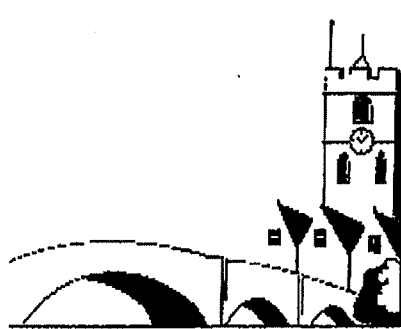


*ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING
OF ST PETER AND ST PAUL'S CHURCH
AYLESFORD*



***ANNUAL REPORT FOR PCC YEAR
2024/25***

For Meeting on
Tuesday 29th April 2025 at 7.30pm
in church

**Draft Minutes of Annual Meeting of Parishioners and
Annual Parochial Church Meeting of St Peter and St Paul's Church, Aylesford
held on Sunday 12th May 2024 at 11.45am in the Church.**

1. Welcome and Prayer.

Ruth thanked everyone for attending and opened the meeting with a prayer.

2. Apologies for absence

Emma Parren, Anita and Michael Keays, Gordon and Barbara Hunt, Peter Walton, Sheena and Des Nolan.

MEETING OF PARISHIONERS (VESTRY MEETING)

3. Election of Churchwardens

a) Ruth advised that Ian Packer is standing down as churchwarden this year due to his ongoing discernment for ordination training and thanked him for his dedication and hard work in the role.

b) Aline Ongley is willing to stand again this year and had previously been proposed and seconded. Ruth asked all those present if they were happy for Aline to be churchwarden again and all those present agreed unanimously. Ruth thanked Aline for her continuing dedication to the role, and her very hard work as a churchwarden and generally in church life.

Ruth advised that Tania Dosoruth and Sharon Stigle had both said they would be prepared to act as Assistant Churchwardens for the next year. Ruth asked all those present if they had any objections to this alternative approach. There were no objections. Ruth thanked Tania and Sharon for taking on the commitment.

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

Hard copies of the Annual Report, Draft Minutes of the previous APCM in 2023, Statement of Financial Accounts, the Independent Examiner's report and the reports from Additional Groups were distributed before the morning service. Ruth apologised for the late availability of the reports this year which was due to unforeseen circumstances.

Ruth reminded all present that only those on the Electoral Roll could vote at this meeting.

4. Approval of the Draft Minutes of the APCM held on the 14th May 2023

There were no amendments to be made and the minutes were agreed to be a true record. Matters arising from the minutes would be taken under 'any other business'.

5. Report on the numbers entered on the new Electoral Roll

Anita Keays is our Electoral Roll Officer and in her absence Ruth read the electoral roll report.

- a) The Electoral Roll is renewed every six years and was last renewed in 2019.
- b) There were 109 parishioners on the Electoral Roll as of 27th April 2024 of which 54% are resident in the parish. Since the publishing of the revised electoral roll on 30th April 2023 5 members have been removed and 5 added.

Ruth thanked Anita for her work as Electoral Roll Officer and for preparing the presentation.

6. Parish Annual Report

All the reports made in the Annual Report were taken as read and there were no amendments to be made.

7. PCC Financial Report and Accounts

Ruth advised that Peter was unwell and unable to attend. Ruth presented the main points of the financial report previously provided by Peter. Clare Hughes commented on the possible ways funds may have been moved, but without Peter present it was impossible to reply in detail. Peter had said he is willing to take on the role as Treasurer again this year. Ruth also thanked Tania Dosoruth for her work as Giving Secretary. Ruth asked if there were questions for Peter, but there were not.

8. Fabric, Goods and Ornaments Report

Ruth thanked Ian who chairs the fabric committee. Ian presented and advised that the Quinquennial Inspection was eventually carried out September 2023 and there is nothing that must be done immediately. He mentioned that the Fabric Committee consists of only the vicar, Aline (churchwarden), Bob Greenway and him. Ruth stressed the difficulties caused by the shortage of members, which mean that work gets delayed, and she asked everyone present to think about becoming a member or suggesting it to friends and family.

9. Deanery Synod Report

Ruth's brief report gave an indication of the content of Deanery Synod meetings in 2023. Ruth apologised that she had left Emma Parren out by mistake; Emma had been a representative since the annual meeting last year. Ruth advised that the Deanery Synod meet 3 times a year.

10. Vicar's Comments

Ruth had already presented her comments during the morning service and as no additional people were present at the meeting, she did not repeat them. Her comments are appended to these minutes.

11. Election of Members to the PCC

Ruth advised that as our Electoral Roll has over 100 members we can elect 12 PCC members. This number is then divided into three groups each with four members who serve a three-year term. This year the term ends for Christine Hatfield and Emma Parren with two historical vacancies. Christine is willing to stand again and has been proposed and seconded, but Emma has stepped down. Ruth thanked both Christine and Emma for their past contributions to the PCC.

These changes left 5 places available for elected members. Ian, as churchwarden, automatically became a member of the PCC and although he is unable to continue as churchwarden he is willing to stay on as a PCC member. He has been proposed and seconded. Des Nolan and Tania Dosoruth have both put their names forward to join the PCC and have been proposed and seconded. All those present agreed to all appointments. Ruth thanked Ian and Christine for staying on the PCC and Tania and Des for taking on the role.

12. Election of 1 Representative to the Deanery Synod

With 1 House of Laity vacancy available, Ruth asked if anyone at the meeting would be interested in becoming a representative. Tania Dosoruth agreed and Ian proposed, Sue Gallico seconded. All those present agreed.

13. Appointment of Independent Examiner.

The Independent Examiner, Martyn Burt, advised he was willing to continue. Agreed unanimously.

14. Any Other Business

There were no matters arising from last year's minutes.

It was agreed that a copy of the PCC minutes could be published for wider communication with church members. It was noted that members of the church can have their say on anything, but would be unable to reverse any decisions formally made by the PCC.

Clare Hughes mentioned the danger of someone entering the tower on their own to wind the clock or access the roof. All agreed that the lone working policy and risk assessment should be examined and updated if necessary, as soon as possible.

Ruth thanked the providers of all the additional reports included in the annual report. She also said, thanks were due for all the work that goes in, often unnoticed, by so many people across the breadth of church life. There were no matters arising from the additional reports.

15. Date, time and place of next AMP and APCM

Ruth suggested the 11th May 2025 in church after the Sunday morning service.

Ruth thanked everyone for attending the meeting and advised that a meeting of the new PCC to elect officers would follow immediately.

The meeting closed with The Grace.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF SS PETER & PAUL, AYLESFORD.
ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER 2024

Administrative Information

St Peter and St Paul's Church is situated in Vicarage Close. Aylesford. It is part of the Diocese of Rochester within the Church of England. The correspondence address is Church Office, The Brassey Centre, Station Road, Aylesford, ME20 7QR.

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is registered with the Charity Commission under Registration No. 1138956.

Structure, Governance and Management

PCC members who have served at any time from 1 January 2024 until the date this report was approved.

Name	Office	Dates served if not full year	Elected term ends
The Revd Ruth Peet	Incumbent		
Aline Ongley	Churchwarden		2025
Ian Packer*	Churchwarden	Until 12-05-2024	2025
Emma Parren	Elected PCC Member	Until 12-05-2024	2024
Anita Keays	Elected PCC Member		2025
Sharon Stigle	Elected PCC Member		2025
Ian Packer*	Elected PCC Member	Since 12-05-2024 Until 01-09-2024	2025
	Deanery Synod Representative	Until 17-07-2024	
Ann Beale	Elected PCC Member Secretary	Until 22-08-2024	2026
Ann Butterworth	Elected PCC Member		2026
Sue Gallico	Elected PCC member		2026
Janet Holdstock	Elected PCC Member Pastoral Assistant		2026
Tania Dosoruth	Elected PCC Member Deanery Synod Representative	Since 12-05-2024 Since 12-05-2024	2027
Christine Hatfield	Elected PCC Member	Until 25-02-2025	2027
Desmond Nolan	Elected PCC Member Deanery Synod Representative	Since 12-05-2024 Since 17-07-2024	2027
Sheena Nolan	Elected PCC Member	Since 20-06-2024	2027

Peter Smith (Lay Reader) and Peter Walton (Treasurer) are not members of the PCC but have a standing invitation to all PCC meetings. Christina Hellyar became PCC Secretary on 22nd August 2024, but is not a member of the PCC. *Ian Packer stepped down as churchwarden but continued as an elected member.

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

Property Letting Agent: Simon Miller and Company

Bank: CAF (Charities Aid Foundation)

Independent Examiner: Martyn Burt B.Sc. (Hons), ACMA, CGMA

Aims and Purposes

The PCC of St Peter and St Paul has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical; this includes the provision of regular church services, including baptisms, weddings and funerals, and the provision of activities and events to involve and support the wider parish community. It also has maintenance responsibilities for the Church of St Peter and St Paul.

Objectives and Activities

The PCC is committed to providing, to the whole parish community, the means of worshipping, growing in faith, and serving and supporting each other, so that together, we may realise a vision of everyone in the parish coming to flourish, as individuals and as community, through lived experience of the love and grace of God.

To achieve this objective, the activities of the PCC include the provision of church services, baptisms, weddings and funerals, the provision of means of spiritual development and practical and pastoral support to the parish community, and the responsible and efficient care of all resources, volunteers, employees and church buildings.

We have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, and in particular the supplementary guidance on charities for the advancement of religion. We believe that our work contributes public benefit through the development of the spiritual well-being of individuals, the practical outworking of faith in wider society, and the support for those in need. We deliver on our responsibility to maintain and provide the parish church and its services for worship, including baptisms, weddings and funerals, for all in the parish.

Church Electoral Roll

As of 31st December 2024 there were 109 on the electoral roll of which 46% are not resident in the Parish.

Attendance 2024

Figures for 2023 are shown in brackets after the 2024 figures, e.g. 24 (22).

During 2024 the average Sunday attendance on a 'usual' Sunday (i.e. not on major festivals or during peak holiday periods) was 43 (45) adults and 5 (12) under 16s.

The average attendance at the 23 (22) services held at 8am, was 10 (10) adults.

The average number of Zoom attendees at services held at 10am was 5 (7).

Special services included Easter Day (77 (75) adults and 6 (6) under 16s); Harvest Festival (64 (54) adults and 17 (16) under 16s); Remembrance Sunday (67 (131) adults and 6 (78) under 16s); Christmas Eve Nativity Service (51 (47) adults and 22 (19) under 16s); Christmas Eve Midnight Communion (52 (78) adults and 0 (0) under 16s). These figures do not include Zoom attendees.

Apart from Christmas Eve Nativity and Midnight Communion, the figures in the paragraph above give the attendance for the main 10am Sunday service only. The total number of people attending worship at services on Easter Day was 83 (90), and the total number attending on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day was 149 (168).

Outside Sundays and occasional offices (baptisms, weddings and funerals) the total number of people attending special services held for the congregation and local community, in church, was 618 (340). The total number of people attending special services held specifically for civic organisations or schools, in church, was 570 (675).

This year, 2024, we reported a worshipping community of 150 (154). This included 24 age 0-17 (27), 61 age 18-69 (61) and 65 age 70+ (66). (The worshipping community is people who attend a church service (not necessarily *in church*) at least once a month.)

36 (26) people (24 adults and 12 under 16s) joined and 18 (14) (11 adults and 7 under 16s) people left the worshipping community during 2024; including, sadly, those who died (Susan Holmes and Margaret Terry).

This year 10 (10) babies, children and young people, and 0 (1) adult were baptised, 7 (5) couples were married in church, 9 (10) funerals were held in church, 4 (9) in a crematorium and 6 (10) burials of ashes were conducted.

PCC's Annual Report on its Proceedings and Activities of the Parish Generally

PCC Review

The PCC's monthly meeting plan continued through the year with standard 'business' meetings, alternating with 'exploratory' meetings to look at selected issues in more depth. The exploratory meetings have been helpful and enjoyable; subjects have included finance strategy and project priorities, discussion and adoption of the Prayers of Love and Faith, addressing a shortage of volunteers, building the case for the faculty for the proposed AV system and planning a Giving Sunday and ways of encouraging financial support from the wider community.

An extraordinary meeting was held on 3rd July 2024, to focus on the worsening financial situation, and to agree a definitive list of six actions to increase income.

The shortage of volunteers to carry out all the activities needed for a flourishing church, remains a real problem, and this year has severely hindered finance, fabric and mission-related activities and progress. The PCC has continued to respond by being more selective of tasks and projects to undertake, by communicating about roles needed with limited success, but reduced team of available volunteers is now overloaded.

Thanks are due for the volume of work undertaken by the Churchwarden, Treasurer, PCC members and many others.

Our vicar, Ruth, continued to work tirelessly and as collaboratively as possible, across many areas of church ministry and administration.

Safeguarding

By Sheena Nolan (Parish Safeguarding Officer)

The PCC is committed to good safeguarding practice. It has formally adopted the House of Bishop's Safeguarding Policy and is complying with the duty to have due regard to the House of Bishop's guidance on safeguarding.

At the end of the year the Safeguarding Committee members were Revd Ruth Peet, Sheena Nolan, Aline Ongley, and Sharon Stigle. Janet Holdstock retired from the position of Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) in November 2024. Thanks are extended for her dedication to this role over many years.

Sheena Nolan stepped into the role of PSO in November 2024, having completed Leadership safeguarding training and been safely recruited. Sheena receives regular updates of policies and information from the diocese, and has support from the PSO online group. Sheena became Adult Safeguarding Representative and Sharon Stigle continued in her role as Children's Safeguarding representative. Aline remained the Disclosure Officer and kept all DBS records up to date.

The Safeguarding Committee met regularly throughout the year and undertook all required training in safeguarding. The committee implements national and diocesan policies and guidance on safeguarding and continued to report at every meeting of the PCC. It continued to safely recruit both paid and voluntary workers.

Throughout the year risk was assessed and updated, and concerns were addressed. A new review process was introduced which enables better encouragement of volunteers, and better communication between volunteers and supervisors.

On behalf of the PCC, the safeguarding team continues to ensure that any concerns or complaints are promptly addressed, following procedures, reporting to the Diocese Safeguarding Advisor without delay. This includes keeping all training records. Encouraging church leaders and members, as appropriate, to complete all necessary safeguarding was an ongoing task.

The annual safeguarding service was held on 8th September 2024, to help the congregation remain aware of the importance of safeguarding. All the congregation and all role holders in church life, as well as the safeguarding team share the responsibility of keeping our church and church activities a safe place for children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable.

A 'no photography' policy is maintained for all activities attended by children and young people.

Safeguarding information was displayed as required and kept up to date.

Worship

The monthly pattern of Sunday services remains as standard Common Worship Order One Holy Communion at 8am and 10am on the first and third Sundays of the month, with Services of the Word held on the second (with Communion) and fourth (Family Service) Sundays. These services continue to allow less formality and more flexibility and connection, and as agreed by the PCC, the more traditional services have been approached with greater connection in mind (for example, a clear theme, and the explanation of the meaning of hymns and readings). The Family Service held on the fourth Sunday of the month, continues to include songs from the Youth Choir, and is particularly well attended. The style of worship continues to be very much appreciated by the large majority of worshippers.

The Lay Ministers continue to be involved in the creation and delivery of services, although, one of the two Licenced Lay Ministers continues to be very busy elsewhere, which has meant they are largely unable to be involved in church ministry.

Bishop Simon visited Aylesford for the 10am Service on 11th February 2024 and preached on 'Everyday Faith'.

We have continued to Zoom the 10am main Sunday service, to reach an average online congregation of 5 adults.

Monthly services were also conducted by the Pastoral Assistant, Janet Holdstock, and other helpers from the Pastoral Team, in 4 local care/nursing homes and sheltered housing.

Special services included Good Friday 'Stones and Shadows', the APCM Sunday Service, the Patronal Festival, the Safeguarding Sunday service mentioned above, All Souls' Day 'Remembering Loved Ones' and 'Lights of Love' for Advent.

Occasional Offices have continued as required.

We were very fortunate to have Ann Ruby (ordinand) on placement from 19th May until 27th October 2024. Ann contributed to worship and church ministry more widely, with warmth and wisdom.

However, we were sad to lose our own ordinand, Ian Packer, who was moved to the Kent Downs and West Malling Team for wider church experience during ordination training, on 8th September 2024.

Pastoral Ministry

The Pastoral Team continued to meet regularly throughout the year and remained in touch with approximately 50 people in the parish, by phone and through visiting. Communion was regularly taken to those who requested it. Pastoral team membership has reduced and an intention to review the aims and purpose of the team has been carried over to 2025.

During 2024, we continued the provision to the community through the Community Hub and associated activities mentioned below, and this has meant that some of those with pastoral concerns could enjoy fellowship with others.

We have continued to send the money donated for coffee on Sunday mornings to charities chosen by the PCC.

Mission

During 2024, we have continued to provide a Community Hub offering a variety of ways of engaging with the wider parish, with the aim of supporting the wellbeing of the whole community. This includes a weekly 'Place of Welcome', a food bank, a Dementia Café and organised litter picking.

The local community continues to support the food bank, with some schools and organisations donating regularly. Volunteer helpers include church goers and non-churchgoers.

Through continued contact with external agencies (such as Involve Kent), we remain able to offer food bank and community hub clients any extra help needed, such as help with social housing or debt management.

Other missional/social activities included a summer fair, a day trip to Capel-le-Ferne and Folkestone, and Christmas carols in the village square. Memorial services at the Heart of Kent Hospice and The Friars were supported by the vicar. As chaplain, the vicar also led the Annual Sea Sunday service for the Maidstone Royal Naval Association, and supported other events. The vicar also led Remembrance Services in the Royal British Legion Industries (RBLI) village, for both RBLI and RBL.

In January 2024 we completed 'The Bereavement Journey', a programme to help those grieving, and feedback showed that it had been much appreciated.

A monthly 'Reflective Walking' group, led by Emma Parren (LLM) continued throughout the year.

Throughout the year we continued to work toward the Eco Church Bronze Award, which we gained on 18th December 2024.

Families, Children and Young People

At the monthly Family Service (mentioned above) we continue to provide a staffed activity table for the young, in keeping with the theme of the service. It remains very popular. In addition, the children's area in church is used regularly by Sunday and Occasional Office families.

Although the average overall number of under 16s attending church has dropped this year, the family services continue to be well attended, with an average of 17 under 16s.

End of term services were held in church for St Peter's Church of England School. Christingle services were held in church for St Mark's Church of England School. The vicar assisted St Marks with the development of the school vision, which directly supported the positive SIAMS result (in 2025), and also continued to assist in both church schools with Christian teaching and support, as and when requested.

Under the management of a new group of parents and church representatives, the Aylesford Community Youth Choir continued to move from being the responsibility of the PCC to setting up as a charity in its own right.

Relationships with the uniformed groups were maintained, with a highlight being the visit of the 1st Aylesford Horsa Beavers to church for their awards ceremony (21st February 2024).

Spiritual Growth

In addition to Sunday services, in 2024 we ran 'The Bible Course' during Lent, which was much appreciated.

The two Connect (Small) Groups started in 2023 continue to flourish.

Also, Janet Holdstock (Pastoral Assistant until Pentecost 2025) continued to lead a weekly Bible Study group.

For the second year running, we held a 'meeting-free' Lent to allow everyone the time for individual and corporate Lent reflection. All PCC members felt that they and the church had again benefited from this, and it led to revising the committee meeting schedule to reduce the frequency of meetings.

Spiritual growth continues to be encouraged through a number of opportunities for sharing and discussion, during and after Sunday services.

Health & Safety Activities

Health and Safety considerations are incorporated into the responsibilities of the Fabric Committee.

Brassey Centre

The annual rental charge paid by the PCC to the Brassey Trust was again waived for 2024. On behalf of the PCC, the church administrator continued to be responsible for Brassey Centre lettings, and for oversight of the maintenance of the main building.

Finance

By Peter Walton (Treasurer) and Revd Ruth Peet

2024 Continued to be affected by domestic and world events beyond our control. Income wise we continued to fall short of our needs. This situation was highlighted in the 2023 End of Year accounts. The PCC has given this considerable thought and put together plans and actions that are now underway to improve our income.

We finished the year slightly better off than we budgeted by £2,818 with an actual deficit of £17,057.

Looking at expenditure, we managed to finish £8,847 under the budget, supporting the general view that we have done well to control our expenditure without any detriment to our good works.

Overall, after transfers we finished with an overall General Fund loss of £17,777. This loss has been covered by removing Funds from our Designated Funds, which continue to be depleted.

We know from last year that the Independent Examiner noted a concern with the 2023 accounts loss, that we are likely to run out of money within a couple of years if this trend continued. He has raised the issue again more formally for the 2024 accounts and required the PCC to respond with a plan to at least

neutralize these losses. The PCC had already regularly considered the situation; for example on 3rd July 2024, had held an extraordinary meeting to identify and prioritise plans to increase income. The response of the PCC was communicated to the Independent Examiner on 18th March 2025 as follows:

The PCC had been aware of declining income against expenditure for a number of years, but it was with the change to the current treasurer that the situation was able to be addressed in more detail, more effectively. The current situation for 2024, of a £17000 deficit that has been covered using unrestricted designated funds, is clearly understood by all PCC members.

The PCC have not been unaware or inactive regarding the financial situation, and have put a lot of effort, over the last year, into addressing it. In particular, an extraordinary PCC meeting was held in July 2024, to discuss mainly how to increase income.

Six aims were agreed:

1. Legacies

To produce a package of easily distributable information, for church and for inclusion in the proposed mailing list (point 3 below). To look into discounted will writing.

2. Giving Sunday

Another Giving Sunday to be arranged. Legacies to be included.

3. Whole Parish Appeal

Step 1 - the cost of mailing the whole parish to be established.

4. Parish Share

Diocesan finance to be informed. to hold back £10K from payments made during the rest of the year.

5. Donation from Brassey Trust

The Brassey Trust to be asked if it will support the church by donating £10K.

6. Increase the Letting of the Brassey Centre.

Longer term project. Step 1 - ask the Brassey Trust to commit to the refurbishment of the centre.

Like many organisations, we are suffering from a shortage of volunteers, but we have progressed the above aims as follows:

1. Legacy information is on the website. The package is yet to be developed. Legacies were mentioned at giving Sunday held on 9th March 2025.

2. Giving Sunday. Held 9th March 2025. Results awaited.

3. *Whole Parish Appeal. Cost established. Working party yet to be organised. This is the aim that the PCC have agreed to prioritise at present.*

4. *Parish Share. Was reduced by £10K in 2024.*

5. *Donation from Brassey Trust. The Brassey Trust has agreed to fund a specified project to the value of £10K. Project to be specified.*

6. *Increase the letting of the Brassey Centre. Agreement gained from the Brassey Trust. Quotes for refurbishment have been obtained. Work due to start soon.*

In addition to the above 6 aims, we also discussed 140 The Avenue. We have since completed work to establish the ownership of that house and confirmed that it is owned by the PCC. So that house is available to sell if necessary. Obviously, pastoral issues concerning the long-term tenants cannot be ignored, and the parish would need to plan carefully for the use of the money, rather than allowing it to be used just to plug the deficit. The PCC are well aware of that.

Fortunately, our Food Bank, Community hub and Warm Spaces services remain financially self-supporting. Thanks to the efforts of the team involved in raising funds and attracting donations.

Once again, a big thank to the Treasury Team for all their support and hard work.

Reserves Policy 2023

By Peter Walton (Treasurer)

In addition to money designated for specific purposes including investments, it is the policy of the PCC to maintain (if possible) a balance of Liquid Unrestricted Funds which equates to four months Unrestricted Expenses, to be available to cover emergency situations that may arise from time to time. For 2024 four months Unrestricted Expenses amounted to circa £31,250. Our Actual balance of Liquid Unrestricted Funds amounts to £25,548. This is a little under that required by our policy and highlights the concerns with the depletion of our reserves.

Annual Report of Fabric, Goods and Ornaments

By Aline Ongley (Churchwarden)

The Fabric Committee has continued to work to preserve, maintain and improve the fabric of the church.

There is still work outstanding from the quinquennial report of 2024 although some areas have been addressed, arising from emergency roof repairs, following ingress of water to the west end of the church. This work was carried out in November 2024. A further quote has been obtained for works to the tower roof and guttering; the List B faculty has been obtained and an application has been made for a grant towards this work from the Friends of Kent Churches, which will be considered at their next session in June 2025. Quotes still need to be obtained for major internal plaster repairs, but this requires the use of scaffolding, which is expensive, to be able to inspect properly. A list of tradesmen who have carried out this type of work for the diocese is being sought. Some of the work may be eligible for insurance cover as it was due to water ingress.

All statutory checks were carried out as due, i.e gas safety, fire extinguishers. Also, the 5-year electrical installation certification and the resulting minor remedial works were completed. Some other minor electrical works were completed.

The request to move the TMRO to a full faculty in respect of the re-ordering is still in progress with the DAC. Further information was submitted as requested in Sept 2024 but nothing further heard.

The demand for parking (from school teachers and others) in the small church car park continues. As a trial, 4 marker posts were placed in the churchyard car park to mark 3 bays to be kept exclusively for church use/people attending to graves etc. only. The scheme appears to be working well.

Quotes were obtained for a new audio-visual system, and a preferred supplier was chosen and informed. However there has been no further progress due to the lack of someone to oversee the project.

A church de-clutter and cleaning day was held on 31st August 2024.

The fabric committee would benefit from more members, but we were pleased to welcome Andy Stigle to the committee. He has assisted with minor repairs and his help is much appreciated.

We were also joined, later in the year, by Russ Barnes, who has a wealth of experience in dealing with contractors and building projects. Russ will be an asset to the committee.

Deanery Synod 2024

The Deanery Synod provides for parishes to channel their views to the Diocesan Synod and implements decisions made by the General Synod. During 2024 our representatives were Revd Ruth Peet, Ian Packer, (until 17th July 2024), Emma Parren (until 12th May 2024), Tania Dosoruth (from 12th May 2024) and Desmond Nolan (from 17th July 2024).

There were 3 meetings held on 7th February, 18th June and 7th October in the parishes of Coxheath, Aylesford and Snodland respectively.

Presentations were given on the work of the Diocesan Advisory Committee, the Diocesan Board of Education, the Diocesan Safeguarding Team, and the Environment and Eco Church. Revd Wil North (Area Dean until July 2024), also presented on 'Life as an Associate Archdeacon' and his sabbatical.

Revd Danielle Pearson-Smith was appointed Area Dean in July 2024.

The pastoral reorganisation related to the Bradbourne Benefice and Burham & Wouldham was completed, and new priests were licensed in each place in September and October 2024.

A deanery confirmation service was held on 17th November at Snodland, and we were delighted that Lucy Butler from our congregation, was one of the candidates.

PCC ACCOUNTS

Year Ending 31 December 2024

SS Peter & Paul, Aylesford

**Accruals Accounts using
SORP 2015**

Year Ending 31st December 2023

SS Peter & Paul, Aylesford

Accruals Accounts using SORP 2015

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF SS PETER & PAUL, AYLESFORD

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted General Funds £	Unrestricted Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2024 £	TOTAL FUNDS 2023 £
Income and Endowments						
<i>Voluntary income</i>	2a	49,238		40,144	89,382	71,577
<i>Activities for generating funds</i>	2b	6,702			6,702	9,617
<i>Income from investments</i>	2c	15,666	941		16,607	15,124
<i>Church activities</i>	2d	5,046			5,046	6,833
<i>Other incoming resources</i>	2e					12,055
Total income		76,653	941	40,144	117,737	115,206
Expenditure						
<i>Church activities</i>	3a	91,197		14,142	105,339	112,877
<i>Raising Funds</i>	3b	1,003			1,003	2,549
<i>Investment Management Costs</i>	3c	1,510			1,510	2,605
Total expenditure		93,710		14,142	107,852	118,031
Net income/(expenditure) before investment gains		(17,057)	941	26,001	9,885	(2,825)
Net gains on investments						10,000
Net income/(expenditure)		(17,057)	941	26,001	9,885	7,174
Transfers between funds		17,057	(17,777)	720		
Net movement in funds		(0)	(16,836)	26,721	9,885	7,174

Total funds brought forward at 1 January 2024		442,384	59,945	502,328	495,155
Total funds carried forward at 31 December 2024		(0)	425,548	512,214	502,328

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF SS PETER & PAUL, AYLESFORD

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023 for Comparative purposes

	Notes	Unrestricted General Funds £	Unrestricted Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2023 £
Income and Endowments					
<i>Voluntary income</i>	2a	59,104	6,801	5,672	71,577
<i>Activities for generating funds</i>	2b	9,617	0	0	9,617
<i>Income from investments</i>	2c	15,124	0	0	15,123
<i>Church activities</i>	2d	6,833	0	0	6,833
<i>Other incoming resources</i>	2e	0	0	12,055	12,055
Total income		<u>90,678</u>	<u>6,801</u>	<u>17,727</u>	<u>115,206</u>
Expenditure					
<i>Church activities</i>	3a	96,463	2,611	13,803	112,877
<i>Raising Funds</i>	3b	2,549	0	0	2,549
<i>Investment Management Costs</i>	3c	2,245	360	0	2,605
Total expenditure		<u>101,257</u>	<u>2,971</u>	<u>13,803</u>	<u>118,031</u>
Net income/(expenditure) before investment gains		(10,579)	3,829	3,924	(2,825)
Net gains on investments		0	0	0	0
Net income/(expenditure)		(10,579)	3,829	3,924	(2,826)
Transfers between funds		10,579	(12,158)	1,579	0
Net movement in funds		<u>0</u>	<u>(8,329)</u>	<u>5,503</u>	<u>(2,826)</u>
<hr/>					
Total funds brought forward at 1 January 2023		0	450,712	54,441	505,154
Total funds carried forward at 31 December 2023		<u>0</u>	<u>442,384</u>	<u>59,948</u>	<u>502,328</u>

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF SS PETER & PAUL, AYLESFORD

BALANCE SHEET AT 31 DECEMBER 2024

	Notes	2024	2023
		£	£
Fixed assets			
Investment Assets	5	400,000	400,000
Investments	6		
Total fixed assets		<u>400,000</u>	<u>400,000</u>
Current assets			
Debtors	8	1,557	2,959
Short term deposits		109,675	18,407
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>2,776</u>	<u>87,647</u>
		114,008	109,014
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	9	<u>(1,794)</u>	<u>(2,891)</u>
Net current assets		112,214	106,123
Total assets less current liabilities		<u>512,214</u>	<u>506,123</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due after one year	9		
NET ASSETS		<u><u>512,214</u></u>	<u><u>506,123</u></u>

Funds	7		
Unrestricted General Funds	10	(0)	-
Unrestricted Designated Funds	10	425,548	442,384
Restricted funds	10	86,666	59,945
		<u><u>512,214</u></u>	<u><u>502,328</u></u>

Approved by the Parochial Church Council on

and signed on its behalf

Chairman

The accompanying notes form a part of these financial statements.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF SS PETER & PAUL, AYLESFORD

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

1. Accounting policies

a Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 together with applicable accounting standards and SORP 2015.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention as modified by the inclusion of investments at market value and the revaluation of fixed assets. The financial statements include all transactions, assets and liabilities for which the PCC is responsible in law. They do not include the accounts of church groups that owe their affiliation to another body, nor those which are informal gatherings of church members.

b Funds accounting

Funds held by the PCC are:

Unrestricted funds - general funds which can be used for PCC ordinary purposes

Designated funds - monies set aside by the PCC out of unrestricted funds for specific future purposes or projects.

Restricted funds - a) income from trusts or endowments which may be expended only on those restricted objects provided in the terms of the trust or bequest; b) donations or grants received for a specific object or invited by the PCC for a specific object. The funds may only be expended on the specific object for which they were given. Any balance remaining unspent at the end of the year is carried forward as a balance on that fund.

c Incoming resources

All incoming resources are accounted for gross as far as practicable.

Voluntary Income

Collections are recognised when received.

Planned giving receivable is recognised only when received.

Income tax recoverable on Gift Aid donations is recognised when the income is recognised.

Grants and legacies are recognised when the PCC is legally entitled to the amount due and receipt is probable.

Income from investments

Dividends are accounted for when due and payable. Interest entitlements are accounted for as they accrue.

All other income

All other income is recognised when it is receivable.

Gains and losses on investments

Realised gains are recognised when the investments are sold

Unrealised gains and losses are accounted for on revaluation on 31 December.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF SS PETER & PAUL, AYLESFORD

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

d Resources used

Resources expended are accounted for on an accruals basis and are accounted for gross.

Grants

Grants and donations are accounted for when paid over, or when awarded where the award creates a binding obligation on the PCC.

Church Activities

The diocesan parish contribution is accounted for when paid. Any parish contribution unpaid at 31 December is provided for in these accounts as an operational (though not a legal) liability and is shown as a creditor in the balance sheet.

e Fixed Assets

Tangible fixed assets

Consecrated and beneficed property of any kind is excluded from the accounts by s.10(2) of the Charities Act 2011.

Movable church furnishing held by the Vicar and Churchwardens on special trust for the PCC and which require a faculty for disposal, are accounted as inalienable property unless consecrated. They are listed in the church's inventory which can be inspected. For inalienable property acquired prior to 2006 there is insufficient cost information available and therefore such assets are not valued in the accounts. Individual items acquired since 2006 have been capitalised in the accounts and depreciated over their useful economic life.

All expenditure on consecrated or beneficed buildings and individual items costing under £2000 are written off in the year they were incurred.

Depreciation

Depreciation is calculated to write down the cost of tangible fixed assets, excluding freehold properties, over their expected useful lives. The rates generally applicable are:

Fixtures and fittings	25% straight line
Computer equipment	50% straight line

Investments

Investments are stated at market value at the balance sheet date.

f Current Assets

Amounts owing to the PCC at 31 December in respect of fees, rents or other income are shown as debtors less provision for amounts that may prove uncollectible.

Short-term deposits include cash held on deposit either with the Diocese of Rochester or at the bank

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF SS PETER & PAUL, AYLESFORD

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

2 Incoming resources

	Unrestricted General Funds £	Unrestricted Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2024 £	Unrestricted General Funds £	Unrestricted Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2023 £
a Voluntary income								
Planned Giving	36,740			36,740	42,522			42,522
Income tax recoverable	6,865			6,865	8,788			8,788
Collections at all services	2,142			2,142	1,414			1,414
Sundry donations and appeals	3,491		31,644	35,135	6,380	6,801	5,672	18,853
Grants			8,500	8,500				
Legacies								
	49,238		40,144	89,382	59,104	6,801	5,672	71,577
b Activities for generating funds								
General Fundraising	2,994			2,994	5,586			5,586
Brassey Centre Lettings (Note 12)	3,709			3,709	4,031			4,031
	6,702			6,702	9,617			9,617
c Investment income								
Dividends and interest	2,516	941		3,457	2,324			2,324
Rent from Property	13,150			13,150	12,800			12,800
	15,666	941		16,607	15,124			15,124
d Income from Church Activities								
Fees from weddings, funerals, etc.	5,046			5,046	6,833			6,833
	5,046			5,046	6,833			6,833
e Other other incoming resources								
Other Income - Insurance Claim								
Grants							12,055	12,055
							12,055	12,055
Total incoming resources	76,653	941	40,144	117,737	90,678	6,801	17,727	115,206

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF SS PETER & PAUL, AYLESFORD

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

3 Expenditure

	Unrestricted General Funds £	Unrestricted Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2024 £	Unrestricted General Funds £	Unrestricted Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2023 £
a Church Activities								
Missionary and charitable giving:								
Royal British Legion	35			35	35			35
	35			35	35			35
Ministry costs:								
Diocesan Offer	38,300			38,300	46,000			46,000
Expenses	600			600	836			836
Vicarage costs	4,369			4,369	4,189			4,189
Other Ministry Costs	578			578	374			374
Church running expenses								
Utilities	6,169			6,169	6,137			6,137
Insurance	5,909			5,909	5,271			5,271
Organ/Piano and other	652			652	1,092		49	1,141
Church maintenance	2,361		6,200	8,561	715	2,348		3,063
Upkeep of Churchyard	480			480	140			140
Upkeep of services	4,674			4,674	4,583		3,395	7,978
Flowers	650			650	1,340			1,340
Training, Mission and Outreach	385			385	295	263	20	578
Brassey Centre running costs (Note 12)								
Utilities	4,107		1,829	5,936	2,965		1,497	4,462
Insurance	162			162	507			507
Cleaning & Refuse	5,376			5,376	5,130			5,130
Rent								
Food Bank			2,857	2,857			6,979	6,979
Community Hub			2,593	2,593			1,786	1,786
Dementia Café			664	664			77	77
Parish Office & Administration	16,390			16,390	16,855			16,855
	91,197		14,142	105,339	96,463	2,611	13,803	112,877
b Raising Funds								
Stewardship costs	75			75	282			282
General fundraising	928			928	2,267			2,267
	1,003			1,003	2,549			2,549
c Investment Management Costs								
Rental Property Repairs	44			44	648	360		1,008
Insurance	357			357	522			522
Agents Fees	1,109			1,109	1,075			1,075
	1,510			1,510	2,245	360		2,605
Total expenditure	93,710		14,142	107,852	101,257	2,971	13,803	118,031

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF SS PETER & PAUL, AYLESFORD

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

4 Staff costs

	2024	2023
	£	£
a Wages and salaries	<u>16,555</u>	<u>17,996</u>

During the year the PCC employed an Organist and a Parish Clerk and made PAYE deductions and payments on their behalf.

b Payments to PCC members and related parties

Mrs A Keays, a member of the PCC, received remuneration for her role as Parish Administrator of £8,679 during 2023 (2022 £5,799). Her husband, Michael, received £2,412 (2022 £2,412) as remuneration for his role as Organist.

No other payments, apart from re-imbursed expenses and small thank you gifts, were made to PCC members.

The total amount of donations to the PCC made by PCC members and related parties in 2024 was £6,758 (incl. Gift Aid), (£10,704 in 2023)

5 Investment Assets

	Freehold land and buildings	Church equipment	TOTAL
	£	£	£
Market valuation			
At 1 January 2024	400,000		400,000
Additions			
Disposals			
Revaluation			
At 31 December 2024	<u>400,000</u>		<u>400,000</u>

The freehold land and buildings comprises of the rental property at 140 The Avenue, Aylesford and is currently let to a tenant. Wards provided a market value assessment as at 31.12.2024 of £400,000.

6 Investments

The PCC does not currently hold any Investment assets other than 140 The Avenue.

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

7 Analysis of Net assets by fund

	Unrestricted General Funds £	Unrestricted Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2024 £	Unrestricted General Funds £	Unrestricted Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £
Fixed assets for church use								
Investment fixed assets		400,000		400,000		400,000		400,000
Current assets	1,091	25,548	87,369	114,008	1,136	42,384	61,700	105,219
Current liabilities	(1,091)		(703)	(1,794)	(1,136)		(1,755)	(2,891)
Long term liabilities								
		425,548	86,666	512,214		442,384	59,945	502,328

8 Debtors

	2024 £	2023 £
Income tax recoverable - General Fund	1,557	2,959
Prepayments and accrued income		
	1,557	2,959

9 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2024 £	2023 £
Unbilled Utilities/IE Fee	415	395
Rent in received in advance	550	500
Other Expenses	313	346
PAYE Liability	126	241
DBF Fees	258	1,131
Hand Bell Ringers Funds	132	278
	1,794	2,891

Creditors: amounts falling due after one year

	2024 £	2023 £
	nil	nil

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF SS PETER & PAUL, AYLESFORD

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

10 Statement of funds

	Bal b/fwd 1 Jan 2024	Income	Expenditure	Investment Gains	Transfers between funds	Bal c/fwd 31 Dec 2024
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted General Fund						
General fund	0	76,653	(93,710)	0	17,057	(0)
	0	76,653	(93,710)		17,057	(0)
Unrestricted Designated Funds						
140 The Avenue Repair Fund	5,990	0	0		0	5,990
140 The Avenue Property Fund	400,000	0	0	0	0	400,000
Church Repair Fund	7,463	941	0		0	8,404
Legacy Fund	28,931	0	0		(17,777)	11,154
	442,384	941	0	0	(17,777)	425,548
Restricted Fund						
Organ Fund	2,272	0	0		0	2,272
Youth Choir Fund	0	1,067	0		0	1,067
Fabric Fund	44,154	25,000	(6,200)		0	62,954
Community Hub/Warm Space Fund	1,025	7,234	(3,507)		0	4,752
Community Engagement	5,445	750	0		0	6,195
Audio Visual Fund	0	0	0		720	720
Dementia Café	281	1,017	(664)		0	634
Food Bank	6,769	5,075	(3,772)		0	8,073
	59,945	40,144	(14,142)	0	720	86,666
Total funds	502,328	117,737	(107,852)	0	0	512,214

The **140 Avenue Repair Fund** is for monies ring-fenced by the PCC for repairs to this property.

The **140 The Avenue Property Fund** represents the market value of the property.

The **Church Repair Fund** is for monies ring-fenced by the PCC for Church repairs.

The **Legacy Fund** was set up in 2017 to ring-fence the monies received from the Mr B Eddy legacy. It is intended to spend this mainly on church repairs and some on music resources.

The **Youth Choir Fund** was created in 2018 from a grant of £4,500 to fund the Junior Choir Masters quarterly honorarium.

The **Restricted Organ Fund** is for monies raised or donated towards future maintenance costs of the Church organ.

The **Restricted Fabric Fund** is for monies raised or donated towards future maintenance costs of the Church

The **Restricted Community Engagement Fund** is for monies raised or donated towards the Church's Community Engagement Projects listed below. The monies can be split between those projects at the discretion of the PCC.

The **Restricted Food Bank Fund** is for monies raised or donated towards the setting up and running of the Church's Food Bank.

The **Restricted Community Hub/Warm Space Fund** is for monies raised or donated towards the setting up and running of the Church's Communi

The **Audio Visual Fund** is more monies raised or donated towards improving the Church's AV system.

The **Restricted Dementia Cafe Fund** is for monies raised or donated towards the setting up and running of the Church's Dementia Cafe.

11 Conduit Funds (Agency Collections)

These are funds received by the PCC on behalf of others i.e. as a result of a special collection for a charity. They are not PCC funds and are not included in income or expenditure but are given in this note for information. Please note that these figures do not include cheques received but made out in favour of the charity; these were passed on to the organization involved.

	£
Air Ambulance	158
Children's Society	194
Crossroads	150
Involve Kent	182
Family Trust	144
	<hr/>
	828
	<hr/>

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF SS PETER & PAUL, AYLESFORD

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

Brassey Centre

These activities attract income and expenditure and the respective net positions are set out below for informaton.

Brassey Centre

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
Income	3,709	4,031
Expenditure	9,646	8,602
Surplus/(Shortfall)	(5,937)	(4,571)

adventus accounting solutions

Supporting Charitable Organisations

17 April 2025

Independent Examiner's report to the Member/Trustees of St Peter and St Paul Aylesford

I report on the accounts for the year ended 31 December 2024 which are set out on the pages following.

Respective responsibilities of the Trustees and Independent Examiner

The church's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The church's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to

- Examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- Follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- State whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of Independent Examiner's Statement

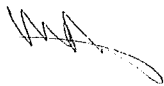
My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent Examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- (1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; or
 - to prepare accounts which accord with these accounting records have not been met; or
- (2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Yours sincerely



Martyn Burt

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Additional Reports

Bellringers and Steeple Keepers Report

During the course of 2024 we had had one ringer returning to ring after a break of some years and another who is learning... Ringing for Sunday services is now only 3 or 4 and 5 at best. Though sometimes can be as low as 1. Nevertheless, we continue to call the faithful to church.

We have continued to run successful weekly practices, helped by a number of visiting ringers regularly attending.

On 6th June 2024 we rang 80 changes of Plain Bob Doubles to commemorate the 80th anniversary of D-Day. We also rang a quarter peal on 8th June 2024 in commemoration. Three other quarter peals were during the year including on 14th December to mark Robin and Helen Turner's last service at Aylesford.

We have also rung for a number of weddings and funerals throughout the year. Again, we have had to rely on help from others to fulfil these commitments, especially the funerals, and increasingly weddings, which are during the working week and some of our existing band are working or at school.

Paul Bastow, our Steeple Keeper, continues to undertake periodic inspections of the fabric of the bells and tower, including the roof. He also ensures the flag is flown from the tower roof on appropriate occasions.

The winding of the church clock has become an onerous task. As a result I am pursuing the possibility of installing an electric winding mechanism with help from Mark Elvers, who is the Tower Captain and steeple keeper at ST Michael and All Angels in Maidstone. Although this is still a work in progress the latest version of the winding mechanism seems to be working quite well. and involves no alteration or modifications to the clock. Thereby obviating the need for a faculty. The cost will be borne by me.

Finally, I am not able to ring at the moment, as I suffered a stroke whilst on holiday in Malta in November. While recovering back home, I was hospitalised over the New Year with pneumonia. I am happy to say I am recovering well from those tribulations. In the meantime I am most grateful to Shona Clark, one of our band of ringers for stepping into the breach and running ringing at the tower in my temporary absence.

Choir Report

As with last year, very little has changed with the choir over the last 12 months. Having lost two members since from this time last year (one being Ian, who is now in training for the ministry); we were glad to welcome one new member, so overall our numbers have eased by one: As ever, we

are always on the look-out for more singers!

We continue to support the singing of the traditional services (1st and 3rd Sundays of the month), and some others; the annual carol service was rather more of a challenge than usual this year, on account of sickness; with the support of some auxiliary members and a change to the original music plans, we managed, but are hopeful that we don't experience similar problems again next Christmas!

The Community Choir (of youngsters under the direction of Paul Richards) has grown massively over the last few months and continues to provide an enthusiastic contribution to the 4th Sunday of the month.

Helen Turner, our Assistant Organist for the last 57 years, retired at the end of the year; the leaving service (15/12/24) was a good time to reflect on the huge contribution Helen has made to the Choir (and more widely to the church in Aylesford), always supported by Robin. We wished them both well in their new life on the Isle of Wight.

Levente Vas continues to play for parts of the services when he is at home from university; he has now started playing for the whole service on occasions, filling-in for the vacant role of Assistant Organist when I am not available.

Dementia Cafe Report

In the last year, we have had a busy and fun time. Everyone that comes along enjoys meeting old and new friends.

We have some sort of activity, sometimes with a theme.

We have planted bulbs, Easter crafts, fundraising for Dementia UK, reminiscing about VE Day, seaside fun, Autumn, clay decorating, Christmas craft. We have also enjoyed celebrating our 2nd birthday, listening to handbells and Rob and his electric Ukelele.

We have also been fortunate to have been given 2 donations from Cllr Andrew Kennedy, a large grant (to buy larger items we needed like cd player, cushions, tablecloths, cups and plates). We have also just been given another donation from Aylesford Parish Council.

I would just like to thank all the volunteers that help every month. We would not be able to run without you.

Pastoral Report

Our church has a successful Wednesday hub in the Brassey centre and I encourage all of us to bring a member of our congregation to this for tea/coffee and cake. The Brassey centre is not on a bus route so members of our congregation need a lift.

I continue to take praise services and Communion services to Dennis Cadman House, Queen Elizabeth Court, Appleton Lodge and Bradbury House. Residents are invited from Duchess of Kent to join Dennis Cadman for the service but the notice is no longer on their notice board. I will visit the manager. I have yet to ask if I may lead a service in the new Royal British Legion village residential home, Greenwich House.

Some residents cannot come from their rooms so I offer a visit for Communion or prayers after the communal service to them in their room.

I can also take Communion to people in their own homes if requested.

Jane and Lenora help when available. This is an important opportunity for church outreach and social interaction with the residents.

There is much need for pastoral support in our community. It seems there is no training now for the Pastoral Assistant role in Rochester Diocese. We are a dying breed.

Who will continue Pastoral work? The ministers/ vicars undertake many visits but a lay visitor has a vital role in regular visits. We may notice changes in health and activity, muddled thinking, loss of weight and much more.

Please consider Lay ministry training in Rochester Diocese with a pastoral emphasis.

I lead a small group for monthly Bible study.

I attend church services weekly and I am a member of the PCC.