

The Parish of St Giles' with St Mary's, Pontefract



**ANNUAL REPORT
AND
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2024**

The Benefice of Pontefract
All Saints ✠ St Giles' with St Mary's ✠ St Michael the Archangel ✠ St Stephen's
Strengthening Faith, Building Community

The Parochial Church Council of The Ecclesiastical Parish of St Giles, Pontefract
is a charity registered in England and Wales (1135106).

Bank

Virgin Money

Independent Examiner

KJA Kilner Johnson Ltd

Objectives

St Giles' has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent, The Reverend Ian Bullock in promoting in the ecclesiastical Parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. It also has maintenance responsibilities for St Giles' Church.

Structure, governance and management

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

The PCC held seven meetings during the year, and seven meetings of the Standing Committee.

PCC Membership

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is a body corporate (PCC Powers Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2022) and registered with the Charity Commission.

PCC members are elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting in accordance with the Church representation Rules 2022 and during the year, in addition there are a number of officers who are Ex-Officio.

During 2024, the following served as members of the PCC

Incumbent	<i>The Reverend Ian Bullock (Ex-officio)* (Chair from March 2024)</i>
Assistant Curate	<i>The Reverend Sam Fletcher** (Finished Curacy August 2024)</i>
Associate Priests	<i>The Reverend Wayne Phillips** (Ex-officio)</i> <i>The Reverend Kate Reynolds** (Ex-officio)</i> <i>The Reverend Rod Walker** (Ex-officio)</i> <i>The Reverend Mark Watkins** (Ex-officio)</i>
Churchwardens	<i>Mr Bruce Dalglish (Ex-Officio)*</i> <i>Mr Peter Lavine (Ex-Officio)*</i> <i>Miss Pam Mercer (Ex-Officio)*</i> <i>Mrs Barbara Sessford (Ex-Officio)* (Chair until March 2024)</i>

Deanery Synod	Mrs Barbara Sessford (<i>Ex-Officio</i>)* Mrs Jill Clapham (<i>Ex-Officio</i>) Vacant (<i>Ex-Officio</i>) Vacant (<i>Ex-Officio</i>)	
Elected Members	Dr Sonia Atkin Mrs Joan Taylor Mr David Belford Vacant Mrs Lynne Davis <i>Mrs Karen Glynn *</i> <i>Mr David Leigh *</i> Mr Frank Ward Mrs Susanna Farnham Mr Ulric Murray Mr Anthony Williams Mr Ian Wood	(Term of Office Expires 2025) (Term of Office Expires 2025) (Died September 2024) (Term of Office Expires 2025) (Term of Office Expires 2026) (<i>Term of Office Expires 2026</i>) (<i>Resigned February 2025</i>) (Term of Office Expires 2026) (Term of Office Expires 2027) (Term of Office Expires 2027) (Term of Office Expires 2027) (Term of Office Expires 2027)

*Names in *italic* denote members of the Standing Committee

**As Clergy licensed to The Benefice of Pontefract, they have the right to attend all PCC meetings, but in practice this doesn't always happen.

Standing Committee

This is the only committee required by law. It has power to transact the business of the PCC between its meetings, subject to any directions given by the council. It also meets to discuss other matters to be put before the PCC and prepare the agenda.

It consists of the Vicar, churchwardens, PCC Secretary, PCC Treasurer and one member of the PCC

Electoral Roll

After the annual update of the Electoral Roll there were 142 people on the electoral roll at the APCM in April 2024

Review of the Year

Matters discussed by the PCC

Some of the significant areas that the PCC has considered are:

- Heritage week in September
- Risk Assessments on all areas of church life
- The church's budget, parish giving and fundraising
- Works undertaken on the fabric of the church including replacing of bulbs in all areas of the church to LEDs
- Staffing
- Parish Share
- Revising of Term of Reference for committees and church policies
- Receiving of committee reports inc. community provision
- Work of the St Giles Foodshare and Pantry club
- Safeguarding dashboard updates, especially related to new role descriptions for leaders and members of teams
- Remembrance Day Concert and Remembrance Civic Service
- Continuation of Messy Church at St Mary's every third Sunday of the month
- Fees updates
- Digital Giving Device
- Continuing work on the installation of solar panels and applying for a faculty, planning permission and grants to help cover the cost of the installation.
- The creation of the New Benefice of Pontefract
- Talks with Rhubarb Radio to install an aerial on the roof of the church in return for a monthly hire fee, free advertising and reduced charges.

Financial Activities

Due to a change in the way our accounts are reported, it was not possible to show a comparison between 2023 / 2024; however, the accounts demonstrate that we were able to make not only an increased payment towards our parish share commitment, whilst also ensuring that we kept the full amount in our reserves to allow us to continue to operate in the event of a significant issue arising.

This year also saw some investments maturing and as such we were able to open an account with CCLA who are used by churches across the UK for large deposits of money, paying a competitive interest rate, while ensuring there is no risk on our investment.

Later in 2024 we made the decision to cease operation of the floor stand donation device which we had found unreliable, and was also costing us money with a quarterly maintenance fee. This was replaced by the Collectin device which can be seen clearly as you enter the Nave. While the device is still new, we are already beginning to see that it is being noticed and used. Whilst there was an initial upfront cost to purchase it, there are no ongoing maintenance costs attached to it.

St Giles' continues to depend on its members for support, both practical and monetary, for its continued existence and outreach to the community.

The Church can claim an extra 25p for every £1 given if donated by a tax payer who has signed a "Gift Aid" declaration or completes and signs a one-off gift aid envelope, available from the welcome team.

This is paid by the Inland Revenue (at no extra cost to you); if you are a tax payer and would like to help boost the Church income, please have a word about gift aiding your donations.

Thank you to all who support the Parish in all your various ways; your generous giving of time and money is greatly valued.

After many years serving as the church treasurer, David Leigh stepped down from this role on 31st December. David has worked tirelessly behind the scenes looking after the accounts, and we give thanks for his years of service.

Moving forward we are fortunate to now have an accountant who will act as our treasurer, Mrs Sam Hutton, who has offered to give her skills and expertise to us freely, we are grateful for her support. Fr Ian has been building a close working relationship with her, and between them they will ensure that we remain fiscally secure for the future.

A copy of the parish accounts are appended to the back of this report for inspection and have been independently examined.

Fabric

The Quinquennial Report by the church architect, David Barker was received in August. His closing statement in his comprehensive, eighty-five-page document encapsulates his thoughts on the state of the fabric of the church. "In summary, the building is in good condition, well maintained with a positive and active approach to maintenance and repairs". There are minor repairs to complete but most of these can and will be completed, in house over the period that is covered by the report (2028).

Taking into account the comments above we have experienced some challenges in the tower. Damp within the spiral staircase enclosure is a worry. The architect has been consulted over this matter and has responded that this problem exists in a lot of churches and has been worsened by the increase in extreme weather conditions. We will work closely with him to try and find a workable remedy to this problem. Whilst we speak about the tower, it is worth noting that the condition of the ringing chamber warranted redecoration. The ringing team, led by the Tower Captain, has undertaken this task, and have carried out the complete redecorating and the replacement of some worn fittings to a very high standard. Our thanks go to them.

The proposed installation of a radio transmitter on the top level of the tower is still an ongoing project that needs completing. I am confident that within the near future all the problems will be overcome, and the installation will be financially beneficial to the church.

Over the summer period extensive work has been carried out in the baptistry, cafe and kitchen areas to redecorate and fit new LED lights, over sixty percent of all lights in the

church are now LED's and it is hoped that, that total will lead us to be completely LED in the near future.

In July we were granted a free energy assessment, under the VCSE (voluntary, charitable and social enterprise) grant scheme. Following this assessment, we were able to apply for a grant to cover the cost of solar panels on the south aisle roof, new LED lights in the main body of the church and a sustainable, improved method of loft insulation. This work will be completed in the coming year.

All the mandatory tests that are required, to allow the church to operate safely and legally have been carried out at various stages in the year; The five yearly, fixed electrical certificate was renewed, the portable appliances test (PAT) along with tests on the fire extinguishers, gas boilers, the hydraulic lift and the intruder/fire alarm.

As always, I have been supported in the various endeavours by a committed group of volunteer helpers, namely; David Malkin, Ian Knox, Charles Atkin and David Roydhouse. Without their help, most of the improvements and maintenance in church would not happen. Many thanks.

Peter Lavine
Churchwarden

Study

In Lent 2024 St Giles the Lenten study was based on the Tom Wright book – Lent for Everyone – Mark.

Worship

Regular Worship at St Giles' is as follows:

10.15 a.m. Holy Communion
4.00 p.m. Choral Evensong (1st Sunday of Month)
9.30 a.m. Wednesday – Midweek Holy Communion
10.30 a.m. Friday – Midweek Holy Communion

In addition to our regular worship there have been other services conducted through the year during Holy week and Christmas, as well as the Annual Civic Remembrance service, with many gathering together to remember those who paid the ultimate price for peace. This year also saw the return of our Christingle service on Christmas Eve, which was very well attended, and enjoyed by all.

Clergy

In March 2024 St Giles' welcomed The Reverend Ian Bullock as the Vicar of Pontefract, and on 1st May 2024 the Pastoral Scheme to create the New Benefice of Pontefract came into operation, the parishes of All Saints, Ss Giles' with St Mary's, Michael the Archangel and Stephen all operate under his authority as Incumbent and The Vicar of Pontefract.

This scheme also altered the licences of the clergy team with the four Associate Priests now being authorised to work across the new Benefice, their invaluable work allows us to enjoy worship across the Benefice and we give thanks for their service,

As the long-term view is to increase the level of co-operation through the Benefice, there has been the beginning of much more interaction with all of the clergy team within the parishes. Fr Ian has the responsibility of ensuring that worship happens within all our churches, and as such, the allocation of clergy resources reflects this new way of working.

We are also grateful for the support of other members of the clergy The Reverend Michael Taylor is a retired member of clergy, who is Beneficed with us, and we are also fortunate to be able to call upon The Reverends Sue Hulme and Mike Marsh to supplement the team.

In August at a Benefice service, we said goodbye to Fr Sam Fletcher as he completed his curacy and moved to Exeter to work on a Doctorate.

In addition to his duties inside the Benefice, Fr Ian also accepted the invitation to become the Assistant Area Dean of Pontefract, working with the diocesan Stewardship team, a mentor to other members of clergy, and a Member of the Diocesan Synod.

Lay Ministers

The Benefice of Pontefract is blessed with a number of Local Lay Ministers (LLM's), with Mrs Anita Hayes and Mrs Jackie Guest, based at All Saints, Mrs Jill Clapham and Mr David Brooks (PTO) at St Giles and Ms Natalie Vause (currently in her final training year) at St Michael the Archangel.

In addition to this we have a Lay Worship leader, Mrs Barbara Pollard and a Lay Pastoral Minister Mr Alf Taylor at St Stephen's

In the same way that the clergy licences changed with the new Benefice, the LLM's did as well, primarily this affects the Local Lay Ministers with them having the opportunity to grow and develop their ministry more widely. However, as we continue to develop other opportunities will be available for all Lay Ministers to be involved on a Benefice scale.

We are grateful for all the work that they do, and how they enhance our churches.

Deanery Synod

Owing to the Area Dean, The Rev'd Margaret Gallagher moving to a new post in North Yorkshire last year, the Deanery Synod only met on one occasion. The meeting took place on Saturday 13 April at St Mary's Church, South Elmsall; Fr Ian Bullock was welcomed back to the Deanery by the Area Dean and elections were held for secretary and chair, the latter which remained vacant.

A new Area Dean was appointed in December, The Rev'd Canon Paul Cartwright SSC, Vicar of the Priory Benefice, he will chair his first Deanery Synod in early 2025.

Jill Clapham

Pastoral Care

Pastoral care is a central part of our parish's ministry.

We have a core pastoral care team comprising Fr Ian, Fr Sam, Jill Clapham, and Pam Mercer. We currently provide Home Communion on a monthly basis to seven regular home communicants, as well as those who receive home communion on a temporary or one-off basis. This is in addition to the pastoral visiting by our clergy, which we arrange as the need arises, including hospital and hospice visits where appropriate. We support people facing a wide variety of difficulties, including grief, isolation and ill health.

To help us in this work, we rely also upon the strong network of friendships that exist within church. We are thankful to be part of a church community in which people show so much love and care for one another, and are grateful for those occasions when church members have alerted us to pastoral needs on behalf of their friends. While our pastoral ministry team takes on particular responsibilities, the task of providing support and caring for one another is shared by the whole church.

As the Parish Church, our pastoral care responsibilities extend far beyond those who attend church, and through our ministry where we are embedded, we offer support and assistance to any who ask for our help.

In summary, through our pastoral ministry, we continue to provide important spiritual and emotional support to our congregations and the wider community.

Outreach and Activities

St Giles' Management Committee

Established over 12 years ago the St Giles Centre Management Committee is responsible for the development and day to day management and promotion of the community facility and has held regular meetings throughout 2024.

The Centre's vision continues to maintain and extend the church's mission within the community to bring benefits to local people and new initiatives to the life of the church and community whilst encouraging equality, diversity and cohesion within a safe and welcoming environment.

There was an increase in the use of the Centre by community groups and local organisations during 2024 compared with 2023 and substantially higher compared with the previous three years which were severely affected by the COVID restrictions. Income from room rentals amounted to £16050.00 compared to £14318 in 2023 and £4318 in 2022. For the last two years the Centre has benefitted from two National Lottery Community Awards which cover the annual cost of room hire by Citizens Advice and the associated caretaking costs. The second grant will also cover these costs until March 2026.

Centre activities during the year –

- The weekly Chair Exercise classes continue to be popular.
- Citizens Advice service every Wednesday. Throughout the year the outreach service saw 167 clients and advised on 237 issues recording direct financial benefits for residents of £145,209.00.
- The Conexus Healthcare Peer Group meetings and the Wellbeing Café are now in their 3rd year and continue to meet monthly. Additional healthcare group and one-to-one sessions have been held throughout the year including pre-diabetes, pop-up COVID vaccination clinics, Weight Management, Healthy Heart and staff meetings.
- Wakefield Recovery and Wellbeing College courses –
 - Living with and Managing Anxiety
 - Pebble Painting Craft
 - Living with and Managing Depression
 - Journaling
 - Creative Crafting
 - 2 other courses cancelled or withdrawn due to lack of student numbers or tutor illness.
- Pontefract Foodbank food collection and advisory service was suspended from the end of July to the middle of November due to a safeguarding incident which required a review of its risk assessment and procedural operations. When the service resumed the Wednesday money advice service was cancelled and additional volunteers and procedures for the food collection service on Thursdays were introduced together with additional advisor time on that day.
- The Youth Association Future Self Programme, commissioned by Conexus Healthcare and funded by the NHS ran a very well attended 12-week course to support and promote wellbeing of young adults to equip them to overcome life's challenges.

- KLH Events Wheelfest Gift & Craft Fair held in June proved very successful and attracted large numbers of the local community into church. Discussions were subsequently held regarding future such events at St Giles.
- Changing Lives, a charity delivering the Government funded initiative "Pathways to Progress" project that provides essential support to workless households in the West Yorkshire Combined Authority area. two-hour sessions every week from October to March 2025.
- Numerous church activities throughout the year including Tiddlywinks, St Giles 3.16, MU Fashion show, PCC and SC meetings, Missions Committee Beetle Drive, Lent course, Advent course, Choir Practice, Wednesday and Saturday coffee mornings, Centre Management Committee meetings,
- Choral Concerts –
 - Pontefract Choral Society held concerts in March, June and December.
 - Featherstone Male Voice Choir in July in aid of the Rob Burrow MND Centre appeal.
 - Castleford Singers in July

At the November meeting of the committee, it was agreed to increase room hire rates by 3% from 1 January 2025 due to the impact of increasing levels of inflation and how this and other factors has affected the church energy costs.

The Centre Committee continues to oversee the Holiday Food Share and Food Pantry projects which are based at No.6 The Circle in Chequerfield and has reviewed the membership of the sub-committee comprising of three members to provide effective governance, management of the project and future developments.

The weekly Lunch with Us meals service, once again provided a full service throughout the year in the café area. The project continues to meet an increasing demand with a weekly average of:

98 meals to 49 people served by 10 volunteers.

(2023 figures: 90 meals to 45 people served by 9 volunteers)

Looking ahead the committee is planning to increase the use of the church area for large events such as craft fairs and other fundraising events and has purchased 27 additional tables which can be hired out. KLH Events will be organising three Craft & Gift Fairs per year in the next two years and St Giles will be looking to increase its own indoor events in the future to increase our outreach to our community.

The committee wishes to express the sad loss of its founder member, David Belford, who passed away in September and to give thanks to David Leigh who stood down as treasurer at the end of the year. Thanks also to Vivienne (Secretary) and Ian Wood for all their help and support throughout the year.

Committee Membership: Fr. Ian, Vivienne Smales (Secretary), David Leigh (Treasurer), Bill Bradley, Ulric Murray, Fr Rod, Barbara Sessford and Joan Taylor.

Bill Bradley

Social Events

During 2024, we began to re-focus our efforts on utilising our church to provide social events organised by St Giles.

This year we once again hosted Yorkshire Imperial Band for a Remembrance concert, and in November we held a Christmas Fayre.

Both were well supported by our community, and we have created a new Social planning team that will meet in early 2025 to look at what types of events we can hold next year, and the ways that we can engage with our community in new ways.

If you would like to get involved with the Social aspects of the church, please speak to Fr Ian.

Schools

To the end of the 2023 / 2024 academic year Fr Sam spent time looking after St Giles' school as well as working with other schools in the Parish.

During Fr Ian's convalescence he started to forge his relationship with St Giles', taking his place on the Governing Board, getting to know Mr Grace the Head, and planning for the future. As such since the beginning of the new school term, Fr Ian now leads the assembly each fortnight, and it has been agreed that School will come into Church for Four services each year, to mark significant times in the church and school year.

Fr Ian will also be working with the school and going in to take lessons as appropriate, and continue to strengthen the relationship between us.

During the Christmas lead up, Fr Ian also hosted some other schools in church for their Christmas services, and I looking forward to building close relationships with them all during 2025.

Baptism Ministry

During this year we have continued to invite baptism families into church for the meeting of preparation, the baptism service itself following at a later date. The preparation meetings are now held on Saturday mornings and have been led by a member of the clergy and include the family's Baptism Welcomer. In recognition of their role in encouraging the child's knowledge and growth in the Christian faith, godparents are also warmly invited and occasionally have attended. It has been clear that both parents and godparents can benefit by expanding their understanding, not just of baptism, but of the significance of the godparents in the child's upbringing.

Fr Ian has updated the order of service for baptism, making the language more easily accessible for everyone and introducing two new hymns (both with well-known tunes so that all can join in!). The importance of the promises and declarations made by parents and godparents is emphasised.

The baptism service continues to take place at 12.15 p.m. after the Sunday morning Eucharist. This year there have been 16 baptisms. Of these, eight were children under the age of one year; seven were between the ages of one and four years and one child was five years old.

The team of Baptism Welcomers continues to numbers eight, regularly assisted by Daisy. And we thank Vivienne once again for her invaluable admin support and efficiency. Anyone interested in joining our team should speak to myself, a member of the welcoming team, or to Father Ian.

Mary Murray

Bell Ringing

The ringing at St. Giles continues to gather momentum, we now have 19 people who have rung regularly for the past year. The increased numbers mean that we can now offer practice on two nights a week, Monday and Thursday and are able to ring all 10 bells regularly for Sunday morning service. We have also rung a quarter peal before evensong on 1st December 2024.

We are very pleased to have welcomed 10 visiting bands from all over the country to the tower in 2024. They have rung short touches, quarter peals and full peals and have included one method that was rung for the very first time anywhere. Our own band rang for peace on the 80th anniversary of D-Day [6th June 2024].

A programme of refurbishment in the ringing chamber was started in the summer of 2024. This included stripping the old paint from the walls. The walls and gloss work have all been repainted and the carpet replaced with all the costs being raised by the bellringers. We ordered new ropes in the spring of 2024 and took delivery in November of this year; they have been part funded by the reserves in the tower fund. This work should stand the tower in good order for many years to come.

The chimes of the clock are still not working but plans are in place to have experts examine them in the weeks to come and advise the church on the best way forward.

If you want to know more about bellringing or would like to learn to ring, please contact me.

Adrian Garner
Tower Captain

Flower Team

The Flower Fairies remain a small but enthusiastic band, keen to enhance our Church with God's gift of flowers every Saturday morning during the year apart from Lent and Advent. We hope you enjoy our efforts.

Thank you to Bill Bradley for supplying us with greenery each week and thank you to all who have donated towards the Flowers during the year.

The Flower Team

Junior Church – St Giles’ 3:16

Our children and young people continue to meet upstairs every Sunday morning to explore and learn more about our faith.

We were asked to focus on one of our objectives for the year which was and is, the environment. We are trying to lower our carbon footprint all around church. Members of the committee had designed and made a Bug Hotel and we were asked to incorporate this into our teaching and learning.

We chose to do this through the story of creation using some poetic license. Using both teamwork and crafting we told the story day by day. This was helped by Bruce whose photographs from the observatory inspired Annabel to incorporate the stars and planets into day four. The main focus was on the final three days when God created the birds, fish and smaller creatures, the insects and bugs. All was well until the larger animals and humans were created and who were unaware of the tiniest insects and unknowingly destroyed their homes and even injured some of them. Consequently, on day seven when God was hoping to rest, he was bombarded with prayers from his tiniest members of creation asking for help. As humans had already been given responsibility for looking after the earth, they were tasked with finding a solution. The bug hotel! Great fun was had, and amazing art and craft work showed the magnificence of creation. The bug hotel can be found in the garden at the front of church near the door into the vestry.

We continue to follow the main festivals of the church while at the same time incorporating new ideas. Our next project is to back to basics and focus on the life and teachings of Jesus.

Lynne and Stephanie

Tiddlywinks

Last year was a year of change for Tiddlywinks as Sheila Roydhouse and Sandra Cutting retired from our little group, but we were really pleased when Bridget Sowerby agreed to join us. She was a Tiddlywinkers grandma when Bridget and Barry brought Daisy along.

This is a special year for Tiddlywinks as it's our 20th birthday and during that time we've been very fortunate to have lots of children come to our group. We still sing the songs and play our musical instruments and generally make lots of noise.

Last year, in the summer when the weather was fine, we managed a trip to the Castle and had a picnic. The children really loved it racing round and letting off some steam.

Barbara Lavine
Elaine Troughton
Jill Townsend
Bridget Sowerby

Lunch With Us

Lunch with Us will enter its 10th year in September and what a journey it has been. We started slowly and built-up numbers of customers and meals served. We had to close

during COVID but opened as soon as we could with a takeaway service. Numbers are building up again now and we have regular and occasional customers.

We are always grateful to receive donations towards our work with vulnerable people.

Barbara Sessford
Lunch with Us Co-Ordinator

Messy Church

Messy Church has continued to join together in fellowship and worship on the third Sunday of each month. We have seen some new faces join our congregation and we are hoping that we continue to see growth throughout 2025 when we will be holding our services on the third Saturday of each month.

Following the departure of Fr Sam at the end of his curacy Messy Church has been led by a small team of volunteers co-ordinated by our LLM Jill Clapham with help from Anita Hayes, another of our LLM team from across our Benefice.

Highlights of our messy year have included *Wondering about Holy Week, Jonah and the Big Fish, Salt and Light*, and the *Exodus* story. We have begun to use Godly Play in some of our sessions which has been popular; the highlight of our craft activities was a huge blue whale which was co-ordinated by Christine Benham who has led our crafts with imaginative flair.

Thank you to everyone who continues to contribute to this important mission, especially our catering team who continue to serve our refreshments.

We would love to welcome you to our team or our congregation so if you have ever wondered what Messy Church is all about do come and see.

Jill Clapham

The Missions Committee Report

Once again, our main fundraising activity has been selling coffee in church on the second Saturday of each month.

Other fundraising events were a beetle drive held in the February 2024 half-term and a chocolate tombola held in March 2024.

Through 2024 we raised £2589.19, of that £2254 was donated to the charities below, and the Missions fund currently stands at £ 2459.33

The five charities we continue to support are:

The Leprosy Mission - £254 (Lent Project)

TLM offers rehabilitation, education, vocational training, small business loans, housing and fresh water and sanitation to tens of thousands of leprosy sufferers each year. TLM was the church's Lent Project for 2024.

Church Missionary Society - £500

Andrea and Andrew Young have now retired, and we are currently in communication with CMS to arrange who we will be supporting in 2025.

Mara - £500

Majengo Mapya is our link parish near Musoma on Lake Victoria and we sent a contribution to assist with the continuing work being done there.

The Church Army - £500

The Missions Committee made a donation towards the work done by Church Army in some of the deprived areas in the UK.

The Missions to Seafarers - £500

This charity works worldwide to support seafarers, providing specialist help in a crisis. We made a contribution towards this work.

The Missions Committee thanks our congregation for their continuing support. It is through their generosity that we can continue to donate monies to the charities listed.

Edie Barber
Treasurer and Secretary

Mothers' Union

We have 22 members and are a very active branch. During 2024 we had some very interesting speakers.

In January we held our Wave of Prayer service followed by our New Year social. In February we welcomed Anita from All Saints who gave a lovely talk explaining how she came into the ministry. Fr Mark led our Stations of the Cross service in March, which was a very beautiful and moving service.

David Jones gave an interesting talk in April about his year being the Mayor of Wakefield and in May Linda Atkins gave an insight into her fundraising for Tiny Tickers. In June we had our annual outing and had a day out at Bakewell and Buxton.

We held an afternoon tea in July, which was followed by a quiz which everyone enjoyed. Over the busy summer month of August, we take a break, but then in September we welcomed Joy from the Foster Care unit who explained how the unit works when the children become eighteen.

In October we walked around Church with a difference where members talked about different parts of the Church and prayers were said. November saw our AGM take place followed by a pie and pea lunch and in December we held our Advent service followed by the Christmas lunch. Quite a year.

Funds were raised through hosting a fashion show and running a bottle stall. In January 2024 we sent £150 to Away From It All Holidays for upkeep of the caravans, £60 to Make a Mother's Day and £86 to Summer of Hope.

Marjorie Laidlaw
MU Secretary

Open Church

Open Church volunteers continue to welcome visitors into our beautiful church. Some come to pray, some in search of something missing in their lives and some to look at the architecture and stained-glass windows. Whatever the reason for their visit our volunteers are there to help.

If you feel like you could help as a volunteer, please ask a Church Warden who will be pleased to explain more.

Barbara Sessford

Serving Team Report

Members of our congregation and choir have continued to volunteer their time during both our regular worship and special services throughout the past year. We are blessed at St Giles with so many people willing to take their turn reading the lessons, leading intercessions, serving at the altar, and serving as eucharistic ministers.

Each of these ministries are important components of our church life and we would like to thank everyone for their continued dedication. There is always room for new volunteers so if you feel called to any of these roles, please speak to one of our Licensed Lay Ministers, David Brooks or Jill Clapham who will provide you with the necessary support and training.

Jill Clapham

St Giles' Food Share and Pantry Club

Two projects are run from the premises at No 6 The Circle: the weekly Pantry Club and Holiday Food Share in/during school holidays. During 2024, the Pantry Club has supported an average of 21 families or 89 people a week. An average of 41 families have been nominated for Holiday Food Share on each of 9 occasions, supporting a total of 1638 people over the year. In total the two projects have provided the ingredients for at least 50,000 person-meals during 2024.

Weekly deliveries through the Pantry Club continue to help families avoid financial crises and need for the Foodbank's emergency support. Cooperation with the Foodbank has enabled signposting to the Foodbank's financial inclusion support, helping families to maximise benefit claims and to get help with financial worries. One family which joined the Pantry after the October half-term sent a Christmas card saying they found the help "a Godsend".

Meeting the demands of ongoing weekly provision with a large increase every six weeks or so involves careful stock management. Some of our intake comes from regular donations at St Giles' and All Saints' Churches and we benefit from donations brought to No 6 and those made through our local Morrisons and Asda; Pontefract Trussell Foodbank also passes some food on to us and we benefit from supplies of Warburton's bread through Wakefield Street Kitchen and Pontefract Community Kitchen. For the financial year 2024-5, weekly deliveries from FareShare have been financed by WMDC,

but this is expected to cease from April 2025. We are grateful to have again received Harvest donations from local schools, and Smiles for Miles and All Stars provided seasonal goodies for the children at Easter and Christmas.

However, the heavy uptake of the two projects has necessitated the purchase of much of the food we distribute. The total spending on food during 2024 amounted to nearly £12,000, while subscriptions from Pantry members were just over £2100. We continue to rely on cash donations from Church members and those who call in at the shop (c. £2300), and monthly donations from a local firm. Supporters have run stalls to raise funds and staff at Tesco held a collection to support us. We also apply for grants, some being government money channelled through WMDC, and others given by the charitable arms of WDH, Asda and Morrisons. Grants from WDH have enabled us regularly to provide eggs and fresh fruit for several months at a time.

Our tenancy at No 6 is only possible through a generous charity lease from WDH, and this was extended for a further 3 years from November. They have also been supportive when we were faced with a stuck shutter, a leaking water heater and fly tipping at the back of the premises.

Services and events of interest are promoted in our shop window and we welcome local people calling in at the shop. We continue to develop relationships with local businesses on The Circle. As part of the Benefice's outreach in the community, we again promoted No 6 at the annual Community Showcase as well as the St Giles' Christmas Fair.

Thank you to everyone who has made our work at No 6 possible. We must again express heartfelt thanks for the regular support given by a team of about 12 volunteers who help with packing and deliveries for the Pantry Club and Holiday Food schemes. We have signed up additional volunteers from within the wider community.

Paul & Ann Harris

St Mary's

St Mary's continues to have a very small, but faithful and hard-working congregation. Everybody has a role to play whether it be opening and setting up, organising music for hymns, playing the recorder for mood or singing to, meet and greet deacon during the Eucharist, tea and coffee, clearing up or finally seeing Fr Michael home!

A successful strawberry tea was held with all hands-on deck. Efforts are made to encourage and swell the congregation and Messy Church continues to thrive. The year ended with a well-attended carol service.

Fr Michael

Good Causes

During 2024, St Giles' was able to support the following organisation:

- Through the generosity of members of the church, we were able to provide each child who was leaving St Giles' School with a Bible
- The Children's Society through our Christingle Service, and also St Mary's Christmas service.

Social Media

Web address: <http://www.cofe-pontefract.co.uk>

2024 saw a lot of changes to the way the social media is run following Fr Ian's arrival.

We now have a Facebook page for all five churches in the Benefice which allows for all the churches to share news and events for what is happening in their Church and for news and events at all five churches to be shared between Facebook pages so that people don't have to navigate from one page to another.

Thank you to Natalie Vause at St Michael's and Barbara Pollard at St Stephen's for their input in promoting events on the St Michael's and St Stephen's Facebook pages, we are looking for others to become part of this team, which as we move forward will be crucial. If you are interested in getting involved, in the first instance please talk to Fr Ian.

Due to a donation, a licence for Hootsuite was purchased which means that posts can be scheduled in advance and shared on the Facebook pages quickly and easily rather than having to post content one page at a time.

The other big change in 2024 was the launch of the Benefice website which Fr Ian put hours of work into. It is still very much a work in progress but it will be a great asset to the Benefice once it is fully up and running. All the old websites have now been shut down, but for the time being we have retained ownership of the addresses, and a review of whether to keep these will happen later.

We are already seeing a good amount of traffic on the site, and are looking forward to seeing how this develops as the site grows.

The social media will continue to be developed and improved as we move into 2025. We will make more effective use of X (formally known as Twitter) and look into developing an Instagram account to allow for content to be shared with a younger audience.

During 2024 we have developed a new daily cycle of Prayer, #PrayerforEveryone, which was launched in January. A prayer goes out each morning at 8.00 a.m. for a different group or industry in society across the Facebook pages and X account.

As always, if you have a news story or event taking place in one of our Churches and you would like it to be promoted on social media, please email jonathan.harris@cofe-pontefract.co.uk and we can put it on for you.

Jonathan Harris
Benefice Digital Lead

Safeguarding

The Church complies with Diocesan Safeguarding Policies and Practices, with regular updating of the Diocesan Safeguarding Dashboard and Safeguarding Hub. This guides the PCC in fulfilling its statutory obligations.

The PCC continues to commit to carrying out the Church of England Policy for Safeguarding; it also reaffirms that everyone is responsible for safeguarding children and vulnerable adults irrespective of their role within the church community, with any concerns being reported to the Safeguarding Officer, Clergy or a member of the PCC.

All members of St Giles' who are, due to the nature of their post (Voluntary or otherwise) are currently in receipt of an enhanced DBS check and this information is confidentially stored with the parish administrator. Post holders and volunteers have all received the necessary clearance to fulfil their roles. All DBS checks are renewed every three years.

Actions completed:

- All necessary training has been completed together with some non-compulsory courses, which I feel help all matters of Safeguarding within our Community.
- Updates completed to the Parish Safeguarding Dashboard stand at 100%. The Safeguarding Dashboard helps to make sure everything is completed on time and if there are any matters outstanding then notification is received and can be completed asap.
- Updates completed to the Parish Safeguarding Hub. This facility helps keep Safeguarding on track. It also provides job descriptions, policies etc which are helpful in Safeguarding procedures.

I Worship at All Saints' so to keep in touch I call into St Giles on a regular basis. I am in constant contact with Father Ian and would like to thank him for his support of Safeguarding Matters. My thanks also to Vivienne, Church Wardens and anyone I've pestered for answers to my questions.

Safeguarding is not one person's responsibility, it is the responsibility of all. If at anytime you have any Safeguarding Concerns please report it as soon as possible.

Christine Brown
Safeguarding Officer

Conclusion

This Report and the Attached Accounts were approved by the PCC on 11th February 2025 and signed on their behalf by:



The Reverend Ian Bullock (PCC Chair)
Vicar of Pontefract

Independent Examiners Report to the PCC of St Giles

I report to the Parochial Church Council (PCC) on my examination of the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31 December 2024.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As members of the PCC you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 ('the Regulations') and S1.44 (2) of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the church's accounts carried out under section 145 of the Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act and the Church Guidance 2006 Edition.

Independent examiner's statement

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

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

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

KJA Kilner Johnson Ltd.

.....
KJA Kilner Johnson Ltd

Network House

Stubs Beck Lane

Cleckheaton

BD19 4TT

St Giles, Pontefract

Receipts and Payments Accounts for the Year Ended 31 December 2024

	Note	Total Unrestricted Funds £	Total Designated Funds £	Total Restricted Funds £	Total 2024 £
Receipts					
Voluntary receipts					
Collections at services		37,118	-	7,983	45,101
All other giving/voluntary receipts	4a	10,633	100	55,622	66,355
		47,751	100	63,606	111,456
Activities for generating funds					
Investment income	4b	27,163	-	42	27,205
Church activities	4c	28,611	-	12,468	41,079
Total receipts		103,525	100	76,116	179,740
Payments					
Church activities					
Parish contribution		31,500	-	5,100	36,600
Ministry expenses		-	-	922	922
Church running expenses	4d	66,043	637	43,664	110,344
Missions giving and donations	4e	-	-	7,491	7,491
		97,543	637	57,177	153,699
Costs of generating funds					
Total payments		112,006	637	57,177	153,699
Excess of receipts over payments		8,683	- 537	18,939	24,382
Transfer between funds	-	50,020	60,000	- 9,980	- 0
	-	44,038	59,463	8,958	24,382
Cash at bank and in hand at 1 January		56,308	9,805	36,592	102,706
Cash at bank and in hand at 31 December		12,270	69,268	45,550	127,088

St Giles, Pontefract

Statement of Assets and Liabilities as at 31 December 2024

	Unrestricted funds £	Designated funds £	Restricted funds £	TOTAL 2024 £
Cash funds				
Virign current account -PCC	3,510	4,268	14,876	22,654
Investment account	8,759	65,000	-	73,759
Virgin account - Food Share		-	17,489	17,489
Virgin account - Centre account		-	13,186	13,186
Cash in hand				
	12,269	69,268	45,551	127,088
Liabilities				
Accountancy	1,800	-	-	1,800
	1,800	-	-	1,800

Notes to the Financial Statements

1. Basis of preparation

The financial statements of the PCC have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting regulations 2006 using the Receipts and Payments basis.

2. Movement in restricted funds

The movements in restricted funds during the year were:

	Balance B/fwd £	Receipts £	Payments £	Transfer £	Balance C/fwd £
Restricted					
Belfry	913	85 -	1,015	20	3
Hardship	1,793	-	328	-	1,465
Choir	339	516 -	450	-	405
Missions	2,124	2,589 -	2,254	-	2,459
St Giles Centre Account	5,480	22,879 -	6,373 -	10,000	11,986
Lunch with Us	1,459	12 -	750	480	1,201
St Marys	7,724	5,483 -	5,100	-	8,107
MU Weds Coffee Fund	799	350 -	50	-	1,099
Messy Church	1,090	58 -	307	-	842
ECO VCSE	-	21,833 -	21,633	-	200
Other collections	341	3,893 -	4,019	-	215
Donations/ sponsorships	-	1,265 -	1,185	-	80
Food Share	14,529	17,152 -	13,713 -	480	17,489
	36,592	76,115 -	57,177 -	9,960	45,551

Belfry – Monies that have been given to the church for the maintenance and upkeep of the Church Bells and Belfry

Hardship – monies that the church have been given which are there for the purpose of helping people who are struggling and need a little assistance. Usually a request will be received for assistance in providing small items that they need, this is the fund we use to support them.

Choir – Monies that are received to support the Choir, this fund may be used for items such as Music licences, Sheet Music, robes or anything that is directly required in the operation of the choir.

Missions – Money raised by the Missions Committee which is used to support external mission agencies

St Giles Centre Account – the Account which deals with the day-to-day operations of the community aspect of the church

Lunch with Us - Are funds donated to offer warm meals and social activities.

St Mary's – After St Mary's bank account was closed this is the money raised by St Mary's church to allow for worship to continue

MU Weds Coffee Fund – Money Raised by The Mothers Union to promote their work, and support outreach

Messy Church – Monies that were awarded to the church to allow for Messy Church to be run

ECO VCSE – Monies awarded to St Giles for the specific NCZ Project

Other Charitable Donations – Monies that the church have taken on behalf of another charity and are paying out to them

Donations / Sponsorship – Monies that have been given for a particular purpose and are used for that purpose only

Food Share - These are monies which are donated and received to fund the operations of the No 6 Food Share project

3. Movement in designated funds

The movements in restricted funds during the year were:

	Balance B/fwd £	Receipts £	Payments £	Transfer £	Balance C/fwd £
Designated					
Flower	539	100 -	155	-	484
Dedicated Funds	4,266	- -	482	5,000	8,784
Reserves Policy	-	-	-	60,000	60,000
	4,805	100 -	637	65,000	69,268

Flower – Monies that have historically been collected to dress the church with flowers

Dedicated Funds – Monies donated to church which are there to assist the operation of the church – when these funds are used, the Incumbent discusses the requirements with the people who have given these funds

Reserves Policy - Monies allocated to cover running costs of the church.

Further Analysis of Receipts and Payments

	Total Unrestricted Funds £	Total Designated Funds £	Total Restricted Funds £	Total 2024 £
Receipts				
a) All other giving/voluntary receipts				
Gift Aid Rebate	9,645	-	-	9,645
Legacies	100	-	-	100
Childrens society	-	-	121	121
Appeals	-	-	210	210
Gifts	-	-	632	632
Bible donations	-	-	553	553
Savings	-	-	250	250
Grant	-	-	35,042	35,042
Food Pantry Subs	-	-	4,306	4,306
Donations	888	100	14,508	15,496
	10,633	100	55,622	66,355
b) Investment income				
Proceeds from investment disposal	26,504	-	-	26,504
Bank interest	659	-	42	700
	27,163	-	42	27,205
c) Church activities				
Candles	1,625	-	-	1,625
Parochial Fees	5,679	-	-	5,679
Room Rental	50	-	101	151
Printing	1,610	-	-	1,610
Coffee	9,454	-	2,020	11,474
Room Hire	-	-	9,670	9,670
Organ recitals	-	-	416	416
Parish magazine income	725	-	-	725
Fundraising activities - raffles/tombolas etc	9,468	-	261	9,729
	28,611	-	12,468	41,080
Payments				
d) Church running expenses				
Cleaning fees	963	-	-	963
Outreach, Evangelism & Discipleship	2,815	-	-	2,815
Training costs	714	-	-	714
Food and materials	-	-	12,875	12,875
Refreshments	1,141	-	23	1,164
Working expenses	1,026	-	307	1,333
Printing, stationery and telephone	3,827	-	50	3,877
Equipment / Equipment rental	1,788	482	4,415	6,685
Church building running expenses	12,510	-	897	13,407
Legal and professional fees	1,643	-	-	1,643
Insurance	5,559	-	148	5,707
Organ \ Music \ Licences	1,043	-	552	1,595
Fundraising Costs	147	-	-	147
Staff costs	23,740	-	-	23,740
Flowers	-	155	431	586
Choir costs	-	-	450	450
Hardship supplies	-	-	328	328
Liturgical Supplies	1,400	-	-	1,400
Church repairs and maintenance	7,727	-	23,188	30,915
	66,043	637	43,664	110,344
e) Mission giving and donation				
Third party donations	-	-	7,491	7,491
	-	-	7,491	7,491