

Annual Report of the Parochial Church Council for 2023

As the people of St Mary Magdalene Church we seek to:

respond to the grace we receive from God;

travel together where Jesus leads;

provide from our resources to grow God's church and care for all in need;

and we are called by name to share our experiences of God.

St Mary Magdalene, Belmont is part of a United Benefice with St Laurence, Pittington. The Benefice is currently in a Vacancy. Rev Canon Leslie Morley, Rev Kevin Dunne, Rev Canon Di Johnson and Rev Dr Jenny Moberly continue with Permission to Officiate at Sunday morning services at both churches.

The PCC is legally responsible for co-operating with the Minister in promoting in the parish the whole ministry of the church: pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. The PCC is responsible for the maintenance and repair of the church buildings and for the moveable items in the church. It has overall charge of all expenditure.

Membership of the PCC is either ex-officio or by election at the Annual Meeting. The parish has between 100 and 200 names on the electoral roll so is entitled to twelve lay representatives to the council. Representatives to Deanery Synod also sit on the PCC: the parish holds three such posts, elected at three-year intervals. Readers licensed to the parish sit on the PCC if the annual meeting decides this. The PCC may also co-opt certain representatives - up to two for a parish of this size electoral roll.

Membership of the PCC

Warden	Anne Corbett	ex officio
Warden	Kevin Reynolds	ex officio
	Geoff Moore	Deanery Synod (elected 2023)
	Charlotte Reynolds	Deanery Synod (elected 2023)
	Julie Winkless	Deanery Synod (elected 2023)

Due to the particular circumstances of the pandemic 2020-2022 the PCC members had all agreed to remain on the council until the situation was more stable. At the Annual Meeting in 2022 eleven members were elected, with the intention of replacing three or four each year to return to the usual 3-year cycle.

Paul Beken	Peter Corbett	Jean Foulds	Judith Holroyd
Patrick Holroyd	Jane Moore	Alan Port	Megan Port

Elected 2023: Di Jackson

Agreed later in 2023: Angela Stockdale, Authorised Lay Chaplain

Co-opted: Gerald Ions (music), Anna Harvey (Authorised Pastoral Assistant
- currently on sabbatical)

Employees

Church Administrator Christina White (until April 2024)

Church Cleaner Deborah Turnbull

Director of Music Gerald Ions

The PCC also oversees payment of fees to vergers for weddings and funerals.

Church Statistics

There were 112 people on the 2023 Electoral Roll.

During the year we held 10 baptisms, 2 weddings, and 16 funerals.

Live-streamed services continue to be watched by a small number of people.

An average of 11 adults attended early Sunday service, and an average of 45 adults the later service. Both services saw the occasional under-16. Easter day saw 85 adults and 9 under-16s at the 10.30 service.

An average of 15 adults attended Wednesday Communion. Home Communion was taken to a few individuals as well as to between 7 and 25 people at the local care home.

Up to 27 children and 28 adults attended Messy Church.

The Remembrance Sunday service was attended by 25 children and 120 adults, and 6 people joined in an act of remembrance on 11 November.

In the lead-up to Christmas a total of 380 children and 42 adults attended services held for the local primary schools, 58 children and 62 adults the secondary school carol service and 1 child and 48 adults the carol service for the Fire Service. Four children and 68 adults attended the Christmas Carol Service, and 46 people attended Holy Communion on Christmas Day.

PCC Business during the Year

The PCC has had 6 ordinary meetings since the last APCM and this report highlights the work of the PCC from April 2023 to March 2024.

At each meeting we received an update on safeguarding: DBS checks and training undergone, any incidents, whether any disclosures have been made; and an interim treasurer's report.

May

We held a brief meeting after the APCM to elect officers, agree co-opted members and agree the composition of the Standing Committee.

June

We discussed the recent hosting of the Knitted Bible which was well-appreciated. We agreed that our use of publicity needs review.

We agreed the purchase of a replacement strimmer for use in the churchyard.

We accepted a revised Working Agreement for the Lay Pastoral Minister.

We agreed to consult with the Archdeacon on reintroducing Altar Servers.

We heard that Rev Liz Hollis has a new position so will not be returning to us, and agreed a farewell presentation.

We noted that St Hild's School are holding a consultation on their proposed conversion to Academy status, but agreed we have no specific contribution to the discussion.

September

We heard an initial report from Angela Stockdale on her work as Authorised Lay Chaplain. We heard from the Pastoral Visiting Team and the Messy Church group. We discussed the work of vergers for funerals and agreed to look at alternative options for the bier.

We discussed various changes to the pandemic restrictions (receiving the wine, sharing the Peace, chalice administrators, prayer volunteers). We agreed to continue with the use of Powerpoint screens in the service.

We reviewed Remembrance service arrangements and discussed Christmas events.

We discussed work on the kitchen and toilet facilities in the Narthex.

We considered our Guided Pledge (Parish Share) for 2024 and agreed to keep payments the same as this year, a figure slightly less than that proposed.

The Vacancy Audit Process began this month, with a meeting with the Archdeacon.

November

We discussed various questions raised by our Parish Safeguarding Dashboard, which had recently been worked almost to completion by Kevin Reynolds.

We elected Patrick Holroyd as Lay Vice Chair of the PCC.

We agreed purchase of a new mobile phone battery for use in streaming services, and a small weekly payment to Harriet Reynolds to run our Social Media. We held our annual Salary Review (organist and cleaner) and agreed an increase in line with inflation. We agreed an 80th birthday gift for Rev Kevin Dunne. We agreed to increase the limit for devolved responsibility to the Standing Committee to £200. We formed a small Working Party to allocate our charitable giving for the year.

January

We heard that there is another new on-line safeguarding system, HUBS.

We agreed our charitable giving for 2023, and accepted the proposed increase in wedding and funeral fees. In light of our financial situation we agreed a reduction in our Parish Share payments. We held initial discussions on the possible use of an expected legacy, noting both the state of the roof and the expectation to be carbon-neutral by 2030.

We discussed the recent Christmas events and agreed that earlier decisions would improve publicity. For 2024 we agreed an Advent carol service and an event of some kind on 22 December. We discussed our Social Media, now being continuously updated. We agreed a request by the Northumbria Chamber Choir to use the church for a concert, proceeds to church funds.

We continued to discuss alternatives to the current heavy heritage bier. We accepted an addendum to the Health and Safety Policy, relating to the new kitchen area. We noted that we are due a quinquennial inspection in 2025 and gratefully accepted Geoff Moore's willingness to continue to lead on works up to that point.

We agreed in principle (more details to be sought) a request from the Children and Youth worker from Emmanuel Church to use our church as a base for after-school outreach to Belmont School pupils.

We agreed a small group to co-ordinate our Parish Profile.

In January and February we held further meetings with the Archdeacon as part of the Vacancy Process.

March

We agreed an increase in the cover price of the church magazine.

We noted the forthcoming interview date for potential new incumbents.

We discussed the upcoming APCM and noted a general shortage of volunteers.

We heard that the nestboxes in the churchyard are being used, and noted that we intend to return to Ecochurch considerations when we have an incumbent.

We agreed a gift to Charlotte Reynolds as appreciation for all her work while the administrator has been absent.

During April we heard that there had been no applications for the post of Incumbent and that it will now be re-advertised. We also accepted Christina White's resignation as administrator, following a period of sickness absence.

**St Mary Magdalene Church
Belmont**

End of Year Financial Statements

Year ending 2023

Receipts and Payments Account: General Fund

Receipts

Incoming resources from generated funds	Total funds	Prior year funds
<i>Voluntary income</i>		
01 - Tax-efficient (gift-aid) planned giving	29,759.50	32,262.50
02 - Other planned giving (not gift-aided)	4,644.41	7,020.12
03 - Collections at services	3,854.75	4,052.63
05 - Non-recurring giving. donations, appeals	1,586.61	1,082.19
06 - Tax recovered via gift aid	11,791.67	12,000.00
<i>Total Voluntary income</i>	<i>51,636.94</i>	<i>56,417.44</i>
<i>Activities for generating funds</i>		
09 - gross income from fund raising	107.00	105.00
<i>Total Activities for generating funds</i>	<i>107.00</i>	<i>105.00</i>
<i>Investment income</i>		
10 - Dividends, interest, property income	20.54	6.03
<i>Total Investment income</i>	<i>20.54</i>	<i>6.03</i>
<i>Church Activities</i>		
11 - Statutory PCC fees	3,235.00	2,507.00
12 - Income from trading (magazine, hall)	2,303.30	2,693.80
<i>Total Church Activities</i>	<i>5,538.30</i>	<i>5,200.80</i>
<i>Other incoming resources</i>		
08 - Income from Trusts or grants (restricted	28,674.46	36,748.87
RES - Restricted funds	—	22,821.67
<i>Total Other incoming resources</i>	<i>28,674.46</i>	<i>59,570.54</i>
Total Receipts	85,977.24	121,299.81

Payments

<i>Cost of generating funds</i>		
17 - Costs of generating funds	375.02	165.37
<i>Total Cost of generating funds</i>	<i>375.02</i>	<i>165.37</i>
<i>Charitable activities</i>		
18 - Mission giving/Donations to charity	5,409.70	4,839.05
<i>Total Charitable activities</i>	<i>5,409.70</i>	<i>4,839.05</i>
<i>Church Activities</i>		
19 - Parish share	57,000.00	63,265.00
20 - Salaries, wages, honoraria	12,012.18	11,268.20
21 - Expenses	32.58	507.48
22 - Mission and evangelism projects	2,197.49	3,696.75
23 - Church running expenses	9,435.65	10,191.02
24 - Church utility bills	12,487.66	4,382.95
25 - Costs of trading (magazine, hall)	3,452.80	3,181.50
<i>Total Church Activities</i>	<i>96,618.36</i>	<i>96,492.90</i>
<i>Governance costs</i>		
26 - Governance costs	518.29	360.00
<i>Total Governance costs</i>	<i>518.29</i>	<i>360.00</i>
<i>Major capital expenditure</i>		
27 - Major repairs to church	678.00	5,280.41
<i>Total Major capital expenditure</i>	<i>678.00</i>	<i>5,280.41</i>
<i>Other resources used</i>		
REST - Restricted Funds	6,898.38	10,026.95
<i>Total Other resources used</i>	<i>6,898.38</i>	<i>10,026.95</i>
Total Payments	110,497.75	117,164.68

Excess of Incoming resources over Resources used	(24,520.51)	4,135.13
Brought forward balance	32,493.57	28,408.82
Carried forward balance	7,973.06	32,543.95

BBRT - Barclays base rate tracker (Designated)

Receipts

Incoming resources from generated funds		
10 - Dividends, interest, property income	165.13	6.26
<i>Total Investment income</i>	<i>165.13</i>	<i>6.26</i>

Total Receipts	165.13	6.26
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Excess of Incoming resources over Resources used	165.13	6.26
Brought forward balance	16,336.43	16,330.17
Carried forward balance	16,501.56	16,336.43

NR – Virgin money (Designated)

Brought forward balance	0.42	0.42
Carried forward balance	0.42	0.42

Balance sheet

	Description	This year	Last year
Current assets			
	Barclays base rate tracker	16,501.56	16,336.43
	Building Fund	—	—
	General account	7,315.77	32,543.95
	Virgin Money	0.42	0.42
	Accounts Receivable	—	—
	Total Current assets	23,817.75	48,880.80
Liabilities			
	Agency collections	(657.29)	—
	Total Liabilities	(657.29)	—
	Net Asset surplus(deficit)	24,475.04	48,830.42
Reserves			
	Excess / (deficit) to date	(24,355.38)	449.67
	Starting balances	48,880.80	48,880.80
	Total Reserves	24,525.42	48,880.80

Statement of assets and liabilities

	General	Designated	Restricted	Endowment	This year	Last year
Current assets - Cash at bank						
Barclays base rate tracker -	—	16,501.56	—	—	16,501.56	16,336.43
General account -	7,973.06	—	(657.29)	—	7,315.77	32,543.95
Virgin Money -	—	0.42	—	—	0.42	0.42
Totals	7,973.06	16,501.98	(657.29)	—	23,817.75	48,880.80
Liabilities -						
Agency collections –	—	—	(657.29)	—	(657.29)	—
Totals	—	—	(657.29)	—	(657.29)	—
Grand total	7,973.06	16,501.98	—	—	24,525.42	48,830.42

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE PCC OF BELMONT ST MARY MAGDALENE CHURCH, DURHAM

I report on the accounts of the PCC for the year ended 31 December 2023 which are as set out on the attached pages.

Respective Responsibilities of PCC Members and Examiner

The PCC members are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The members 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
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act and CBF guidance; and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of Independent Examiner's Report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission and given guidance from the CBF. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the PCC 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 you as members concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is as to whether the accounts present a "true and fair view" and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent Examiner's Statement

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

1) Which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act;
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act

have not been met; or

2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

T J Hardman
CTA

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2 February 2023