



SAINT
Barnabas
CLARKSFIELD

Annual Report for 2023

presented at the
Annual Parochial Church
Meeting
on Sunday 14 April 2024

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Contents

Parish Reports	8
Report from the Vicar.....	8
Report from the Church Wardens	9
Report from the PCC Secretary	9
Report from the Community Worker.....	10
Report from the Property Committee.....	11
Report from the Diocese and Deanery	12
Ecology report	12
News concerning other church members	13
Community reports	13
Background.....	13
Socio-economic context.....	13
Community work report	15
Church life.....	17
Regular services.....	17
Other services: church year and occasional offices	20
Electoral Roll Officer	20
Youth-work Reports	21
School liaison	21
Report from the safeguarding Officer	21
Report from the Sunday school	22
Ecumenism.....	23
Churches Together in East Oldham.....	23
Church diary	23
PCC programme for 2024.....	23
Liturgical programme for 2024.....	23
Financial Reports	25
Treasurer's report	25
General fund	26
Restricted Funds.....	26
Grants received in 2023	26
Glossary	27

Minutes of the 2023 APCM

Present John Booth, Rebecca Burbridge, Tom Edmondson, Sarah Gura, Pete Haslam (Warden), John Marshall, Paul Monk (Chair), Jo Monk (Secretary), Mary-Anne Oduntan (Community Worker), Sarah Wilding.

Apologies The Revd Denise Owen and Lucie Reilly (Warden).

As Vicar and chair of the Parochial Church Council (PCC), Paul Monk opened the meeting with prayer. He then reminded us that our primary purpose is to love God and to spread God's love in our community: everything we do must be with that motivation and with that goal in mind.

Vicar's introduction

Welcome to this year's Annual Parochial Church meeting!

I'm going to start with a comment that should not be contentious, so here goes. God loves you. Just let that statement sink in a moment. God—the supreme being who created Heaven and earth—knows you by name and He delights in you.

The whole purpose of the Church is to respond to this being of complete love. The best way of responding to a love beyond comprehension and or even description is to let His love rub off onto us. Stated another way, we show that we love God by becoming beings of love. In theory, the church is a collective of those who have let the love of God rub off in this way. Nothing less will do. So, in my view, that is the best criterion by which we should judge the success or otherwise of a church.

Only now, having started in this way, will I talk about the highlights and low-points in the life of this church during 2022. And I will do so by looking through the prism of God's love and what our responses to God's love look like.

Straightaway, I'll look at the positives because, as St Paul says, 'whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—dwell on these things'. So here goes: we have restarted the Bible study and it's doing quite well. It attracts 4–11 members from three different churches, so is feeding a spiritual hunger. Our mid-week service has also restarted and, while numbers are small, it demonstrates spiritual vibrancy. Our reputation as a community centre has grown hugely and our community project is now one of the largest in the entire Diocese. We are showing a love that extends beyond words and improves people's lives. And the numbers in our congregation have grown over the year despite a great many funerals. We are in a better state, financially, than at any time since I arrived in

2009 and maybe before. That's why we could pay our Parish Share last year in a financial climate that only this week the bishop described as 'dire'. And the bishop himself told me that few churches are as well maintained as this one. Much of our building is essentially brand new. In fact, we have paid more on the building since 2010 than everything spent on the church fabric ever since it was built in 1911. We have a good vehicle from which we can safely demonstrate the love of God.

There are clearly negatives as well. Obviously, our congregation is small and is not growing fast. This area of Oldham is clearly deteriorating in a socio-economic sense and will not improve appreciably in the foreseeable future—certainly not during my lifetime. All the statistics demonstrate that churches located in poor, multi-ethnic areas are likely to struggle; stated otherwise, we are witnessing within an extremely challenging context. If you want a visual representation, the Church of England recently produced a graph of average church attendance against levels of poverty and that graph is essentially linear. In truth, we are struggling not because we've done something wrong; rather, we are struggling because we're located in Clarksfield.

A second, wider challenge concerns the Diocese of Manchester itself. When I started here in Clarksfield, the area covered by our so-called Mission Community was served by five full-time priests. Three of them had a full-time curate, so a complement of eight full-time ordained staff. There are now two—Denise Owen at Moorside and me. True: St John the Baptist Church will be allowed to advertise for an incumbent priest possibly before the end of this current year. In response, I'm doing a lot of cover work. I have been asked to become Vicar of Glodwick, which means paperwork, visiting nursing homes, the occasional offices, and so on. And I do also work for the Diocese and Deanery.

These latter considerations clearly relate to money almost as much as to the area and so, as I said earlier, we should feel proud that we paid our Parish Share in full in 2021 and in 2022. We're on track to pay it in full this year. Before moving forward, I'll conclude this part of my introductory talk by reiterating that while many local churches are closing, we are officially regarded as being among the safer churches in the Diocese of Manchester. *But we must make ourselves safer still.*

That 'safer still' means growth. We must frame all responses to church growth *and* community engagement with all those constraints in mind. All of us are to consider ourselves as 'missionary disciples'; 'missionary' here means sharing the love of God rather than simply focussing on larger numbers. No other evangelism works.

Everyone knows there are too many church buildings in Oldham, so any stance that does not look at the wider picture deserves to fail. That is one of the reasons why the Church Council wanted to open up the nave to make it multi-purpose,

multi-use, multi-everything. A lot is at stake; we need to get it right—that's why we consulted so widely. It took ages. It was exhausting. But it does allow us to 'improve our presence', though I prefer to quote the Lord Jesus: we must seek first the Kingdom of God and God's righteousness.

Let's now move to analysis. Here, we are on safe ground because history is always a friend, and we do know the history of this church in detail: St Barnabas was built in 1911 as a mission church by which was meant a place where local people came for worship on a Sunday but during the week came for entirely different things. Those different things fell into the broad category of 'self-betterment', so (to use the language of the day) it was temperance, thrift, home economics, and 'parentcraft'. We are doing that. When the church was built, there were no pews, the altar was moveable so everything could be cleared away for that other work. We have done the same. When built, its churchmanship reflected its contemporary, host society. We must do the same. I could go on but, thankfully, I will not.

I'll go back to the basics. God loves you and He loves the people outside. He loves people of all colours, all ethnicities, all sexualities, all levels of intelligence, all levels of material wealth. He loves all of us and wants everyone to find Him and serve Him and worship Him, and in every possible way, love Him in return. In summary, I want a church that loves God, and nothing else—*nothing*—matters compared to that.

It is now time to close. I want to thank the large number of organisations who have given grants to the church and centre, to fund its work and projects. I will end by thanking the small army of people—church members and volunteers—without whom running this church and centre would be impossible: the list is very long and the commitment is humbling. A huge 'thank you' from all of us.

Annual Parochial Meeting 2023

Election of Wardens Pete Haslam was proposed by Jo Monk and seconded by Sarah Gura. Lucie Fletcher-Reilly was proposed by Jo Monk, seconded by Sarah Gura. On vote, both were accepted unanimously as Church Wardens.

Annual Parochial Church Meeting 2023

Last year's minutes were approved. Proposed by John Marshall and seconded by Pete Haslam. On vote, the meeting accepted them unanimously.

Annual Report for 2022 We read through the Annual Report for 2002. Paul highlighted the following:

- It has been suggested we employ a Church Administrator for the whole Mission Community, with each Church paying a small amount towards it. The PCC will discuss this at their next meeting.
- We now have planning permission for the solar panels we were considering.
- The Church roof needs replacing and will cost between about £300,000 and £500,000.

We looked at the fall in church attendance since 2016 and Paul highlighted three main causes: (1) Brexit—several regular members were EU citizens exercising their right to freedom of movement in the UK. They left the UK after Brexit. This has happened in most churches where the congregation, like ours, is/was multi-ethnic (2) the pandemic, from which church attendance is slowly recovering, (3) loss of several long-term members who have passed away in the last two or three years and are very much missed.

The Community Project is thriving and serving a diverse section of the local community. The Food Co-operative is feeding on average about 160 people a week (including dependants).

The refurbished church has provided space for even more community activities.

Paul is going to become Vicar of Glodwick in addition to the two parishes he already oversees. We do not know what is going to happen to the redundant building of St Mark's in Glodwick—there may be a buyer. The glebe land is being retained and the income from the glebe now comes to us and Waterhead, to be shared equally. The silver from St Mark's Glodwick is now in the Cathedral and we have the portable altar, which we are now using for worship. The Stations of the Cross at Glodwick are going to another church, so will be saved. We do not yet know what will happen to the organ or to the parish records. Paul will keep us appraised.

Election of officers

Sidespeople We do not currently require sidespeople.

Deanery Synod We do not currently have a representative and nobody is willing to stand.

PCC elections There are 2 vacancies, but nobody was proposed to fill the positions.

Child Protection Policy Paul read out the church's Child Protection Policy is full.

Constitution There is no need to make changes to our Constitution this year.

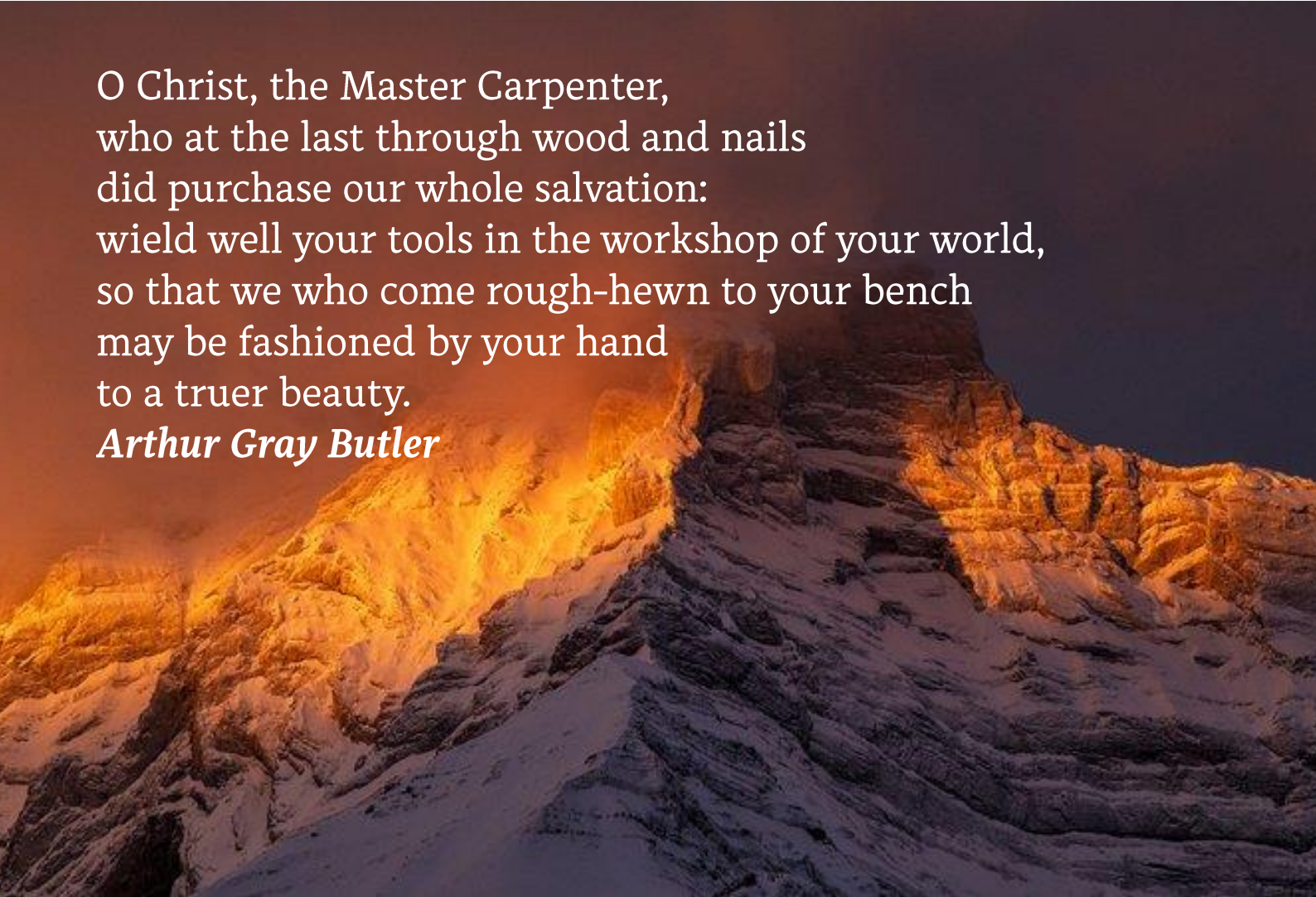
Accounts The accounts have been audited by Kim Barton and approved by the PCC. They have only just been audited, so Paul has not yet had a chance to print copies for everyone. Copies will be made available for anyone who wishes to read them in detail. The accounts were proposed by John Booth and seconded by Tom Edmondson. On vote, they were approved unanimously.

Any Other Business

1 John Booth wanted it noted that much of the success of the Community Project and the Church's activities has been down to a hard-working priest and Community Worker. He proposed we write to the Diocese officially saying that we need extra assistance if this is to continue, as the job is too much for 2 people. The numbers of priests in the Diocese are already going down and will continue to fall, so help is essential. This was agreed unanimously by those in attendance. We will communicate this to the Diocese.

2 John Marshall raised the issue of music. We agreed that a wide variety of good music is important to our worship and that we will not let the music deteriorate.

The meeting ended with prayers at 11: 50 am.



O Christ, the Master Carpenter,
who at the last through wood and nails
did purchase our whole salvation:
wield well your tools in the workshop of your world,
so that we who come rough-hewn to your bench
may be fashioned by your hand
to a truer beauty.

Arthur Gray Butler

Parish Reports

Report from the Vicar

Broadly, 2023 was a very good year. A great many positive features shine brightly. First, the congregation has clearly grown and continues to grow; the Bible study is thriving and attracts members from many local churches. The building is again in better condition at the end of the year than at its beginning. We are in the best financial position for a generation. Our reputation locally has increased over the year. Much of this growth can be attributed to the community project, which also continues to flourish. The number of hall bookings remains high. New people see the church, experience Christian love, and of course its activities generate interest, publicity, and income.

But there are also negatives. We remain, technically a 'fragile' church within the Diocesan definition of 30-adult attendees or fewer; we will probably outgrow that category very soon (in 2024) if the trends on page 19 continue. The biggest challenge concerns the pressure on clergy in the Church of England in general and the Diocese of Manchester in particular. The number of Anglican Vicars in east Oldham has slumped, with vacancies in every single church in our Mission Community except the two in our own benefice. Nor is there a single curate, associate priest, non-stipendiary minister, or retired minister to help. We are the only Mission Community in the entire Diocese for which this is the case. The workload for me, as your Vicar and priest, has been gruesome. Nevertheless, I apologise if I have appeared distracted, disorganised, or merely tired.

Secondly, the re-introduction of 'austerity' by the Government is causing real damage to the local infrastructure at every layer—Council, police, regular groups who convene in our hall; a general sense of hopelessness. These changes make it even more difficult to source grants and funds than last year; stated differently, sourcing grants to replace the church roof will be a significant challenge.

And thirdly, the Diocese continues to struggle, particularly financially. In retrospect, the Covid pandemic accelerated a decline that was already in train.

Some aspects are ambiguous, or at least analysis requires a realistic, nuanced approach. For example, in July we started a new service for younger children, calling it FAB!, where the acronym stands for 'Faith at Barnabas'. At its height, during the long summer holiday, it attracted nearly 20 people (adults + children), but the number dwindled as the nights became cold and dark. We will assess and re-introduce something similar in 2024.

Adaptation remains a key requirement, explaining why we have continued to experiment with music during Sunday worship. The growth in the church congregation is one feature of those more modern choices; that some members attend less regularly is a second direct consequence of that same choice. Stated otherwise, music polarises opinion in a way that few other features of worship can do.

A second ambiguity concerns the Church's plan to create a new charity to oversee the community project: the plans have been welcomed by the Bishop of Manchester, Oldham Council and councillors, funders, and members of the VCFSE (voluntary, charity, faith, social enterprise) sector, but the Charity Commission requires significant changes before we can re-apply. *Paul Monk: Vicar (January 2024)*

Report from the Church Wardens

We welcome those who are new to the Church and joined us during 2023, and hope you feel comfortable at St Barnabas. Please speak with us if you want to get more involved and contribute to the life of the Church.

In all Anglican Churches, the wardens bear the prime responsibility for the well-being of the Church, both as an organisation seeking to sponsor the ushering in of the Kingdom and for the fabric of the building.

We are therefore proud to repeat a sentence from previous years' reports, 'The building is clearly in a superior state of repair than at the start of the year'.

We had many tasks to address in 2023 such as building work, improving our core finances to afford our commitments, and sponsor outreach and other work within our deprived community, so we would like to thank all those members of St Barnabas' congregation who have lavished support on us as Wardens during 2023. We hope we can continue to earn your support in 2024.

Our thanks go to the team that lead each week's services at the Church: the PCC members, readers and intercession leaders, sidespeople, and those who brew. And please notice how the Church always looks clean and tidy every Sunday, so many thanks to all who work to maintain this high standard of presentation.

As Wardens we continue to pray for you all, and we very much look forward to seeing you in church again soon.

Peter Haslam and Lucie Reilly: Wardens (January 2024)

Report from the PCC Secretary

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) convened on five scheduled occasions in 2023 through the video-conferencing computer programme Zoom. The APCM occurred in the nave of the Church.

I have sought to publish the minutes from all our meetings as soon after each meeting as practicable.

Jo Monk: PCC Secretary (January 2024)

Report from the Community Worker

It has been a good year and busy. The success of Barnabas Thrive! is deeply rooted in the collaborative efforts and dedication of our community members, volunteers, and partners across all our projects. I would like to highlight the significant achievements and growth experienced in the past year.

Food Thrive! The food co-operative continues to grow and serve the community in a unique way. In addition to sources of food such as Fareshare, One Stop, and Gregg's, we are now purchasing staples such as tea, coffee, sugar which are always firm favourites.

The numbers of clients consistently reaches 180 a week (including dependants) and is a direct outcome of the cost-of-living crisis as it affects our clients; even though a proportion are working, all feel its impact and hence rely more on food projects such as ours to help make ends meet. The positive impact of Food Thrive! is felt by every client who comes to us and is always expressed verbally by them.

Women Thrive! This project has achieved substantial progress in empowering women within our community. Through workshops, skill-building programmes, and networking opportunities, we have witnessed an increased sense of confidence and self-reliance among the women participants. The establishment of a supportive community network has led to the growth of women entrepreneurs and leaders.

Some of the women have gone on to start their own businesses or run their own group while others have gone back into paid employment opportunities as well as voluntary work both within the project and outside of the project.

Holiday Thrive! has brought joy and togetherness to our community during the school holidays. We were funded through the government (HAF) scheme to deliver sessions for children in receipt of free school meals and their families. This inclusive initiative allowed us to welcome various families from the community. We provided breakfast and a hot meal at lunch time, and the children were able to make new friends and learn new skills whilst having fun.

Teen Thrive! This project has focused on the holistic development of teenagers within our community. Mentorship and volunteering opportunities as well as leisure activities have provided a platform for personal growth and empowerment. The

positive engagement of teenagers in volunteering and peer support reflects the success of the project in nurturing our youth and instilling a strong sense of community within them.

As I reflect on the past year, Barnabas Thrive! stands as a testament to the transformative impact of community-driven initiatives. The success and growth across Women Thrive!, Food Thrive!, Holiday Thrive!, and Teen Thrive! programmes demonstrate the efficacy of targeted efforts in addressing specific community needs. I extend my sincere gratitude to the community members, volunteers, and partners who have played a crucial role in making these achievements possible. Looking forward, I remain committed to furthering the prosperity and well-being of our community through continued collaboration and innovation. Together, we will persist in empowering lives and building a resilient and thriving community.

MaryAnne Oduntan: Community Worker (February 2024)

Report from the Property Committee

In terms of building work, 2023 was a quieter year than 2022. Projects comprised:

- 1 The so-called 'long store' was gutted and rebuilt to accommodate storage for food and the instruments belonging to one of the brass bands that convene in the church. This project was funded by the National Lottery.
- 2 The storage box in the hall was replaced with a new facility. It is twice the size of the previous box and comprises two sections, for flat-pack tables and for the Women Thrive! project. The replacement was funded by the National Lottery.
- 3 Several other, smaller projects occurred: we encased the sound desk in the church within a bespoke oak cabinet (the last part of the nave regeneration, which was funded by the Garfield Weston Foundation); we replaced all the lights in the main hall and toilet block; and we had to rewire and relight the tiny foyer outside the Team Office (the old Vicar's vestry).

Finally, by law, the fabric of an Anglican Church is inspected every five years by a nominated architect. The most recent inspection occurred in November 2018, when the architect found several small problems (all of which have long been addressed). But the architect also noted how the Church needs a new roof, for which the likely cost is colossal.

Paul Monk, Peter Haslam, and Lucie Reilly: Vicar and Wardens (January 2024)

Report from the Diocese and Deanery

At the **Diocesan** level

The Diocesan clergy conference convened at Swanwick in May 2023. Both the Vicar and the Team Curate attended. Changes to financing the Diocese were discussed. Few other changes have directly affected our church.

At the **Deanery** level

As part of the transformation project, in 2023 the Deanery appointed a 'Deanery Children's Support Officer' (Laura Tebay) and a 'Deanery Transformation Support Officer' (the Revd John Evans).

The Deanery Synod convened twice. Each synod was addressed by a keynote speaker, as follows: a debate on eco-church (the in-person synod at Oldham Parish Church in May 2023) and on collaborative ministry with church schools (Zoom synod in September 2023).

At the **Mission Community** level

There have been many changes this year. Firstly, staffing: the Vicar of Hey and Leesfield took early retirement in early January; and in September the Vicar of Moorside left to move to lead a team of three churches in Ashton and Mossley. The associate minister in Hey also retired, in October. Accordingly, our Vicar is the only ordained minister in our Mission Community.

Second, Moorside Parish is likely to 'twin' with Heyside (St Mark's). Heyside will therefore join our Mission Community in 2024.

Thirdly, our Vicar is now formally Vicar of Glodwick. There is no clarity, however, concerning the sale of the old Parish Church, St Mark.

Fourthly, several wide-ranging committees address ecology and the environment, and finance and giving. Our vicar sits on both. **Paul Monk (January 2024)**

Ecology report

At the General Synod in summer 2023, the Church of England committed to 'net zero' by 2030. St Barnabas commits to working toward that goal and also recognises that we will find that goal exceptionally difficult to attain.

Toward that goal, we replaced the lights in the Main Hall, 'long ltore', and outside the Team Office. Accordingly, there are now no non-LED lights in the entire building whatsoever: all are eco-friendly.

The plans for replacing the roof include substantial insulation and solar panels on the west-south-west roof.

Paul Monk, Peter Haslam and Lucie Reilly: Vicar and Wardens (January 2024)

News concerning other church members

It's always good to celebrate the achievements of our Church's members.

- Our Church Warden and Lay Reader Lucie Reilly was appointed the Executive Assistant to the Bishop of Manchester.
- Dean Stott joined us as a placement student on Advent Sunday and will remain with us until Easter 2024

Paul Monk: Vicar (January 2024)

Community reports

The accuracy of some of the statistics below is unlikely to be high but, nevertheless, they well illustrate our daily challenges and our social context.

We obtain our statistics from the following sources:

1. Data collected and analysed by the PCC and members of the Church.
2. The Church of England data (recently processed from the 2021 Census).
3. The Church Urban Fund.
4. Oldham Council via its monthly e-compendium.

Background

The Parish of Clarksfield appears multi-racial, with a composition that is changing fast, but at a rate that has decreased significantly. Statistically, the ethnic composition looks somewhat low at 54%: in fact, the two principal ethnic groups have a Pakistani heritage (ca. 66%) or a Roma heritage (ca. 18–25%), meaning the remainder of parishioners (ca. 10%) represents a much smaller number of people to represent other ethnic groups.

Socio-economic context

As a Christian Church, we exist to fulfil the first commandment and love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength. To that end, we attend and sponsor services of Christian worship. We interpret the second half of the Great Commandment—that we must love our neighbour—as God's telling us to improve the life chances of everyone in this part of Oldham.

The so-called indices of multiple deprivation (IMD) describe relative affluence or deprivation. These IMD bring together 7 statistical domains: employment; in-

come; health and disability; education; crime; housing and services; and living environment. The resulting IMD are a relative measure that is used to compare geographical areas; they are not a direct measure of deprivation. Other measures, such as child poverty or working-age poverty, are necessary when developing a fuller understanding of an area.

The most recent indices of multiple deprivation were published early in 2024 and are based on the 2021 Census and are the most up-to-date available. The 2021 Census data demonstrate that Oldham is the most deprived borough in Greater Manchester. Its data show that in our part of Oldham, 77.7% of households have some form of deprivation (the figure for the whole of Oldham is 59.1%; and is 51.7% for England as a whole). Statistics from the *Joseph Rowntree Foundation* in its report 'UK Poverty 24' show that 44% of all Oldham children under 16 live in poverty, which is the third-highest level in England after Birmingham (at 46%) and Sandwell and Manchester (at 45%).

The Covid pandemic accentuated the need for us to 'love our neighbour'. For example, the *Institute of Fiscal Studies* suggests those hardest hit by Covid will be women, younger workers, and workers on low incomes. Before the pandemic, these groups were over-represented in the economy of east Oldham (ONS: 09-04-2020). And data (released a year ago in February 2022 by the House of Commons Library) shows that in our parliamentary constituency, and across all age groups, the unemployment rate has risen by 43% since the start of the first lockdown; nationally, the rate has gone down.

Using these data from the 2021 census, it is possible to rank our church against all English parishes in order of the deprivation they demonstrate. They suggest our Parish officially ranks 256 out of 12,239; stated otherwise, we are in the most deprived 2.1% of all Anglican parishes in England. This result implies an improvement since statistics were last published in 2019, which then said we were in the most deprived 1.7% of all English parishes. This ranking yields a *comparative* measure rather than anything *absolute*, and all informed opinion suggests that the area bounded within Clarksfield Parish has actually deteriorated very significantly since the Pandemic; stated otherwise, possibly more worryingly, other areas have worsened further and faster than has Clarksfield.

It is unwise to summarise the disparity in life experience across a densely populated parish by using a single datum for deprivation. It also complicates our task of tackling and addressing need and makes it more difficult when seeking external sources of funding such as grants.

Data concerning local super-output areas (LSOA) are better able to describe conditions on a micro-community level. The parish traverses four LSOAs. The

Parish Centre is located within LSOA E01005450. The indices of multiple deprivation from the 2021 Census indicate it is in the most deprived 1.2% LSOAs in all England—a big improvement. The most-needy is to the north of the Parish (LSOA E01005448) and is in the most deprived 0.83% of all LSOAs. It is the 0.44% most deprived in terms of crime; 0.23% in terms of income deprivation; 1.1% in terms of employment; 1.4% in terms of health and disability. All the data used to compile this paragraph are available via the site:

<https://www.arcgis.com/home/webmap/viewer.html?webmap=67bce0ed36dd4ee0af7a16bc079aa09a&extent=-0.4317,51.313,0.1986,51.5945>.

Community work report

The Gospel imperative demands that we seek to establish the Kingdom of God on earth as it is in Heaven.

Our Church is continually devising and resourcing projects to meet the needs of local people. We also offer the use of the Hall to projects that offer help which complements our own projects and that seek to address local needs. Incidentally, this aspect also generates income for both Church funds and renovation work.

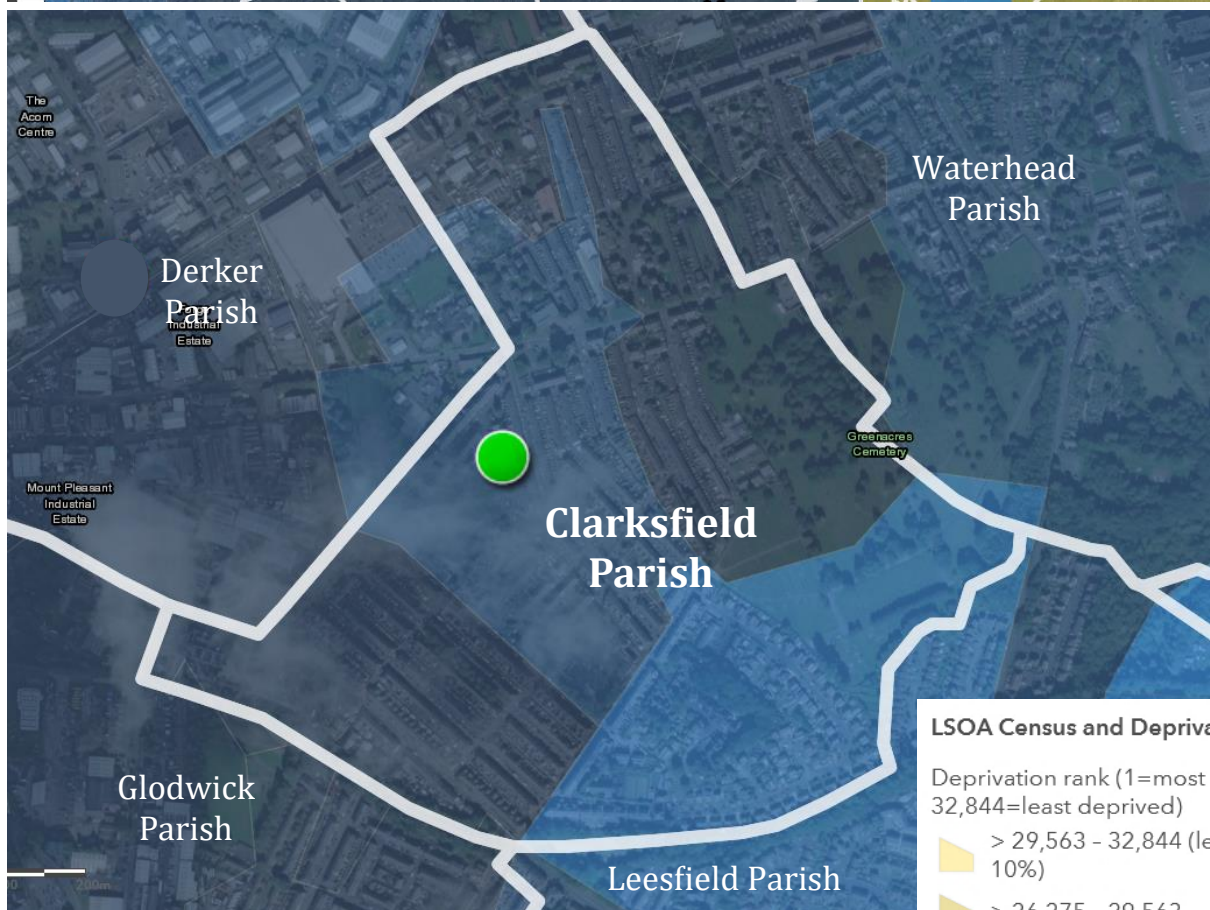
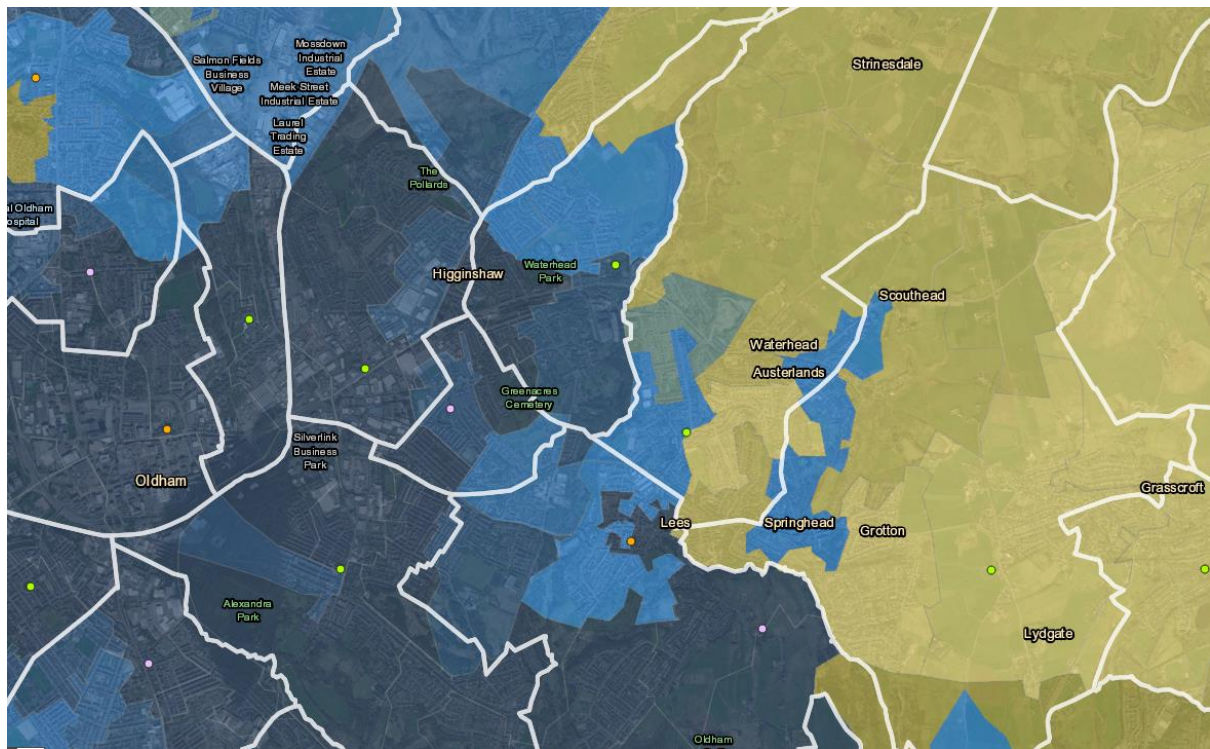
The community project has grown strongly as we seek to address growing local needs. We therefore risk a lack of focus. It is time to re-think and re-assess. The Church Council has therefore decided to create a new, additional charity (the PCC is already a registered charity). This new charity will be led by new, different trustees and oversee the community project. The PCC will therefore have more scope for running services and overseeing the building.

The community project had four principal strands:

1. Women Thrive! is a self-help group that seeks to empower local women.
2. Holiday Thrive! seeks to offset some of the effects of 'holiday hunger'.
3. Teen Thrive! helps people, especially younger people, with mental-health issues.
4. Food Thrive! is our food co-operative. The number of clients (including dependents) each week often reaches 180 and has twice topped 200. We distribute up to a ton of food each week.

The statistics appearing in the pages above amply illustrate why this part of Oldham so desperately needs our kind of community project.

All these projects are funded by a wide array of grants (see page 26).



LSOA Census and Deprivation Summary

Deprivation rank (1=most deprived, 32,844=least deprived)

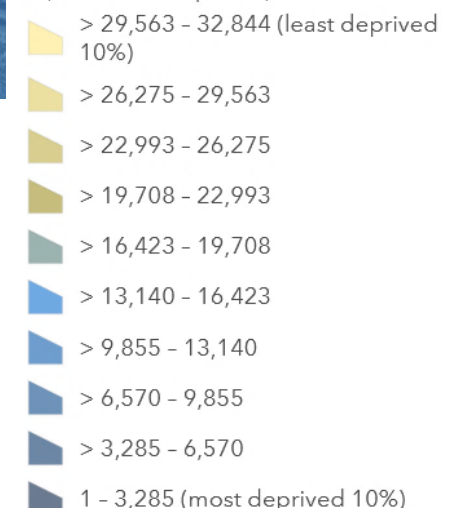


Figure 1 The Parish of Clarksfield: the location of the Church is indicated by a large, central green circle. The figure also shows the indices of multiple deprivation, as indicated by colour (the key appears right). Most areas of the parish lie within the most deprived 20% in England; only the Yorkdale estate is less deprived.



In September 2023, the Church and Community Project was awarded the prestigious 'Quality in Action' Award by the local anchor group, *Action Together*. It entailed completing 57 separate policy documents.

The award is rare in Oldham's faith-based VCFSE sector. The image below shows the Vicar, Revd Dr Paul Monk (centre), and the Community Worker, Mary-Anne Oduntan (right), receiving the award from *Action Together*'s Uzma Khaliq.

Paul Monk and Mary Oduntan: Vicar and Community Worker (January 2024)

Church life

Regular services

The Covid pandemic still complicates any interpretation of the statistics for 2023. Table 1 contains a bland summary of average attendances at services; data for previous years appear for comparative purposes. The line labelled 'All Sunday services' gives a weighted average of all our Sunday services. The lower entries help unpack this headline number.

During the second half of the year, we experimented with a new service aimed at younger children, which started during the long summer holiday. At the end of each week, after the final day of holiday club, we convened in the church for Fab! (where the acronym stands for 'Faith at Barnabas!'). As many as 10 children and 6 adults attended. It did not maintain this momentum after the school term resumed in September and so we stopped it at the end of 2023 with not only sadness, but also gratitude for the relationships we had made and for lessons learned.

		2023		2022		2021	
		A	C	A	C	A	A
No.							
Sunday services							
All Sunday services	52	27	3	17	3	16	3
Eucharistic	49	27	3	17	3	15	3
non-Eucharistic	3	20	2	18	2	—	—
Thursday services							
Morning services of Holy Communion	48	5	0	5	0	4	0
FAB! Praise	18	4	4	—	—	—	—

Table 1 Average adult attendances through the week (all events).
 The data do not include home communicants and nursing homes.
 Key: A = adult and C = children.

In 2023, the number of adults attending Sunday worship varied between the extremes of 10 and 27, and the number of children varied between 0 and 10. The Sunday averages were 17 adults and 3 children, which is the same as 2022. In 2023, 2 adult members were unable to attend worship owing to health and disability (down from 8 in 2022). Members who died or moved away explain the difference.

Figure 2 shows the average number of adults attending services during the census month of October during the period 2000–2023. One obvious trend is the steep decline before the Covid pandemic, which has clearly reversed somewhat. Attendance in the period 2015–2020 reflects changes in the ethnic composition around the Church, owing to both immigration into Britain and emigration as a direct result of Brexit, etc.

An increasing feature before the pandemic was lay participation. During most of

the pandemic period, only members with a formal licence led services owing to insurance requirements, but we can now call again on a wider pool comprising two Lay Readers (one formally worships at Waterhead Church) and one ALM (Accredited Local Minister).

There were no events shared with *Churches Together in East Oldham*.

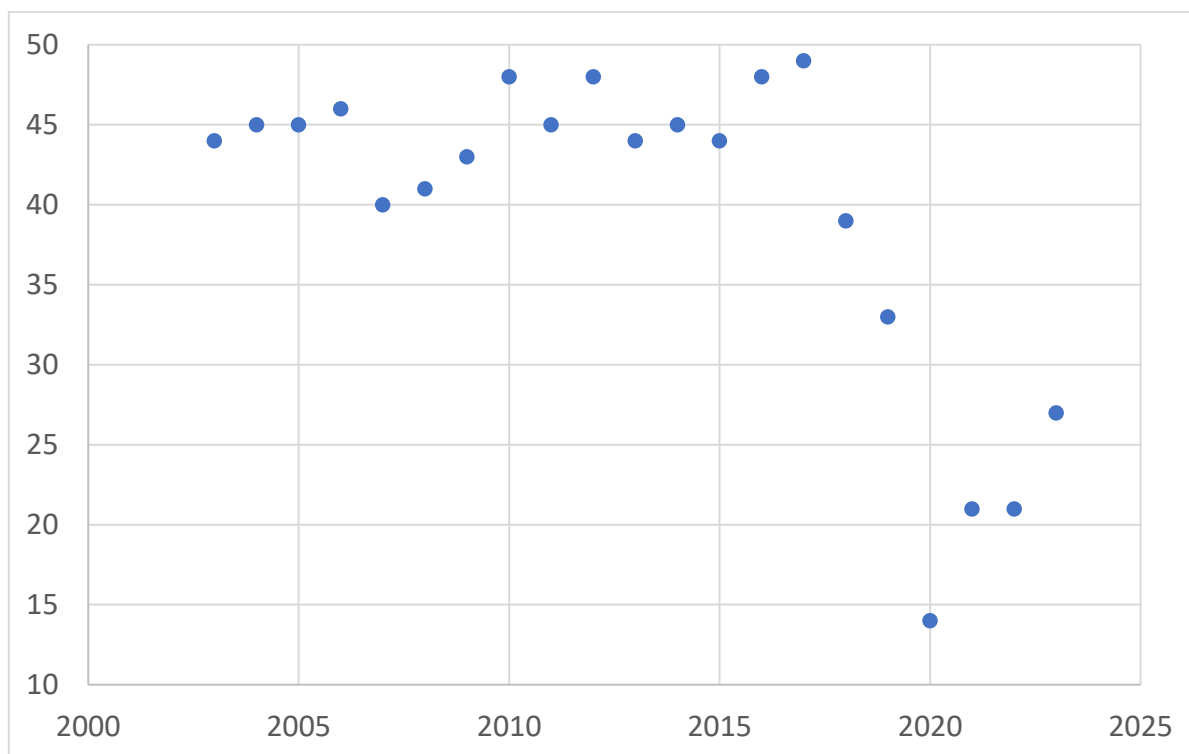


Figure 2 Average adult attendances during the census month of October: these data include both Sunday and mid-week services.

The numbers do not include members who would normally attend but were ill, those receiving communion 'by extension' at their home, or members in a nursing home.

Virtual services

Each week the church publishes service transcripts in .pdf format, for printing or viewing on-screen. In all, 117 pdf services were posted on-line. On average, the Sunday transcripts were downloaded 90 times and the mid-week transcripts were downloaded 72 times, albeit with significant fluctuations. All can be viewed via the page, <https://www.medlockhead.co.uk/resources/index.htm>.

The church magazine is also available on-line. Each edition is typically downloaded about 80 times, with significant fluctuations. All can be viewed via the page, <https://www.medlockhead.co.uk/magazines/index.htm>.

Other services: church year and occasional offices

We celebrated many additional services within the liturgical year such as Ash Wednesday, the whole of Holy Week and Easter, Trinity and Pentecost, Harvest, Advent and Christmas. We joined our sister Church of Waterhead for All Souls, Christingles and for Midnight Mass, and Waterhead joined us for Christmas Day.

Statistics In addition to the above, during 2023 the Vicar also led:

- 5 baptisms (1 adult and 4 children).
- There was 1 wedding but no blessings of marriage. There were also weddings in the churches of Holy Trinity Waterhead and St John the Baptist Hey.
- 22 funerals: 5 occurred in the Church, 2 occurred in Holy Trinity, and 1 each in in St John the Baptist, St Thomas' Leesfield, and St Thomas' Moorside. All the remainder occurred in Oldham Crematorium.
- 25 services of Holy Communion occurred with the ill and housebound.
- 10 services of Holy Communion at Alexandra House Nursing Home in Glodwick.
- Statistics for the occasional offices are given in Figure 3.

Electoral Roll Officer

The list in Table 2 quantifies the adults on the electoral roll. The list is subdivided according to residency within or outside the Parish. We update the list every three years and it will change significantly when next compiled in 2024 to reflect congregational movement, with new members joining and others leaving.

During 2023, the following members died: Dora Boase, Fiona Buchan, and Margaret Wharfe. A great many members also lost a loved one during the year.

Paul Monk (January 2024)

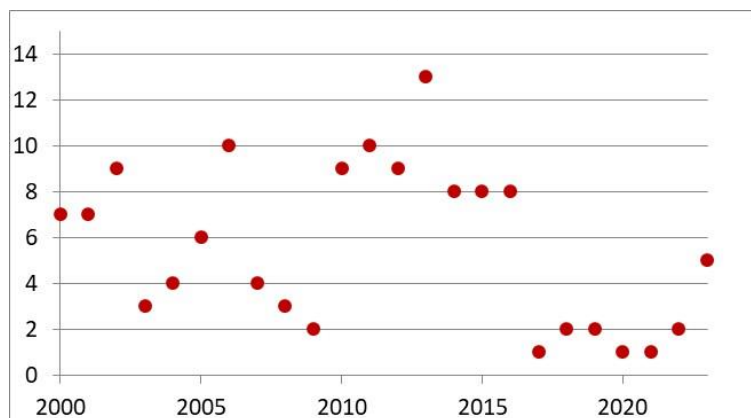


Figure 3 The numbers of occasional offices occurring in the Church.

Key: left: baptisms;
bottom left: weddings;
bottom right: funerals.

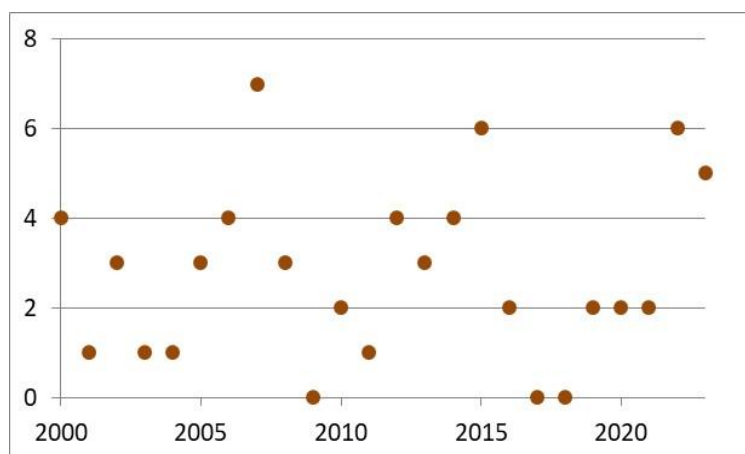
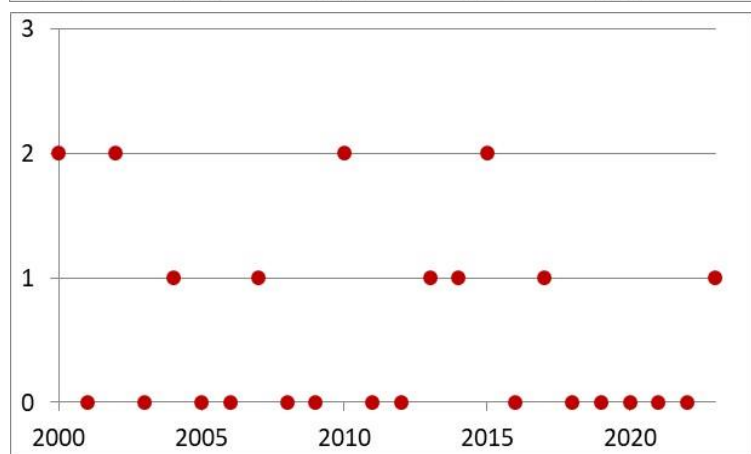


Table 2	Total	Living in the parish	Living outside the parish
2023	30	16	14
2022	38	16	22
2021	44	16	28

Table 2 Numbers of Church members on the electoral roll.
The numbers include the housebound and/or in residential care.

Youth-work Reports

School liaison

There are no Church of England schools in the parish and, since the Covid pandemic, work with local schools has not been extensive:

- The Vicar led three assemblies in Littlemoor School and was a Community Governor of the school during the academic year 2022–23.
- The Vicar has worked extensively with the church schools at St Thomas (Moor-side) and St Thomas (Leesfield), especially for Harvest, Advent, and Christmas.
- No services for local schools occurred in the church during 2023.
- Waterhead Academy again cancelled all the projects scheduled for 2023.
- Three local schools toured Waterhead Church.

Report from the safeguarding Officer

The Parochial Church Council insists that anyone who works with young people or vulnerable adults must have an enhanced DBS certification, that all workers with children undertake on-line training, and all have been advised of the procedures they should adopt if concerns of any kind arise. In this, the Church is following secular law and is acting within the regulations of the Church of England and the Diocese of Manchester. All our policies reiterate these requirements and are displayed prominently at the back of the church nave.

If anyone has safeguarding concerns about any child, they should first contact

me as the church's Child Protection Officer. All the necessary contact details are listed at the back of the church and on-line. The Local Authority Child Protection Officer can also be contacted for advice if required. Please contact the Police in an emergency.

Our principal children's work during 2023 entailed the holiday clubs funded by the Department of Education for deprived communities in which 'holiday hunger' is a major problem. Such activities may be labelled 'Holiday Activities Fund' (HAF).

During the second half of the year, we also experimented with services for younger children (Fab!, as above).


Within the purview of the above regulations, there were no child-protection issues during the year.

MaryAnne Oduntan: Child-protection Officer (January 2024)

Report from the Sunday school

The Sunday school has not reconvened since the first lockdowns in 2020 owing to a lack of leaders.

Paul Monk: Vicar (January 2024)



***The Lord bless you and keep you;
the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you;
the Lord turn his face toward you
and give you peace.***

Ecumenism

Churches Together in East Oldham

Churches Together did not convene during 2022. It is hoped that it will restart during 2024.

Paul Monk: Vicar (January 2024)

Church diary

PCC programme for 2024

Most PCC meetings may convene via Zoom.

Monday 18 January	Monday 18 March	Monday 20 May
Monday 22 July	Monday 23 September	Monday 18 November

Liturgical programme for 2024

Weds 14 February	Ash Wednesday	Ashing and Eucharist
Sunday 24 March	Palm Sunday	Eucharist
Monday 25 March	Holy Monday	Compline
Tuesday 26 March	Holy Tuesday	Compline
Weds 27 March	Holy Wednesday	Compline
Thursday 28 March	Maundy Thursday	Eucharist (followed by vigil)
Friday 29 March	Good Friday	Non-Eucharistic service
Sunday 31 March	Easter Day	Eucharist
Sunday 16 June	Confirmation service for our Mission Community	
Sunday 8 October	Harvest Festival	
Sunday 3 November	Commemoration of the Faithful Departed	
Sunday 10 Nov	Remembrance Sunday	Non-Eucharistic service
Sunday 15 Dec	Carol Service	
Tuesday 24 Dec	Christingle service	at Waterhead Church
Tuesday 24 Dec	Midnight Mass	at Waterhead Church
Weds 25 Dec	Christmas Day	at St Barnabas' Church

Paul Monk Vicar (January 2024)

Liturgical events in 2023




Lent retreat

Clarksfield: St Barnabas
 Glodwick: St Mark
 Hey: St John the Baptist
 Leesfield: St Agnes
 Leesfield: St Hugh
 Leesfield: St Thomas
 Moorside: St Thomas
 Waterhead: Holy Trinity

Saturday 25 February

9:45 for 10:00 am at St Barnabas' Church, OL4 1NL
 in Mission Community 4. All are welcome.
 The retreat concludes with a simple reverent Eucharist at 12:00 noon.
 All are welcome



Barnabas CLARKSFIELD

Maundy Thursday

Thursday 6 April at 7:00 pm

barnabas-oldham.co.uk



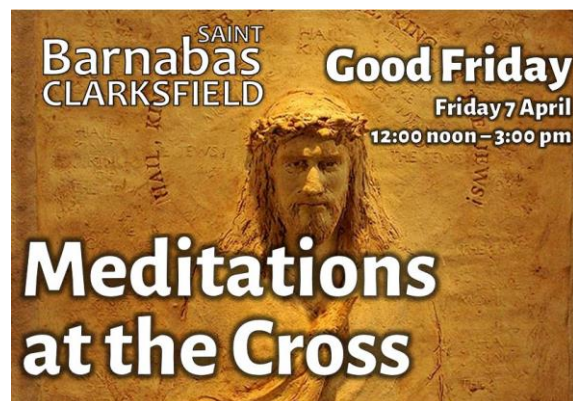
Barnabas CLARKSFIELD

Good Friday

Friday 7 April

Service for all the family, at 9:30 am

barnabas-oldham.co.uk



Barnabas CLARKSFIELD

Good Friday

Friday 7 April
 12:00 noon – 3:00 pm

Meditations at the Cross



Barnabas CLARKSFIELD

Easter Sunday

A joy-filled service for Easter

Sunday 9 April at 9:30 am

barnabas-oldham.co.uk



Barnabas CLARKSFIELD

Remembrance Sunday

Sunday 13 November
 9:30 am

barnabas-oldham.co.uk



Barnabas CLARKSFIELD

Carol Service

Sunday 17 December at 6:00 pm

with the Tame Valley Brass
 at St Barnabas Church, Clarksfield (OL4 1NL)

barnabas-oldham.co.uk



Barnabas CLARKSFIELD

Christmas Day

Celebration and Eucharist

Service starts at 9:30 am: all are welcome

barnabas-oldham.co.uk

Social events in 2023

Funded by the Department for Education and administered by Oldham Council.

Booking is essential. Please text (07492) 849 158 giving your child's name, age, contact number, session date, and HAF code. Thank you.

Family activity club
Food • Friendship • Fun • Free
10:00—2:00 Monday–Thursday, 3–6 April
All children must be accompanied at all times by an adult.
barnabas-thrive-oldham.co.uk



Funded by the Department for Education and administered by Oldham Council.

Booking is essential. Please scan the QR code, or text (07492) 849 158, giving your child's name, age, contact number, session date, and HAF code. Thank you.

Family activity club
Food • Friendship • Fun • Free
Monday–Thursday, 24 July–17 August: 10:00 am—2:00 pm
All children must always be accompanied by an adult.
barnabas-thrive-oldham.co.uk




Financial Reports

Treasurer's report

The accounts attached to this Annual Report offer a detailed description of the Church finances and its trading condition. These paragraphs represent a summary.

The Church paid its full Parish Share in 2023: it paid £11,500 and also paid off about £3,435 of its loan to the Diocese, which was taken out in 2018 to pay for emergency building work.

In summary, Church funds continue to be under great pressure, making achievement of its missionary and charitable aims a challenge.

The Church accommodates many funds. Their year-end balances are:

General Fund	£8,392	
Community Fund	£19,382	
Building Fund	34,330	
Youth club	£15	(which has not resumed after the pandemic)
Women Thrive!	2,231	
Holiday Thrive!	772	
Teen Thrive!	804	

The total income for 2023 was £152,085, which is greater than in 2022 (£129,405). Overall costs over the year were £121,998 (up from £99,990 in 2022). The net balance improved slightly from 29,507 in 2022 to £30,087. Most of this difference relates to grants sourced for the major improvement of the 'long store', and grants for the community project.

General fund

The general fund is the church's only unrestricted account. It pays for heat and light, water and cleaning costs, insurance, and routine maintenance. It also pays the Parish Share. At the end of the financial year, the general fund had increased to £8,392 from £4,872. This increase is very welcome, but the magnitude is too small for comfort: for example, the Diocese of Manchester recommends that it is large enough to pay 6–9 months of bills.

Restricted Funds

Building Fund In 2023, the building fund financed the cost of improvements to the 'long store' and replaced the sound desk area. It funded minor repairs to the lights.

Community Fund Our Community Project runs programmes that include *Food Thrive!*, *Holiday Thrive!*, *Teen Thrive!*, and *Women Thrive!* The project is busy, for example giving food to as many as 250 local people a week (including dependants).

Grants received in 2023

The church was awarded 12 grants during 2023 totalling £95,966. Table 3 cites them in decreasing order of magnitude. This amount is smaller than in 2022, during which year the church received £166,457. These grants helped cover the costs of building (capital) works, and elements within the community project.

It needs to be appreciated that some grant income was awarded in 2022 but received in 2023; and some grant income awarded in 2023 will not be received before 2024 or even 2025. That is how grants operate, particularly those awarded over several years.

Council for Social Action	£30,000	Growth of Barnabas Thrive!
Saddleworth Hydro	£16,200	Solar panels
Diocese of Manchester (pledge)	£15,000	North roof
Oldham Council	£11,902	HAF sessions (summer 2023)
Awards for All	£9,074	Long store conversion
Action Together	£5,000	Household support fund
Oldham Council	£3,000	HAF sessions (Easter 2023)
Oldham Council	£2,220	HAF club for (New Year 2024)
Action Together	£2,000	Covid awareness
Lottery: Reaching Communities	£720	Additional salary for MaryAnne
Duchy of Lancaster Benevolent Fund	£600	Long store conversion
One Stop	£250	Coronation celebrations
	£95,966	

Table 3 The grants awarded and received by the Church during 2023. In most cases, the paperwork needed when applying for these grants was compiled in 2023; the rest were compiled in 2022.

The Parochial Church Council is extremely grateful to these funders for putting their trust in the Church. It is hoped that subsequent grants will enable yet further improvements to the building. A superior building means less maintenance and more projects that help more local people. It also enhances our potential for higher rental income.

Glossary

Accounting period An organisation's accounts are compiled after the end of a week, month, or year. Without qualification, the phrase means the same as a 'financial year'.

Accounts A way of 'giving an account' of what has happened financially. The accounts can cover any period, although most organisations have to produce both monthly and annual accounts. The accounts are compiled to help give a full and clear picture of the transactions during the preceding 'accounting period' year and its financial position at the end of it.

Accrual A form of accounting based on the concept that any money earned by an organisation must be matched with the costs that were incurred to generate that income, and that both are considered during the same accounting period.

Anglican Adjective meaning 'the Church of England'.

Archdeacon The priest in charge of the legal aspects for a large administrative area within a Diocese. In particular, the Archdeacon oversees aspects of property law, the employment and appointment of clergy, and discipline.

Area Dean The priest in charge of an administrative area of a Diocese.

Asset(s) In the accounts, quantifiable or tangible item(s) owned by the charity.

Banns A legal prerequisite for a person to get married in an Anglican church. The word comes from a mediaeval term meaning 'boundary'.

Bishop The head of a Diocese. The bishop is always ordained, so is a priest.

Capital A project involving building work or purchasing of equipment.

Chair The person who oversees the progress of a meeting. Often called a 'chairman', which is itself an abbreviation of 'chair's mandate'.

Church Warden A non-ordained member of a Parish Council with responsibility for the fabric of the church. Wardens are elected at the APCM. Those eligible to vote in an election for a Warden include both the members of a church and those who live within the geographical confines of its parish.

Core cost Regular expenditure, for example on salary, rent, insurance, heating and light, and not a one-off purchase or building project.

Diocese A autonomous administrative district within the Church of England.

Financial year The period over which a year-long 'accounting period' extends. In the Church of England, the financial year starts on 1 January and concludes on 31 December.

Faculty The Anglican form of planning permission which grants permission to proceed with building work, or other scheme.

Fund A component part of an account. For example, the general fund could comprise a flower fund, refreshment fund, maintenance fund, and so on.

General fund The church's main financial account. It is usually unrestricted.

Grant A gift of money to support an organisation or an activity. Grants are generally regarded as 'restricted' income.

Lay Reader A person authorised by an Anglican Diocese to lead and preach at a service held in a parish church.

Overheads The word generally means some or all the fixed costs that need to be met no matter how much or how little of an activity is undertaken, such as rent, heat, light, Council Tax, core staff.

Parish A geographical area overseen by a Church Council.

Parish Share The amount of money payable to the Diocese of Manchester. It helps pay clergy salary and associated costs. In older documentation, this debt is called the 'Parish Quota' or merely 'Quota'.

Parochial Relating to a parish, its area, or business.

Project A series of inter-related activities or programmes. For example, a children's project can comprise fundraising, organisation of volunteers, craftwork, and so on.

Quoracy, quorum, quorate Quoracy describes the rules that define a minimum number or proportion of people who attend a meeting: the decisions of a meeting that operates outside its quoracy is not legally binding. Those people, when assembled, are the 'quorum', and meetings attended by that number (or more) are 'quorate'.

Reader (see 'Lay Reader')

Reserves A word used in accounting meaning 'savings'. If they can be spent on anything the organisation does, they are called free (or 'unrestricted') reserves. If they can only be spent on something in particular, they are 'restricted'.

Restricted Money that has been given to a charity for a particular purpose or project.

Sidespeople Members of a church (authorised by the APCM) to assist the Church Wardens as they oversee the running of a church and its services.

Statutory Adjective meaning deriving from the state, hence the Government, rather than business or VCFSE sectors. The term is usually qualified by words such as 'activity' or 'sector'.

Trustee A person who takes responsibility for managing money or assets that have been set aside for the benefit of others. The members of the PCC are trustees and most are elected.

Unrestricted Money that has *not* been set aside by the trustees of the charity, or a grant-awarding body, for a particular purpose. Unrestricted funds can be used on any of the charity's activities.

Warden (see 'Church Warden')

ALM Accredited Lay Minister. A church member is taught and licensed to help lead an aspect of a church service.

APCM Annual Parochial Church Meeting. This once-a-year meeting always occurs in April, and is the occasion at which representatives are elected to run a PCC.

DAC The Diocesan Advisory Committee. The DAC oversees the planning of Faculties in the Church of England.

HAF Holidays Activities Fund. Grant-based fund for delivering 'holiday-hunger' clubs during the main school holidays.

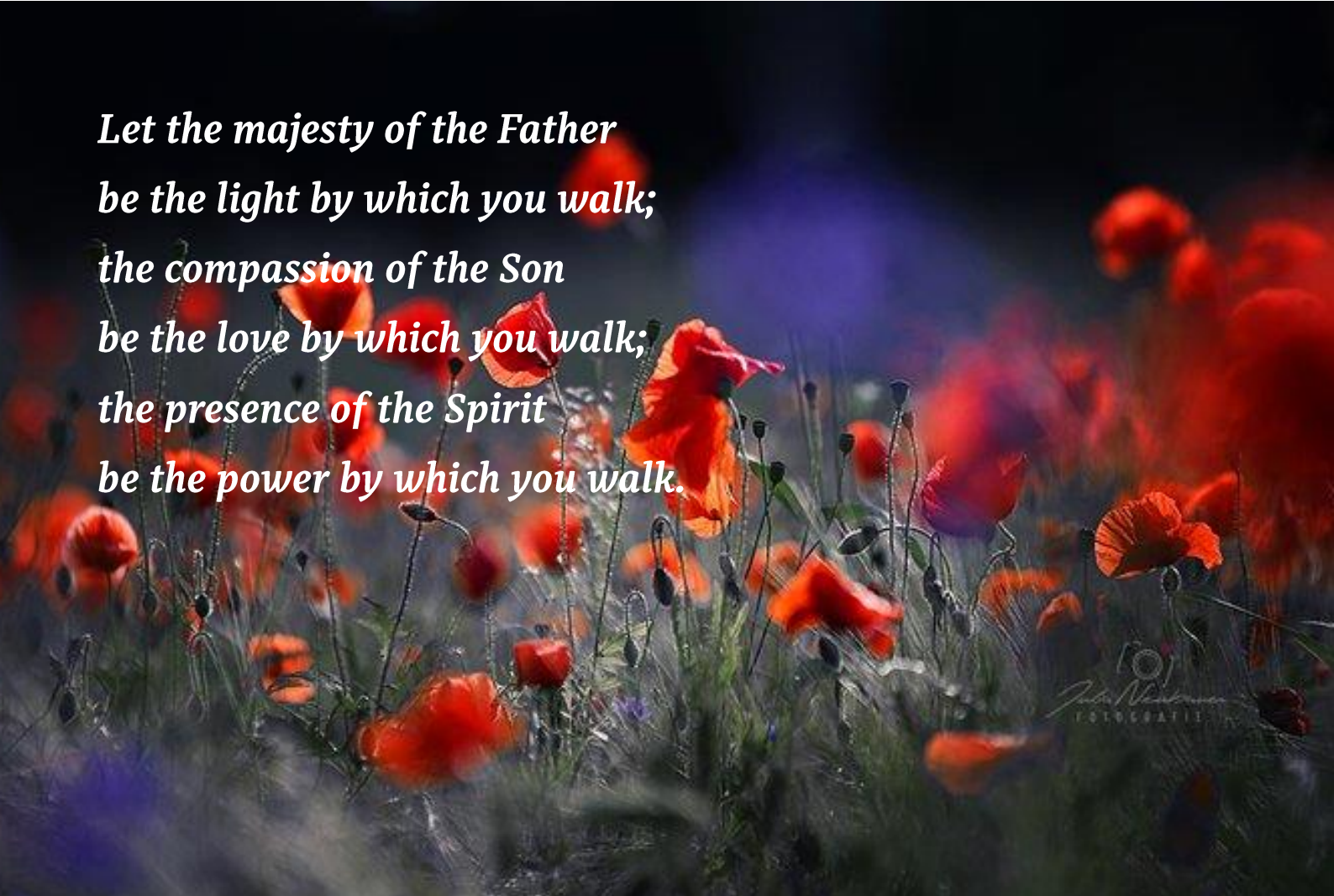
IMD Indices of multiple deprivation. A weighted average of (usually) seven statistical databases used to help define rankings of deprivation. The initials are often followed by a number, indicating the last relevant ranking or accumulation of data. For example, IMD-19 were the data computed in 2019.

LSOA Local super-output area. An acronym used in statistics to refer to an area comprising about 40–60 postcodes and a population of about 2000 houses.

p.a. Per annum = per year.

PCC Parochial Church Council. The PCC is a group of people who oversee the running of an Anglican Parish, with a remit comprising the fabric of a church building, the services of worship that occur within it, and all the financial transactions that oversight requires.

VCFSE Voluntary, charity, faith, social enterprise. The acronym seeks to distinguish an activity or group from either the statutory sector (so led by the Government) or the business sector.



*Let the majesty of the Father
be the light by which you walk;
the compassion of the Son
be the love by which you walk;
the presence of the Spirit
be the power by which you walk.*

John Newman
FOTOGRAFIE

The Parish of Clarksfield and Waterhead, Oldham

The benefice of Clarksfield (St Barnabas) and Waterhead (Holy Trinity) is in the Deanery of Ashton and Oldham, the Episcopal Area of Middleton, and the Diocese of Manchester.

Ministry Team in 2023

Vicar	The Revd Dr Paul Monk
Assistant Curate (in part)	The Revd Denise Owen (and Vicar of St Thomas', Moorside)
Lay Readers	Pete Haslam Lucie Reilly

Parochial Church Council for 2023

Church Wardens	Mr Peter Haslam Mrs Lucie Reilly (in part) Mrs Nicola Williams (in part)
Church Secretary	Mrs Joanne Monk
Church Treasurer	Mrs Vicky Heaton
Deanery Synod Reps.	Position vacant
Elected Members	Mr Tom Edmondson (in part) Mrs Vicky Heaton (in part) Mrs Joanne Monk Mrs Megan Patrick (in part)

Other Church officers

Administrator	Ms Sarah Gura (part time)
Child-protection Officer	Mrs Jo Monk and MaryAnne Oduntan (both in part)
Electoral roll officer	Revd Paul Monk
Treasurer	Mrs Vicky Heaton
Gift-aid Secretary	Mrs Vicky Heaton

Parish Information

Benefice	St Barnabas, Clarksfield and Holy Trinity, Waterhead, both in Oldham.
Bank	The <i>Co-operative Bank</i> , Spindles Square, Oldham.
Insurance	The Church, PCC and property are insured with <i>Ecclesiastical PLC</i> .
Fees	The list of Diocesan fees are displayed in the Church porch and vestry.
Parish Share	The Parish Share for 2023 was £11,500, which was paid in full.