775
Church House	9719		9719	11302
War Memorial deposit		910	910	864
War Memorial 74 CBF shares		<u>1514</u>	<u>1514</u>	<u>1438</u>
	71817	2424	74241	68942

Approved by the Ecumenical Church Council at its meeting held on 16th February 2021



Reverend Paul Withington
Incumbent



John J C Freeman
Hon treasurer