



CHRIST CHURCH WALSHAW

REPORTS OF CHURCH GROUPS FOR 2024/2025

**See, I am doing a new thing!
Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?
I am making a way in the wilderness
and streams in the wasteland**

Isaiah 43:19

Please have this report with you at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting which will be held in church on Thursday, 10 April 2025 at 7.30 p.m.

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VICAR'S REPORT

I was licensed as vicar of Christ Church on Wednesday 2nd October, so my report can only cover from that date to the end of 2024. First, let me thank every member of the church for the wonderfully warm welcome that Steve and I have received, and your patience and understanding as I learn how to manage my responsibilities both here and at St Andrew's, Radcliffe. We are really enjoying becoming part of this lovely church family and look forward to the years ahead.

I also want to thank everyone who has played a part in ensuring that the church has not only survived but thrived during such a long wait for a new vicar. From keeping on top of maintenance of the church and grounds, making sure the church follows good safeguarding practice, keeping the finances in good shape and keeping worship going on a Sunday, to the wide range of regular and occasional ways the church engages with the community, this is a church whose members have shared in its continued life rather than putting things on hold during the interregnum.

I made a conscious choice when I first started not to try and impose my ideas on the church but to take time to get to know you and to work out together where God may be leading us in this new phase. It's impossible to mention everything in a short report, but during this initial phase of learning about the church and the parish, I have seen much to encourage me that God is at work here, which you can read about in the other reports for individual ministries. I have been particularly encouraged by the monthly prayer meeting, where church members gather to pray for the church's ministry, the needs of church members and the needs of the wider world. I have also been renewing links with Christ Church CE Primary School, leading their collective worship once a fortnight.

Looking ahead, I am planning to take the new PCC for an away day at Barrow Bridge Church in Bolton, a chance to come together as a team to worship and pray and to seek to renew our vision for the work of this church over the next few years. Broadly speaking, I hope that together we can serve our community and the wider world, sharing the Gospel and growing as followers of Jesus. I am excited that Christ Church is already doing so much in all these areas, and always open to ideas of where God may be leading us.

Rev Steph Mawhinney

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL REPORT

The PCC has met six times during the year. The council is made up of 12 members with one current vacancy. Helen and Joanne co-led the meetings prior to Rev Steph Mawhinney joining in October 2024. There is currently 1 vacancy within the PCC and 2 vacancies within Deanery Synod.

Attendance has been as follows: Rev Steph Mawhinney 3/3, Helen Clark 6/6, Joanne McKenzie 4/6, Janet Hardman 4/6, Jo Haslam 4/6, Frank Yung 6/6, Norman Beswick 5/6, Chris Lancashire 5/6, Nicola Gordon 3/6, Gordon Clark 4/6, Bill Clarke 6/6, Kate Clarke 5/5.

During the year we have discussed a wide range of issues including

- Eco church and how we can introduce this
- Improvement to sound system
- Ash Trees – removal due to disease
- Laptop and Broadband – purchase of new laptop and introduction of Broadband
- Electrical Works – completed to improve lighting within Church

- Parish Share – to agree a more realistic amount
- Review of church fees
- Energy contracts

In addition, we have discussed the regular reports submitted by the following teams:

Finance, Pastoral Care Team, Fabric and Maintenance Team, Building Projects Team, Safeguarding, Health and Safety Team, Mission Team, Baby and Toddler Team, Community Choir, Audio/Visual Team, Music Group, Refreshment Team.

Janet Hardman

Audio- Visual Report

We have a dedicated team of people who work hard, usually quietly in the background, to ensure everyone can interact fully with the services. This allows people to hear clearly and have easy access to visual aids to worship, including written, picture and video resources.

The teams take responsibility for setting up and running the sound system, and preparing the PowerPoints used for the order of service and then operating them through the service. I am very grateful for every member of the team who plays a vital role in ensuring the smooth running of the services.

The audio-visual team for Sunday services is made up of Andrew Benson, Bill Clarke, Nicola Gordon, David Hemsall and myself. We do not have any reserves who are able to step in at the last minute which adds pressure on those already working hard.

We are looking to add more people to help with both the sound and visual teams.

The PowerPoint team have recently purchased a new laptop and installed broadband using money from a legacy to the church to fund these. These purchases will allow those leading and preaching to use a wider range of resources successfully.

The sound team are looking at the possibility of upgrading the speakers to improve the sound quality. Discussions are ongoing with various companies to investigate possibilities and prices.

Repair work has been undertaken to the loop system which had been damaged by spilt liquid. This means those with hearing aids can once again link directly to anything coming through the speakers, meaning they can hear those preaching and leading more clearly.

Helen Clark

BABY AND TODDLER REPORT

The Baby and Toddler group was established in 2017 as a key part of the church's mission strategy to share the good news of Jesus with families with young children. This focus continues, and the group engages with the families and their children to strengthen the link with our church community. We provide a safe space for parents, carers and their little ones to make friends and have fun.

The average attendance at present is between 22 and 33 children a week. There is a cap of 50 children registered at any time with a waiting list. Those who haven't attended for an extended period of time are contacted to check they still want a place.

The group follows a two-year plan with Christian input through the story, songs and craft activity. Chris Whitmore and Julie Benson attend a hub meeting to join with other church groups and receive ideas and training. On 21st September 2024 Chris and Julie attended the Playtime National conference in Bradford, to discover fresh ideas on how to improve our provision and help move the group forward. In February we both attended the Growing Younger Together Conference held at Bury Church School and intend to take part in the next event which is scheduled for June.

Visits from Michelle Nicolson and her colleague Rachael from the Early Years Team at Christ Church Walshaw School have continued this year in order to strengthen links between school and church.

At the moment the group charges £2 a child to attend, and there is no suggestion to change this. Less parents are carrying cash and the card reader is available to use.

We would like to thank everyone who assists in any way with helping make this group a success. At the moment there are 8 people in the team who are involved with planning, setting up/putting away, and running the sessions. New volunteers who are able to help either with the set up on a Sunday morning or on a Wednesday morning are very welcome.

Baby & Toddler Group Team

BUILDING PROJECTS TEAM

Following on from last year's report, the work of re-wiring and re-illuminating Christ Church has been completed. After a two-year wait, the appropriate Faculty was granted and barely a fortnight later, the contractors Barlows began work. The work was completed as per the projected 5-week timeframe: unfinished items were finished and snagging issues addressed.

Whilst the project has been a success, there are adjustments to be made. In particular, the number of luminaires will be reduced and those that remain will be re-directed to reduce glare and to improve the visibility of PowerPoint presentations on-screen. Accessing the lights is a tad problematical and members of BPT are looking at an optimal solution.

The cost of the project came in below the original budgetary estimate of £35,000. The lighting supplied by Salthouse Sales cost £9,797.94; Barlows' installation costs – materials and labour – came to £21,320.00; the total cost, therefore amounted to £31,117.94. This attracted a VAT liability of £6,223.59 which the Treasurer was able to recover in full through the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme. In addition, the project – specifically the LED lighting – attracted a Quick Win grant of £5,000 by virtue of addressing the diocese's green agenda.

Thanks are due, first, to Norman. Besides supplying the lighting, he managed the project throughout. Secondly, Bill and Andrew have been thoroughly supportive. What's been accomplished might well have fallen within the purview of the Fabric & Maintenance Team but Andrew took the view that as the project pre-dated the establishment of FMT and progress in planning and the Faculty application was already well advanced, it would be sensible to leave things as they were.

Bill has been quietly reassuring throughout. Indeed, bringing the whole project to a conclusion has proved a model of teamwork achieved through good communication, both formal and informal.

What next? Whilst draught-proofing falls within the purview of FMT, access for the disabled remains on the BPT's draft agenda. On receipt of a formal instruction from the PCC, your scribe will invite the church architect, Rebecca Grimshaw, to draw up plans. Doing so will, of course, involve not-inconsiderable expense and in any brief to be given, reference to the scheme drafted by our late church architect may well prove instructive.

David Hempsall

CHILDREN'S CHURCH REPORT

I'm the main leader for the group, with assistance from Alaina Andeson, Andrea Llywelyn-Jones and Gill Pilkington. We now meet most Sundays except when we are in Church for All age Services throughout the year. Children's Church are willing to share the action songs and prayers during the All Age services as long as we are given notice.

I'm delighted to report that we have four to five regular attendees, two younger children with their parents, and older independent children. There ages ranging from 18 months to 8 years. Since February this year, I was pleased to see a pupil in year 4 at Christ Church Walshaw Primary School return with his older brother and his parents. They came to the Valentine event and decided to join us on the Sunday, when we had games and used the small parachute for the first time indoors. He has carried on coming to the group.

I hope to develop stronger links between Church and School in my role as link Foundation Governor, encouraging families to join us at church services.

We have Wiggle worship songs and prayers, nursery songs and a range of other Christian action songs viewed through my laptop. There are always colouring handouts and craft activities for the children to complete. When appropriate I have also used games to engage the children during our times together. We love to share what we have done with the congregation.

The teaching topics range from Old Testament characters, Psalms and stories from Jesus' life. Currently I am working to a plan since January through to April, which I have displayed on the Children Churches notice board, and handed out copies to the parents and children.

I have attended Baby and Toddler Hub sharing, with Christine Whitmore. Steph Openshaw shared her latest book "It's Going to be Fine!" which Baby and Toddler and Children's Church are using over Easter. It would be good to use in a service, as it has a similar format to the books I have used at our Christmas Nativities over the past two years. Additionally, I am using the activity pack which goes with it.

I am going on a Wiggle Worship Workshop on Thursday 15th May at St John's House in Bury. This will help me to use Wiggle more effectively.

I'm willing to carry on with the current set up. However I would like more assistants to volunteer, as depending on the activity we need more helping hands.

I am very grateful to Gill Pilkington to agreeing to cover the fourth Sunday of every month when Children's Church meets. Parents are very supportive and help to engage children as much as possible (Not always easy with toddlers).

I'm grateful for my current assistants and regular attendees, parents and children.

Julie Benson

CHURCHES TOGETHER IN BURY (referred to as CTB in this report)

CTB is an inter-denominational network of churches committed to working together to make Jesus known to Bury residents. I have been Christ Church's representative for many years, and there is space for another one or two people from Christ Church if anyone is interested.

Participating churches

Church of England: St John's Birtle, United Benefice of West Bury, Christ Church Walshaw, St Peter's, Bury Parish Church, All Saints Elton, St Stephen's, St Thomas's, Walmersley Rd Benefice

Methodist: Tottington, Brandlesholme, Bolton Road, Seedfield, Jericho

United Reformed: Bury URC

Baptist: Bury Baptist

Salt and Light: Bury Christian Fellowship

Pentecostal: Metro Christian Centre, Audacious Bury

Catholic: Guardian Angels, St Hildas, St Joseph and St Marie.

Salvation Army: Bury group

Activities

CTB meet 6 times per calendar year at various locations including Bury United Reform Church, Bolton Rd Methodist Church, Metro Christian Centre and the Salvation Army centre.

On an ongoing basis CTB supports, promotes, and in some cases organises the following **ongoing projects**:

- **The Bury Project (CAP Debt Centre) – involving at least 5 members of our church**
- **Town Centre Chaplaincy**
- **'Open the Book' work in schools – involving 3 members of our church**
- **Bury Street Pastors – involving 1 member of our church**
- **Churches Together Facebook page**
- **Churches Together Prayer List for member churches**
- **Zoom prayer meetings**
- **Carol singing in Bury Market**
- **Good Friday walk of witness**
- **Christian Aid collection in Bury Town Centre**
- **Prayer in the Park (Clarence Park) 18th May 24**

Other missional items discussed and supported include:

- The **Salvation Army** under the capable leadership of Cor and Angelique Van der Woude opened a **new Food pantry and drop-in centre** to partially replace the Manna House provisions which have now closed.
- Bury URC are running an **Alpha course** this Spring.
- **Joint services** – some churches in Bury are now holding occasional joint services. e.g. the Walmersley Benefice and the Salvation Army are meeting together on the last Sunday of the month. (Further information from me if you are interested).
- **Cygnnet hospital**, a mental health hospital off Bolton Road, has space for some more chaplaincy work. Kathy Selby of Bolton Rd Methodists will be retiring next year.
- **Night Shelter** – Bolton Rd Methodist church have run a night shelter for homeless people during the sub-zero cold weather.

The meetings always include space for individual churches to share good things happening, and this is always encouraging. Meetings always include prayer.

Gordon Clark

CHURCHYARD REPORT

The main change in the churchyard this year was the removal of five large trees that were suffering from ash dieback. In 2022 following a number of trees coming down in storms during the spring, we had a tree safety survey carried out. This was to identify any urgent actions that needed to be carried out. Thankfully, there were none that needed immediate work although it did reveal that all the ash trees in the yard were suffering from dieback and were at risk of shedding branches. The PCC decided that five trees in particular were a problem as they were located around the graveyard and so represented a risk to visitors and graves. Three of them also overhung neighbouring properties along the northern boundary fence.

Following application for a faculty to carry out the work, the trees were cut down to ground level and the timber removed. As the trees were very large this was an expensive job, costing over £5100. In due course we intend to plant new native trees to replace them.

We continue to employ Camelot Garden Services to cut the grass in the graveyard and around the entrance.

Bill Clarke

COMMUNITY CHOIR

The choir continues to be successful and is enjoyed by all. We have regular numbers between 35 and 45.

In the last 12 months we have held two concerts in the church. The Summer concert with guest performances by Helmshore Ukelele Group was very well attended and £310 was raised for Porch boxes. The Christmas concert was also very well attended and £411 was raised for Porch boxes.

Our Social Group continues to organise our social events in the school holidays, including meals out, a pub get together, a social in church in the summer and a singalong musical event in Bolton. Most of the choir members get involved with the social side of the choir and this helps greatly with forming friendships within the choir.

Angela Ashworth

DEANERY SYNOD REPORT

Deanery Synod is a collaboration of Anglican churches covering the whole of Rossendale and Bury. There have been 4 meetings during 2024 in February (Zoom), May (Unsworth), September (Kersal Moor) and November (Rawtenstall). The purpose of the meetings is to share positive stories of what churches are doing around the deanery, and to receive specific updates from diocesan officials and others.

Rev Donna Williams (Area Dean) chairs the meetings.

Some meetings have a speaker (such Bishop of Bolton, Matthew Porter talking about the Diocese's 'Growing Younger' strategy). Other meetings include discussions based in mission community groups where ideas are shared. The progress being made by some churches on the 'Eco church' initiative is also frequently reported.

If anyone is interested in representing Christ Church on deanery synod, and would like to know more about what is involved, please feel free to discuss with me, or simply ask someone to nominate you for election at the APCM.

Gordon Clark

FABRIC AND MAINTENANCE REPORT

Role and Responsibilities

- The FMT provides guidance and leadership to the PCC on matters concerning the upkeep of the church buildings and land.

Membership

- The FMT is open to anyone, and ideally will include a minimum of two members of the PCC. The members in 2024 were Andrew Benson (Chairman), Helen Clark (Warden), Bill Clarke, and Norman Rigby.

2024 activities

Whilst the FMT did not meet in 2024, it continued to monitor the building and grounds condition providing updates to PCC:

- Ongoing maintenance works to
 1. roof area (regular gutter and downspout clearance, plus completion of pointing to ridge tiles)
 2. church yard - regular activities by Bill Clarke.

- Annual portable electrical appliance testing – not completed in 2024 due to testing equipment being out of calibration, however ad hoc visual checks made to appliance plugs and cables and all ok.
- A proposal for replacement of the external notice board with 2no in the existing position NB. This is now under review to determine best position for 2no separate noticeboards.
- Review of the existing Church Clock maintenance requirements plus consideration of the option to replace the mechanical mechanism with an electronic one – NB. rejected after consideration of costs and potential opposition from listed buildings bodies.

The FMT also continued to work with the Building Projects Team on the successful replacement of the church lighting system.

Future

- The team needs to recruit new members if it is to deliver its responsibilities successfully.
- It is planned to review and prioritise the work identified in the last Quinquennial inspection. And at the same time keep on top of any issues with the church roof, heating system and the access roads and parking.

ANDREW BENSON

FINANCE COMMITTEE

FinCom held a Zoom meeting on 13 February 2025. Members - Andrew Benson, Bill Clarke, David Hempsall and Steph Mawhinney - took the opportunity to review the state of finances following completion of the re-wiring and re-illumination project, the costs of which appear in the Building and Projects Team (BPT) report.

The team focussed initially on a short, broad-brush paper produced by the Treasurer which summarised the state of play. Discussion then broadened. It was agreed that, despite the welcome reduction in Parish Share, it was desirable – even essential – to increase revenue beyond the monthly receipts of ±£3K (plus any fees payable). A number of options were considered, including a Stewardship Campaign and hiring out facilities. It was agreed that work should be undertaken to implement ideas.

Looking ahead, members of committee identified likely areas of expenditure by both BPT and the Fabric & Maintenance Team (FMT) and considered the possibility – subject to compliance with the terms of deeds - of liquidating funds held in trust. Whilst a great deal has been achieved this past twelve-month, work goes on: 'twas ever thus.

In closing, members of the committee wish to commend the continuing contribution of the Treasurer. Bill goes about his work quietly and efficiently. There is never any fuss. The fellowship may feel reassured that – Bill's wish to step aside in favour of someone else notwithstanding – its resources are in safe hands. To Treasurer Bill, a sincere "Thank you" is due.

David Hempsall

GIFT AID OFFICER

After many years dedicated service as Christ Church's gift aid secretary, Diane stepped down from the role after the APCM last year. We would like to express our grateful thanks to Diane for her accurate work in claiming gift aid on donations given to church.

The PCC made the decision to join the diocesan Gift Aid Lite scheme. This means that the diocese act on the church's behalf to claim the tax back from HMRC. The scheme is free, and tax claimed back goes towards paying the parish share. We are grateful to Chris Lancashire who has taken on the role of gift aid secretary and is working with the officers at the diocese to process gift aid claims.

As it has taken a while to make the changes with HMRC, a claim has not yet been made for gift aid for the period 1st January 2024 to 31st December 2024, or for small donations (£30 or less) under the Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme (GASDS) between 7th April 2024 and 31st December 2024. Claims will be made for these donations in the coming months. It is anticipated that gift aid will be claimed on £29,169.00 of individual donations, and £3,710.81 of small donations under GASDS. This should result in a tax claim of approximately £8220. Once outstanding donations have been claimed, we will move towards claiming the tax back monthly.

We are grateful to taxpayers who have completed a gift aid form so that tax can be claimed back on donations. If you are a taxpayer, and haven't completed a gift aid form, please see Chris Lancashire. Maximising what we can claim from HMRC is important to supplement the church's income.

HELEN CLARK

HEALTH AND SAFETY OFFICER

1. Purpose of Paper

- 1.1 To provide PCC members with an update on Health and Safety Issues pertinent to the current reporting period
- 1.2 To outline maintenance or adaptation activity within the Church that may involve Health and Safety Considerations during next few months

2. Outstanding H&S issues

- 2.1 No outstanding issues carried over from 2024
- 2.2 Fire safety procedures implemented 2024 remain current
- 2.3 PAT testing equipment has been purchased. Further details of church members able to carry out PAT testing is required

3. Remedial work undertaken within Church over previous 12 months

- 3.1 Replacement lighting throughout the church has been undertaken without any health and safety issues apparent
- 3.2 Work within the tower room, left the large hatch open and propped against a wall. There was a potential hazard had this fallen and landed in the church office, or damaged the ceiling causing debris to fall. This was particularly concerning as youth groups were meeting in the office at the time.

Recommendation: all contractors working within the church building are made aware of groups who will be using the various parts of the buildings, and where required, areas are taped off to prevent access during building or remedial work

4. Risk assessment updates

4.1 Risk assessment reviews will be undertaken during April 2025 for all groups using the church buildings. Work to be carried out in partnership with the Church Warden.

Mike Lancashire

LINK GOVERNOR REPORT

I was appointed on 4/09/23 as a Foundation Governor at Christ Church Walshaw CE Primary. We meet as a local academy committee. We are part of the Sycamore Academy Trust.

There are now six schools looked after by the trust which are as follows: Christ Church Walshaw CE Primary School, Radcliffe Hall CE/Methodist Primary School, St John's CE Primary School, and St Stephen's CE Primary School, Holy Trinity C of E Primary School and St Thomas's CE Primary School. Each school has a local committee who take care of individual school affairs. We are all informed about how each school is performing in reports at Governor meetings. We are answerable to the Trust Committee board.

I attended the last Governor meeting on 19th November 2024 at Christ Church Walshaw. The school is looking into Letting out the school to outside groups to boost up their income and serve the community. Parent Governor Dominique Stead was appointed as stand in chair of governors. Year one has a full time TA, but the other year groups have part time TA's. The school would like more parent helpers and volunteers, such as governors going in to assist teachers where possible.

I have visited Christ Church last year as the Religious Education Link, visiting all the classes. Very interesting visit with great RE corners in each classroom, with bible stories about Jesus and other Old and New Testament characters as well as resources on other faiths and festivals. Children's comments are in a book journal and their thoughts and prayers are displayed. The school choose a theme to explore once a term.

December 9th 2024 before Christmas I visited the Early years event and parents were also invited. The Christmas event had activities for the pupils to interact with, dressing up photo booth, card and wreath making and a Santas workshop and post office..... I interacted with parents and pupils. It was an enjoyable experience for everyone.

We have distributed the Bible Society Books to Christ Church Walshaw for pupils in key stage one and key stage two.

I have excellent links with the Early year Reception Teacher Mrs M Nicholson and HLTA Nursery Lead Mrs R Mackay, who regularly visit our Wednesday Baby and Toddler group. We have two families from our Baby and Toddler group who have chosen Christ Church Walshaw since visiting the school, starting either September 2025 or 2026. More may follow.

I intend to visit Christ Church Walshaw again in March 2025.

The next Governor meeting I will be attending is on the 1st April.

Wiggle Worm Worship is used every week in the Early years Department at Christ Church Walshaw CE Primary School to engage pupils during lessons at the start of the day. I have observed pupils at the school interacting positively to seeing Wiggle Worm and joining in with him in the times of prayer and worship.

Wiggle is a familiar sight in schools around Bury and pupils love him. I use Wiggle in Children's Church at the beginning of every lesson to encourage children to look and listen and pay attention to the words of prayers and action worship songs.

I would also like Wiggle to be used in Baby and Toddler sessions, so children can get used to seeing him as part of their routine, before they start school. I am on a course Thursday 15th May 2025 to find out more on how I can use Wiggle Worm more effectively. The Diocesan Children's Worker Joanne Haslam has spoken to me about using Wiggle Worm because he provides a link between church and school.

Julie Benson

MISSION COMMUNITY REPORT

Christ Church is part of the Whitefield and Radcliffe Mission Community, which also includes Christ Church Ainsworth, St Andrew's Radcliffe, Emmanuel Radcliffe, St Thomas and St John Radcliffe, St Mary's Radcliffe, All Saints Stand, St Andrew's Hillock and St George's Unsworth. Joanne McKenzie, Andrew Benson and now Rev Steph Mawhinney attend regular meetings to consider how these churches can support one another and work together in mission. The former mission community leader, Donna Williams, was licensed as our Area Dean in January and Alison Hartley of Christ Church Ainsworth has now taken on this role.

During Lent, each church in the Mission Community hosted a short service of prayer midweek and invited people from the other churches to attend. There was also a focus around prayer between Ascension and Pentecost. On Ascension Day one prayer walk began at Christ Church and visited the other churches in the northern half of the community, joining a second prayer walk which had begun at St George's and walked from the south for a service of Holy Communion led by Bishop Mark Davies at St Thomas' and St John's, Radcliffe. This was followed by a short time of prayer on Zoom every evening until Pentecost Sunday.

There has been a focus on helping our churches become more environmentally friendly this year. Several churches have achieved their Bronze Eco Church Award. In July, each parish organised a litter picking event around the church. Several have gone on to make this a monthly event. We are also seeking to co-ordinate attempts to encourage recycling of items the Council does not collect. Old pairs of glasses, hearing aids, bras, keys, foreign currency, stamps, printer and photocopier cartridges are now collected in each church and different people arrange for them to be collected for recycling.

As in previous years, there was a short time of prayer every evening during Advent on Zoom, with different churches taking it in turns to lead. Andrew also organised the purchase of books to give away at Christmas services and in church schools, taking advantage of the cheaper price available for bulk orders.

As a church we have served our community this year through activity such as litter picking and a successful Valentine's event. We also continue support a range of mission partners through prayer and giving. These include including Porch Box, CAP, Street Pastors, Bible Society and Tearfund, Members of the fellowship, including Children's Church, support a child and a young woman through Compassion.

JOANNE MCKENZIE

MUSIC GROUP REPORT

Members: Kate Clarke, Angela Ashworth, Jo Haslam, Alaina Anderson, Paul Rigby (guitar)

The music group supports and leads the musical aspects of worship. We meet at 9.30 -10.30 to rehearse the music. It is hoped that the songs sung 5 minutes before the service help to prepare and focus the congregation before the service starts.

Leaders send me their song choices for the service and I usually choose the songs before the service and the communion hymns. The songs are then sent to the group - this really needs to be before Wednesday lunchtime. I also notify the CCLI about the songs we are using in the services to enable copyright payments.

Given our smaller size, we need to use a greater number of videos when people are away. The group would be delighted to welcome additional members.

The group was augmented by a number of the congregation for our carol service and Ruth Boaden kindly played the piano and Jane Clark played her flute. We also attended the carols at Highbank. Alan Whitmore also played guitar during a few Christmas services.

The group is always happy to consider new material to introduce to services (so please feel free to speak to one of us if you have any suggestions).

We would also like to express our thanks for the supportive comments received from many of you.

Kate Clarke

PASTORAL TEAM REPORT

BACKGROUND:

The Pastoral Care team was formed in April 2022 following the Rev Steve Openshaw and Steph Openshaw leaving the church. Steve had invited me to form a team of church members with some experience of helping people in need. The first team meeting was held on 21st June 2022. The names of people with health or other problems were passed on to Frank Yung or myself.

At subsequent meetings it was decided to formalize our work. This included a statement of our aims and principles, establishing a referral system and how we could help and support the people referred. The statement was adopted in February 2024 and ratified by the PCC shortly afterwards.

Over the past 12 months we have made several changes. Firstly, we were concerned that there were gaps. We were not always aware of who needed help. In response to this we produced a referral form so people who wanted help or someone to talk to could refer themselves. It could also be filled by another member of the congregation or friend on behalf of someone who was in need, but only on the condition that they had given their permission in advance. It was also agreed that the person in need does not need to attend church, but they should be known to a church member.

The work consists of contacting the person asking for help by telephone, sending get well cards, sympathy cards when there was a death in the family or a friend or sending just a letter letting them know we are thinking about them and praying for them. These messages have been welcomed and comforting.

In some cases, we have offered to do a home visit, and this has been well received.

To give you an insight into the extent of our work, in the past 12 months many telephone messages of support have been made together with some 60 cards and letters, the majority of which have been written by Mavis on behalf of the church and the Pastoral Team. Also, over 40 home visits have been made during this period.

Summary:

Over the last four years the Pastoral Team has been on a journey. We have seen God at work in people's lives and in our lives. With God's help we have been able to bring comfort, peace and hope to those people struggling with life's trials and challenges. We thank God for the privilege of serving Him through the work of the pastoral care done in His name.

Norman Beswick

SAFEGUARDING OFFICER REPORT

Since I have been in post as Christ Church Safeguarding officer, I have not been aware of any safeguarding issues within church or outside of church affecting church members.

We have a fantastic group of volunteers in the Pastoral care team, children's church and parent and toddler group. We are fortunate that the overwhelming majority of these volunteers have been in safeguarding roles previously in their careers which is really positive for us as a church.

I have spoken with safeguarding at St Johns House in Bury with the view that Kathryn Ford safeguarding officer comes into church to offer face to face safeguarding training with volunteers however at present Kathryn has recently returned to her role after sickness leave and is still not driving and this is not possible at present. I have discussed safeguarding training with volunteers and some have completed this online.

I have met with Steph our vicar recently and it was identified that there was nothing in church regarding domestic abuse/ violence such as leaflets with information and contact numbers for help and support and as such I have been booked onto Domestic Violence training at St Johns House on the 06 03 25. I am also undertaking further training regarding safeguarding on the 01 04 25 and the 05 04 25.

I have also discussed meeting up with my counterpart at St Andrews church with Steph as I feel this would be useful in my role.

As always, we would appreciate some help from new volunteers for Children's church.

Andrea Llywelyn-Jones



CHRIST CHURCH WALSHAW

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND ACCOUNTS OF THE PCC FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

**See, I am doing a new thing!
now it springs up; do you not perceive it?
I am making a way in the wilderness
and streams in the wasteland** *Isaiah 43:19*

Please have this report with you at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting which will be held on Thursday, 10 April 2025 at 7.30 p.m.

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INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE PCC OF CHRIST CHURCH WALSHAW

I report on the accounts for the year ended 31st December 2024.

Respective responsibilities of Trustees and Independent Examiner

As trustees of the charity, the members of the PCC are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. They 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 under 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 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 I do not express an audit opinion on the accounts.

Independent Examiner's statement

In the course of my examination, no matters have come to my attention

1. which give me reasonable cause to believe that in, any material respect, the requirements
 - to keep proper accounting records in accordance with s.130 of the 2011 Act); or
 - to prepare accounts which accord with these accounting recordshave 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.

Signed:

Peter D Benson ACA

Date:

16th March 2025

Christ Church Walshaw - Accounts - 2024

	<i>General Account (Unrestricted use)</i>	<i>Deposit Account (Designated & Restricted use)</i>	<i>Building Fund (Designated use)</i>	<i>Total</i>
Opening Balance Jan 2024	4979	54805	15105	74888

<i>Receipts</i>				2023	Variance	Notes
Tax efficient planned giving	25715	1416	27131	26434	697	1
One off Gift Aid	2075		2075	2506	-431	
Tax Recovered	8923		8923	7932	991	
Other regular planned giving	3146		3146	2734	412	
Collections of loose cash at services	2202		2202	2270	-68	
All other giving	1243		1243	1099	144	
Total giving	43304	0	1416	44720	1745	
Legacies	2000		2000	0	2000	2
Dividends & Interest	3290	761	105	4156	1301	3
Recurring Grants	50		50	50	0	4
Non-recurring Grants			0	330	-330	5
Listed Places of Worship Scheme	6224		6224	508	5716	
Fees	1668		1668	1459	209	
Fund raising events			0	2454	-2454	3
Trust Accounts		9171	9171	0	9171	
Baby & Toddler Group	1413		1413	1738	-325	
Community Choir	2308		2308	1513	795	
Total Income (excl. giving)	16953	9932	105	26990	16083	
Total Receipts	60257	9932	1521	71710	17828	
<i>Transfers</i>						
From Deposit to General	42502					
From General to Deposit		508				
From General to Building Fund			354			
Total Receipts & Transfers	102759	10440	1875			

Christ Church Walshaw - Accounts - 2024

General Account	Deposit Account	Building Fund	Total
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Payments			2023	Variance	Notes
Overseas missions societies		0	0	0	6
Christian Relief and Dev. Agencies		0	1000	-1000	
Home mission and other Church Soc.	203	203	500	-297	
Secular Charities	25	25	20	5	
Parish Share/Quota	25,000	25,000	23500	1500	7
Incumbent working expenses	142	142	0	142	
Parsonage	1,089	1,089	-424	1513	8
Church running expenses	20,534	20,534	19198	1336	9
Church maintenance	1,558	1,558	10255	-8697	10
Upkeep of Services	1,217	1,217	1045	172	11
Upkeep of churchyard	7,309	7,309	1980	5329	12
Major Repairs & Improve.	37,342	37,342	0	37342	13
Support costs	353	353	124	229	
Baby & Toddler Group	154	154	0	154	14
Community Choir	400	400	0	400	
Church administration	293	293	131	162	
Total Payments	95,617	0	95,617	57329	38288
Transfers					
From Deposit to General	42,502				
From General to Deposit	508				
From General to Building Fund	354				
Total Payments & Transfers	96,479	42,502	0		
Closing Balance Dec 2024	11,259	22,743	16,980	50,981	

Notes to accompany 2024 accounts.

General Account - Unrestricted – Funds that can be used for any purpose approved by the PCC.

Deposit Account (part) and Building Fund - Designated – Funds that have been allocated to a particular purpose by the PCC.

Deposit Account (part) - Restricted – Typically funds from a bequest or grant where there were instructions set on their use.

1. Giving

Giving was generally at similar levels to 2023. The card reader has seen more use this year mainly down to the Baby & Toddler group and Community Choir using it for their fees. The system was reconfigured so that giving can be identified between the church and the two groups.

The tax recovered (£8923) was against the giving in 2023.

After many years of sterling service Diane Ewart-Jones is stepping down as Gift-Aid Officer. The PCC have decided to join the Diocesan Gift Aid Lite scheme. Gift Aid Lite is a free, HMRC-approved service which assists with the administration and claiming of donations made through Gift Aid and the Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme (GASDS). All monies reclaimed through Gift Aid Lite will be paid directly to the Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF) and then credited to the Parish Share account of the church. Previously most of the money recovered was used towards meeting the share so this is not a real difference for us. Any excess, after meeting the share, will be sent to us.

2. Legacies

We were the recipients of a legacy from the estate of Joan Owen. The PCC have decided that we should use some of it to replace the laptop used to run the PowerPoint during services.

3. Dividends and interest

The increase this year is primarily down to an exceptional item. There are a number of trusts associated with the church, which you can see on the final page of the accounts and some of these pay dividends into the bank account. In addition there is a trust which, while not connected with the church, has the vicar and church wardens as trustees, this is the Nancy Howarth Trust. The purpose of this trust is “assistance for poor people over the age of 50 living in the parish of Walshaw” and the vicar and wardens were probably appointed trustees as they were regarded as pillars of the local community! Due to lack of activity, Barclays closed the bank account associated with the trust and after much effort the funds were transferred into the church account on a temporary basis while we were in the interregnum. This amounted to £9,171 paid into the deposit account and £730 interest. A new account external to the church will be established in 2025 and this money transferred out.

4. Recurring Grants

We continue to receive a small grant towards the maintenance of the war graves.

5. Listed Places of Worship Scheme

Following the work carried out to improve the lighting in church we were able to reclaim all the VAT associated with the work, both fittings and installation. As usual this money will be transferred into the deposit account ready for the next set of improvements to the building.

6. Mission Support

During 2024 there was no financial support given to our mission partners beyond the giving to Compassion via the jar. £203 was given to the Church of England Children's Society from the Christingle Service

7. Parish Share

The original assessment for 2024 was £45,284, which was simply unachievable and the Diocese recognized this. Helen Clark and I attended a meeting with representatives from the Diocese to discuss this and we were

very pleased when they agreed to a much more realistic figure of £25,000. We were able to meet this in full even though this was more than we paid in 2023. The assessment for 2025 is a 5% increase which £26,250.

8. Vicarage

While the vicarage was empty there were no council tax or water charges to pay. Revd. Mawhinney was appointed in the summer of 2024 and she took up her post from October 2024. She is the incumbent for both Christ Church Walshaw and St Andrew's Radcliffe, so her costs are shared between the two parishes. As she has chosen to live in 37 Gisburn Drive, the Christ Church vicarage, it made sense for us to continue to pay the council tax, water charges and ground rent and then claim 50% back from St Andrew's. To keep things as simple as possible Revd. Mawhinney submits her expenses to us monthly, I then claim 50% back from St Andrew's. Obviously if her claim is for something specific to one parish or the other that parish would pay 100%.

9. Church running costs.

- Electricity: £1,024. Our new contract started at the end of January 2024 so this reflects the higher tariff that we are now on.
- Gas: £7,837. The current contract runs until November 2025.
- Insurance: £11,190.
- Water Charges: £484.

10. Church maintenance

- Clock servicing: £317.
- Heating servicing: £384.
- Organ tuning: £322.
- Lightning conductor test: £222.

11. Upkeep of Services etc.

- CCLI copyright licence: £441
- Replacement microphone: £102
- Printing etc.: £371

12. Churchyard

The major expense was the removal of 5 ash trees located around the graveyard that were suffering from ash dieback and so represented a risk to visitors and graves from falling branches. Three of them also overhung neighbouring properties. The cost of this work was £5,160. In due course we intend to plant new native trees to replace them.

We continue to employ Camelot Garden Services to cut the grass in the graveyard and around the entrance: £1980.

13. Major Repairs & Improvements

The big task in 2024 was the improvements to the lighting inside and outside church, mainly replacing all the halogen floodlights with energy efficient LED spotlights. The hardware was sourced by Norman Rigby at a very competitive price (£11,757) and installation was carried out by Barlows (UK) Ltd for £25,583. As mentioned earlier we were able to reclaim the VAT on the works (£6,224).

14. Community Choir

The revenue from the choir's Christmas concert of £400 was donated to Porch Boxes.

W S Clarke

20 January 2025

INVESTMENTS

Securities held on behalf of Christ Church Walshaw by the Manchester Diocesan Board of Finance.

Trust Title	Nominal Value	Cost Book Value	Income Received	Market Value	
				2024	2023
Mrs Leigh (deceased) Lady Chapel (CB3010563-001) Fixed interest	£1,448.00	£2,095.88	Paid into Lady Chapel deposit trust	£2,159.26	£2,095.98
Mrs Leigh (deceased) Lady Chapel (CB3010794-001) Deposit	£2,641.56	£2,335.91	Interest retained	£2,641.56	£2,456.48
M A Hibbert Trust (CB3010756-001) Investment fund	£2,431.83	£27,836.28	£1,525.97 (paid into general account)	£56,230.48	£54,972.25
Constance Middleton Trust (CB3010927-001) Deposit	£19669.33	£19669.33	£1,024.04 (paid into general account)	£19,669.33	£19,669.33

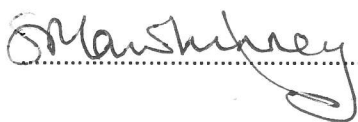
n.b. the funds within these trusts are all restricted and as such can only be used for the purposes designated at the time of establishment.

Liabilities Nil

Accounts for the Financial Year ending 31 December 2024

Approved by the Parochial Church Council meeting held on : 20th March 2025

and signed on their behalf by :

 Chairman

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE PCC OF CHRIST CHURCH WALSHAW

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Peter D Benson ACA

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16th March 2025