

STURRY AND DISTRICT UNITED CHURCH

England & Wales · Charity number 1181753

Details

Status Registered

Legal form Other

Registered 2019-01-25

Register [View on the Charity Commission register](#)

Contact

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Broad Oak
Canterbury
Kent
CT2 0QU

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Email rector@sturrychurch.org.uk

Website <https://www.sturrychurch.org.uk/>

Activities

Objects: THE PURPOSE OF THE CHARITY IS TO ADVANCE THE CHRISTIAN FAITH IN THE AREA OF BENEFIT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES OF THE PARTICIPATING CHURCHES. IN ACHIEVING ITS PURPOSE, THE CHARITY WILL ENGAGE IN A RANGE OF ACTIVITIES, EITHER ON ITS OWN OR WITH OTHERS, INCLUDING (BUT NOT RESTRICTED TO):A) THE CELEBRATION OF PUBLIC WORSHIP; B) THE TEACHING OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH; C) MISSION AND EVANGELISM; D) PASTORAL WORK, INCLUDING VISITING THE SICK AND THE BEREAVED; E) THE PROVISION OF FACILITIES WITH A CHRISTIAN ETHOS FOR THE LOCAL COMMUNITY, INCLUDING (BUT NOT RESTRICTED TO) THE ELDERLY, THE YOUNG AND OTHER GROUPS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS; AND F) THE SUPPORT OF OTHER CHARITIES IN THE UK AND OVERSEAS.

Activities: To advance the Christian faith in Sturry, Westbere, Fordwich, Hersden and Broad Oak in accordance with the principles and practices of the Church of England and The Methodist Church

Classification

- **How:** Provides Buildings/facilities/open Space, Other Charitable Activities
- **What:** Religious Activities
- **Who:** The General Public/mankind

Geography

- Kent

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2024-12-31	£54,028	£48,453	-	-
2023-12-31	£55,462	£57,088	-	-
2022-12-31	£48,593	£63,971	-	-
2021-12-31	£50,577	£51,760	-	-
2020-12-31	£54,285	£55,645	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Angela Muriel Pilgrim		2016-04-24
GAVIN KENNETT		2020-10-30
Georgina Ann GLOVER		2013-04-28
Jane Freeman		2023-05-28
Martin George Pilgrim MBE MA		2016-04-24
Paul Haines		2017-04-30
Pauline Louch		2021-06-06
Phili Audrey B Lewis		2023-10-19
Rev Peter Cameron Jessett Freeman		2018-04-29

STURRY AND DISTRICT UNITED CHURCH

England & Wales - Charity number 1181753

Accounts

**The Ecumenical Church Council
of
Sturry and District United Church
within the parish of
Sturry with Fordwich and Westbere with Hersden
Charity Commission reg no: 1181753**

ANNUAL REPORT

for the year ended 31 December 2024

STURRY & DISTRICT UNITED CHURCH



St. Mary's Fordwich



St. Nicholas' Sturry



All Saints Westbere

The Ecumenical Church Council of Sturry and District United Church

Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council for 2024

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Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council for 2024**The Ecumenical Church Council of Sturry
and District United Church**

This **Annual Report**, accompanying the parish and partnership annual accounts, is compiled in line with the requirements of the Charities Act 2006, the requirements of the Charity Commission and the public benefit reporting requirements that now apply to all charities.

Following the formal adoption of the new constitution on 20 February 2013, the responsibilities and the membership of the Parochial Church Council (PCC) of the Anglican Parish of Sturry with Fordwich and Westbere with Hersden and those of the Ecumenical Church Council (ECC) of Sturry and District United Church are inevitably closely linked, and accordingly the following is a joint report approved by both councils.

Administrative information

Sturry and District United Church is a joint Anglican-Methodist Church serving the above-named parish. The Local Ecumenical Partnership in this parish was set up in September 1970 and its Sponsoring Body is Churches Together in Kent. It meets in two parish buildings, St Nicholas' church in Sturry, and All Saints' church in Westbere, both Anglican-owned but the subject of sharing agreements signed in 1988. (The church building of St Mary the Virgin in Fordwich was declared redundant in 1996 and is vested in the Churches Conservation Trust.)

As an Anglican-Methodist partnership, Sturry and District United Church is part both of the Diocese of Canterbury and Deanery of Canterbury within the Church of England and also part of The Canterbury and East Kent Circuit of The Methodist Church. The correspondence address is:
C/O The ECC Secretary, 88, Sweechgate, Broad Oak, Canterbury, CT2 0QU

The Ecumenical Church Council which was set up alongside the new Parochial Church Council from 20 February 2013 fulfils within this parish and partnership the roles normally carried out by a Parochial Church Council and a Methodist Church Council, and is therefore a body corporate (PCC Powers Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2006). Sturry and District United Church was registered as a charity in January 2019.

The PCC has complied with the requirements imposed by the code under section 5A of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016.

Given the suspension of the right of Presentation dated 18 May 2021 which is still in force, Revd Preb. Gillean Craig was licensed as interim 0.2 part time priest in charge rather than incumbent in September 2022. Revd Catherine Wagstaff was welcomed to the LEP as interim part time methodist minister also on 0.2 in September 2022. Both had been in conversation with the church in the months leading up to their joining us. Revd Gillean Craig and Rev Catherine Wagstaff both left the parish and partnership in 2024. In 2024 Revd Danny Wheadon joined us. Revd Danny is also the Methodist Circuit Superintendent for the Canterbury and East Kent Methodist Circuit

Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council for 2023 (continued).
(1) PCC members who served during the period 1 January – 31 December 2024 were:

Part time interim Anglican Priest	Revd Preb Gillean Craig (until June 2024)
Part time interim Methodist Minister	Revd Catherine Wagstaff (until September 2024)
Part time interim Methodist Minister	Revd Danny Wheadon (from September 2024)
Retired minister with Permission to Officiate	Revd Peter Freeman
Churchwardens	Mr Martin Pilgrim Mrs Jane Freeman
Representatives on the Deanery Synod	Mrs Georgina Glover
Elected members	Mr Paul Haines Mr Gavin Kennett (secretary) Mrs Angela Pilgrim Mrs Pauline Louch Mr Philip Lewis

(2) ECC members who served during the period 1 January – 31 December 2023 were:

Part time interim Anglican Priest	Revd Preb Gillean Craig (until June 2024)
Part time interim Methodist Minister	Revd Catherine Wagstaff (until September 2024)
Part time interim Methodist Minister	Revd Danny Wheadon (from September 2024)

Retired minister with Permission to Officiate Revd Peter Freeman

(The Circuit Superintendent minister, together with other ministers who have pastoral responsibility within the circuit, and the Bishop of Dover or her appointed representative, may also attend meetings)

Church Stewards & Churchwardens	Mr Martin Pilgrim Mrs Jane Freeman
Representatives on the Deanery Synod	Mrs Georgina Glover.
Members of the Circuit Meeting	Mr Martin Pilgrim (As Church Steward_ Mrs Angela Pilgrim (ex officio as circuit steward)
Elected Members	Mr Gavin Kennett Mr Paul Haines Mrs Pauline Louch Mr Philip Lewis
In attendance	Mr Peter Bartlett

Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council for 2024 (continued).***Structure, governance and management***

Since 20 February 2013 the method of appointment of PCC members and ECC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules of the Church of England, the Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church and the constitution of the Sturry and District United Church within the parish of Sturry with Fordwich and Westbere with Hersden, with the exception that in this parish and partnership those whose names are on the Methodist membership list enjoy the same rights, privileges and responsibilities as those whose names are on the Anglican electoral roll.

There is no pre-determined 'quota' governing the balance between Anglican and Methodist members on the church councils; candidates are elected without regard to their formal denominational allegiance. All who attend worship regularly in our churches are invited to register on the electoral roll or Methodist membership list and stand for election to the PCC and ECC.

In 2007 a Joint Membership List was created, consisting of those who had registered on the electoral roll or Methodist membership list, and it is noteworthy that since that date all such church members have wished to regard themselves as joint members of both denominations. At the Joint Church Council (JCC) meeting of 30 March 2009 it was resolved that following the Annual General Meeting and Annual Parochial Church Meeting the numbers reported to our parent denominations would each be one-half of the total figure for the Joint Membership List.

Under the new constitution which came into force from 20 February 2013, the maximum number of elected representatives on each of the PCC and the ECC is nine. Elected representatives are elected to serve for three years. At the end of their first period of three years they are eligible for election for a further three years, but after a service of six consecutive years there must be a gap of at least one year before they can stand again for election.

Objectives and activities

As laid down by the PCC (Powers) Measure 1956, the PCC and ECC of Sturry and District United Church have the responsibility of co-operating with the Anglican and Methodist minister(s) in promoting in the parish and partnership the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. The PCC also has maintenance responsibilities for the church buildings of St Nicholas, Sturry, and All Saints, Westbere, and the churchyard only (not the church building) of St Mary the Virgin, Fordwich, and also exercises functions with respect to the Church of England Primary School in the parish.

The PCC and ECC met in person seven times during the year, including a brief meeting after the 2023 AGM and APCM. The PCC and ECC generally have joint meetings, at which the business of each council is handled separately, and a similar principle applies with respect to the AGM and APCM. The Standing and Finance Committee has met five times, generally between ECC / PCC meetings, and minutes of their deliberations were received by the full PCC and ECC and discussed where necessary. The pastoral committee has met twice this year. We are pleased that our many visitors comment on the friendly atmosphere and warm welcome that they receive at Sturry. We would like to develop our work further, particularly with the young people who join us for Sunday worship.

Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council for 2024 (continued).**The purpose of Sturry and District United Church as a charity**

The purpose of the Sturry and District United Church as a charity is to advance the Christian Faith in the area of benefit in accordance with the principles and practices of both The Methodist and The Anglican Church. The charity identifies its work as a charity in six areas;

The celebration of public worship – this included regular Sunday worship at Sturry, a return to regular monthly services at Westbere and special services at Fordwich.

The Teaching of the Christian Faith has been carried out through services, work in our local schools, and articles in the church magazine “Link Up”.

Mission and Evangelism has been reviewed and a plan of action drawn up.

Pastoral Work is carried out by our Ministers and others such as by members of the Pastoral Committee which includes phone calls / visits to those who need support.

The provision of facilities within a Christian Ethos for the local community: We encourage the use of the church by all members of the community and amongst other things hold weekly coffee morning, a warm space during the winter months, children’s activities during the school holidays, craft afternoons and hosting Sturry Singers. Sturry Church is also open on Wednesdays and Sundays all day for people to come and visit and the building to pray and find out about its history.

Support of Other Charities in the UK and Overseas. The church has supported other charities through raising recognition of their work, praying for them and raising money during special services and events. We have regularly donated money to the Church Army and have collected money for Action for Children, The Children’s Society, The Kajokeji Educational Trust Africa, The World Methodist Mission Fund amongst others. More details of how we meet our objectives as a charity are given in the different sections of this report.

Achievements and performance**Worship**

The table below gives a summary of key numbers reported annually with the previous year’s figures given by way of comparison. Following the pandemic, a few members of the congregation continued to ‘worship at home’, through the provision of printed or emailed worship resources, a live Zoom service held by the Methodist Circuit, pre-recorded services from other churches or broadcast worship on the BBC.

The figure for funerals included those conducted were held by parish ministers either in one of the church buildings, at a local cemetery or at a crematorium.

	2024	2023
Number on the Joint Membership List	47	43
Anglican Electoral Roll	24	21
Methodist Membership	23	22
Usual Sunday figure reported as part of the Anglican Statistics for Mission	23	25
Baptisms	2	6
Weddings	4	5
Funerals	8	11

Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council for 2024 (continued).

A year in the Life of Sturry & District United Church

Introduction

2024 was for Sturry and District United Church a year of change and innovation. We do not take for granted the work that goes into our regular events – the worship, weekly coffee mornings, the monthly Soup on Saturday, the production and distribution of our monthly magazine, Link Up with a print run of 450 copies, the work of our bellringers, the regular groups, such as Crafty Allsorts and Sturry Singer; the bereavement group – we could go on.

January

We began 2024 by making it easier to give money to the church. We installed a machine which enables donors to use their debit or credit cards. Regular churchgoers and visitors have used this. We are also encouraging more people to give regularly using the Church of England centralised system, which helps with Gift Aid and enables giving to be updated in line with the rise in prices.



Winter 2024 was dominated by a crisis about the cost of heating. Sturry Church responded to this by running a “Warm Wednesday” programme from the end of January until the spring. Films, activities, refreshments and a warm welcome were on offer, enabling people to save the cost of an afternoon’s heating at home.

February

We began Lent with a service for Ash Wednesday, 14 February.

Then, on 22 February, Revd Gillean Craig began a weekly five-session course on Mark’s Gospel, in which 10 or 12 people studied and discussed the gospel.

In Fordwich, Philip Lewis organised a series of themed displays in the Church of St Mary the Virgin. This included passages to read and activities to do. The programme ended with a service on Holy Saturday, 30 March.

March

On Saturday, 16 March, there was a Celebration of Spring in Sturry Church, featuring games, refreshments and crafts.

Sturry Church organised a deep, spring clean the morning of Saturday, 30 March, followed by a fish and chip lunch.



Also in March, Stephen Marsh of the bellringers was able to get the clock on the north face of Sturry Church tower working again. In his poem, “The Old Vicarage, Grantchester”, Rupert Brooke asked whether the church clock still stood at ten to three. In Sturry, the church clock no longer still stands at seven minutes past five.

Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council for 2024 (continued).

Sturry Church was recognised as an Eco-Church in March, with Bronze status. This was based on our work in: worship and teaching about the environment; the management of our buildings and land; our community and global engagement; and, lifestyle.



April

As part of our eco-church mission, we recorded 14 varieties of birdsong in Sturry churchyard and the Milner Ground. We also noted the appearance of beavers on the River Stour, only a hundred yards from the church.



On 18 April, we were represented at the Licensing Service for the Reverend Lucy Sullivan as an Associate Chaplain at The King's School, Canterbury. Revd Lucy has particular responsibility for the Junior King's School and we have been pleased to welcome Lucy to lead occasional Sunday worship at Sturry and Westbere in addition to her responsibilities at the school.

May

Sturry Church received a new wall hanging. The Craft Allsorts Group, which meets in the church each week, with others in our village have produced a banner celebrating many facets of life in our town and villages.

On 29 May, during the Spring Bank Holiday half term week, we ran an activity afternoon in Sturry Church for 23 children and helpers. As one of the organisers said, "Children were happy, parents were happy, church people were happy – we have a good team."



June



On 9 June we said "farewell and thank you" to Revd Prebendary Gillean Craig and his wife, Linda. For two years, Gillean had been the Anglican part of our "ecumenical team ministry", along with the Methodist Revd Catherine Wagstaff. He had made a great impression and worked tirelessly – far beyond his nominal 0.2 full time equivalent.

We held our Annual Strawberry Tea on 23 June. This is a fundraising event but also a great summer social occasion for the whole community.

Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council for 2024 (continued).

The Archbishop inspects the ceiling in 2017.

At the end of June, we finally signed off the National Lottery Heritage Fund Project. This had begun in 2017 when the Quinquennial Inspection had identified the need for major repairs to Sturry Church. With funding from the NLHF, donations from individuals, fundraising activities and volunteers time valued at £27,000, we delivered a £317,000 project. Along the way we had COVID lockdowns, a liquidated main contractor and three church treasurers. However, the building was repaired, kitchen facilities were improved and we became able to share the building and its heritage with the wider community.



June also saw the ordination at Ripon Cathedral of Rebecca Mathen as Deacon in the Church of England. Rebecca's, parents are part of our local worshipping community. Rebecca worshipped at Sturry when her studies at Cambridge made it possible. Revd Rebecca began her ministry as Curate in the Bradford area. Pic of Rebecca.



Revd Rebecca Mathen

August

In August, Revd Catherine Wagstaff stood down as our Methodist minister after two years. In her place we welcomed the Revd Danny Wheadon, who is also our Circuit Superintendent Minister. Like her Anglican counterpart at Sturry, Revd Gillean Craig – to whom we said farewell in June – Catherine was nominally 0.2 of a full time equivalent, but also like Gillean we were pleased to have more than that effort from Catherine.

Discussions continue with our parent denominations about the future of ministry in Sturry and District but our clergy resources are – at least for the time being – much less than we have been used to. We have welcomed ordained and lay people from the Methodist and Anglican Churches to lead our worship, and we are grateful for that support. But quite often our local church family has been left to organise and lead worship ourselves. In Methodism, this is known as a Local Arrangement. Local Arrangement services make real the statement, "*Worship is the work of the whole people of God: a congregation is not an audience or a group of spectators*" (Methodist Worship Book). One of the innovations using this freedom has been "Café Church", which combines Sunday worship and breakfast.

September

On 14 September, the annual Ride + Stride event took place. This is a fundraising event in which participants are sponsored to visit as many Kent churches as possible in a day. Half of the money raised goes to the participants' local church and half goes to help repair and maintain Kent churches. In Sturry, our local efforts raised a total of £764. Some Sturry folk did their bit by being sponsored for completing circuits of Sturry church with their mobility aids.



Also in September, we began monthly visits to Sturry Church of England Primary School. Using resources from "Open the Book", a few of our team give short dramatizations of Bible stories at school assemblies. We

Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council for 2024 (continued).

were pleased to improve the links with the school in this way and we feel it has helped to encourage children and their parents to participate in church events and services too.

October



At the autumn half term, we ran another activity afternoon in the church for children of all ages. During this event we launched a project as part of our work as an Eco Church, we set up bird feeding stations in the churchyard.

November

We recognised the problems faced by those suffering bereavement or other life changing loss by inaugurating our monthly “Butterflies” group. People can share their experiences and be listened to. The group welcomes people of all faiths and none.



December

Advent and Christmas was an exciting and busy time. As well as traditional services and events, we had a “Blue Christmas” service to meet the needs of those for whom – for one reason or another – were not in a position to have a happy Christmas. Our 2024 Christmas Tree Festival attracted 36 entries from a wide range of church and community groups and schools. Insert Christmas Tree Word Cloud. St Mary’s Church, Fordwich hosted a Carol Concert with readings, reflections, carols, hot punch and mince pies.



Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council for 2024 (continued).

Property Report for Annual Report from the Church stewards / Churchwardens

At Westbere we organised repairs to masonry at All Saints' Church, replacing fallen coping stones etc. This was a c £1600 project.

At Sturry, we are grateful for continued support from Community Payback and the Junior King's School for maintenance of the Milner Ground between the churchyard at the A28 road. We have also engaged contractors to deal with Japanese knotweed in the southeast corner of the Milner Ground, as we have a legal obligation to stop it spreading. The contractors visit three times a year as part of the management plan for dealing with the knotweed.

We thank Stephen Marsh of the bellringers for his expertise in repairing the clock on the tower.

In 2024, we began to investigate the possibility of installing a glass door to the north entrance of St Nicholas' Church, Sturry, in addition to the existing wooden door. This would improve the impression of the church and be much more welcoming. At the time of writing, we are seeking the necessary permissions and consulting interested parties but we hope to go ahead with the project later in 2025

At Fordwich churchyard, Community Payback began extensive clearance of undergrowth, etc. in 2024. We also commissioned a professional survey of the need for more extensive work on the larger trees, including the removal of some, with the aims of: improving safety and access; preventing damage to walls and the church building; and, improving biodiversity. We are still waiting for permission from the diocese for the work to take place. After we have this, we can begin fundraising for the estimated cost of £5,000.

Finally, we need to recognise the tireless work of our cleaning teams at Westbere and Fordwich Churches

Martin Pilgrim

28 April 2025

Synod Report 2025

Synod has met 3 times since our last APCMs.

- In June 2024 we met at Canterbury Cathedral Studio and discussed Revitalisation, one of the three bold outcomes of the Diocesan strategy. Following an introduction from Archdeacon Will Adams there were group discussions focussing on what revitalisation could look like in the parishes.
- In October 2024 at St Paul's we focussed on another of the bold outcomes, New Worshipping Communities. After a presentation by Shiela Porter on the work of Myriad (a national organisation which helps lay leaders to form new communities) there was a short video on three such communities. After a lively period for questions there were group discussions.
- In February 2025 at All Saints, Synod was an entirely open meeting which focussed on the Deanery Mission Plan. Revd Nick White gave a short presentation outlining the structure and main elements of the plan followed by opportunities for discussion around six tables each led by a facilitator. These covered the main elements of the Plan: Ignite, Youth, Housing estates, University students, Buildings and Eco church. Everyone had the opportunity to discuss each topic for 10 minutes during the hour-long session. Each facilitator gave a brief summary of the main issues raised and these comments will be taken back for further consideration by the Deanery Mission and Ministry Committee (DMMC). The Plan will be brought back for formal approval at the June meeting of Synod.

Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council for 2024 (continued).

The Deanery Eco group continues to flourish, although Caroline Blamey is stepping back from the coordinating role, the Deanery is grateful for all the effort she has put into the group.

The Care in a Crisis initiative, networking local agencies working against poverty and disadvantage, was merged with the similar activity led by the Canterbury Society, to avoid unnecessary duplication.

Communication: The Deanery Facebook page www.facebook.com/CanterburyDeanery/ provides current news of the huge range of activities among our Deanery parishes and Christians Together in Canterbury.

During the year: the Deanery welcomed back Revd Jo Richards after a period of illness. Revd Brian McHenry was appointed as Assistant Area Dean. Liz Morrison (Lay Chair) and John Morrison (Treasurer) stepped down from their roles. Professor Roger Vickerman was elected as Lay Chair and Canon Treasurer Andrew Dodds as Treasurer

Thanks to all members of the DMMC for their hard work on the Deanery Mission Plan and for their continuing dedication to the needs of the Deanery, and to Harry Macdonald, our Administrator, for his efficient work in serving the Deanery

Roger Vickerman

Methodist Circuit Report

Sturry Church is a Local Ecumenical Partnership between the Anglican and Methodist Churches and as such plays an active part of the Canterbury and East Kent Methodist Circuit. Our Circuit stretches from Faversham to Dover and across to Thanet. Our Superintendent minister, Danny Wheadon, has been looking after our church this year. Danny has taken many services and played an active part in supporting us as we seek to find a way forward for our church. Danny will be leaving us in July to go to work in a North London circuit. He will be replaced by Rev Dr Peggy Kabonde, who comes from Wiltshire but with extensive experience of church and circuit development in Zambia. Peggy will lead a team ministry of Methodist ministers across the whole circuit who will work together to support all churches. Peggy has already visited our church and was very impressed with all the work we do.

Our minister, Danny Wheadon, our two churchwardens and church stewards, Jane Freeman and Martin Pilgrim, all attend the Circuit Meeting along with Angela Pilgrim, who is currently Senior Circuit Steward.

The Circuit Meeting is the local decision-making body for finances and the deployment of staff including ministers. Methodist ministers move churches regularly and this year we are faced with the challenge of seeing how our human (ministerial and lay) and financial resources can support God's work across East Kent including Sturry.

Angela Pilgrim (Senior Circuit Steward)

Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council for 2024 (continued).

Financial review We are grateful to those church members who reviewed their giving through the church over the year, and to all who have organised and supported fundraising events. However, we need to increase our income if we are to become truly sustainable. In 2024, the ECC signed up to the Parish Giving Scheme. This will allow for people to pay by direct debit rather than standing order and to review their giving more easily each year with the possibility of indexing their regular giving in line with inflation. Details of our receipts and expenditure, including our parish share and circuit assessment by which we contribute to ministry costs not only in this parish but in the wider churches, will be available in the financial accounts.

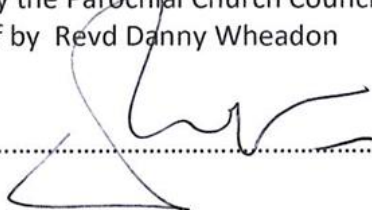
At the end of 2022 Liz Morrison stepped down as Treasurer. Gavin Kennett agreed to temporarily take on the role of "book keeper" with the guidance of Martin Pilgrim and help of Pauline Louch.

We are very grateful for those who give generously both in terms of time and of money.

Reserves policy The PCC has reviewed the church's needs for reserves in line with the Operational Guidance No 43 (Charity Income Reserves) issued by the Charity Commission. The income of the Parish, as well as its financial demands, are subject to fluctuation. Maintaining two listed buildings can be costly and in order to meet the cost of major repairs and other calls upon parish funds, the PCC consider it prudent to maintain substantial reserves.

Report approved by the Parochial Church Council and the Ecumenical Church Council on 30 April 2025 and signed on its behalf by Revd Danny Wheadon

...Name



Date

30th April 2025

Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council for 2024 (continued).



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees	STURRY AND DISTRICT UNITED CHURCH		
On accounts for the year ended	31 st December 2024	Charity no (if any)	1181753
	Set out on pages		
	14 - 16		

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended **31 / 12 / 2024**.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

Independent examiner's statement

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination (~~other than that disclosed below~~ *) which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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

* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

Signed: CSutcliffe Date: 17.4.2025

Name: CLARE SUTCLIFFE

Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any):

—

Address: 128 SANDWICH ROAD, WHITFIELD, DOVER, KENT. CT16 3JP

Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council for 2024 (continued).

Sturry & District United Church						
Receipts and Payments Summary 2024						
		Unrestricted	Restricted	Endowment	2024 Total funds	2023 Total funds
RECEIPTS		£	£	£		£
Voluntary receipts						
Planned giving		12825.00	-	-	12,825.00	12111.00
Giving at services		2558.1	-	-	2,558.10	2640.68
All other giving / voluntary receipts	KSC	5,040.00	-	-	5,040.00	5040.00
	Donations (general)	3,902.04	-	-	3,902.04	4214.45
	Fees to PCC	1,801.00	-	-	1,801.00	1912.00
	1 Fees due to DBF		1,352.00	-	1,352.00	2430.00
	2 Wedding staged payments	1,792.00	627.00	-	2,419.00	2650.00
					-	
Tax Recovered	3 Gift Aid (planned giving)	-	-	-	-	11024.20
	VAT (NLHF project)	-	-	-	-	0.00
					-	
		27,918.14	1,979.00	-	29,897.14	42022.33
					-	
Activities for generating funds	Coffee	631.58	-	-	631.58	589.95
	Fundraising events	1,525.83	-	-	1,525.83	1368.83
	4 Soup lunches	907.25	-	-	907.25	166.50
	5 Warm Space	1,251.81	-	-	1,251.81	1422.26
	6 Sundries	13,489.91	-	-	13,489.91	3428.15
					-	
Investment Income		4,093.44	-	-	4,093.44	3919.17
					-	
Church Activities	Magazine	1,642.00	-	-	1,642.00	1911.50
	Charity Collections	589.00	-	-	589.00	633.50
					-	
Total Receipts		54,027.96	-	-	54,027.96	55462.19
					-	
					-	
					-	
PAYMENTS						
Church Activities						
Stipend contribution/share/assessment		21,310.22	-	-	21,310.22	24299.00
Clergy and staffing costs	7 Ministry Costs	771.80	-	-	771.80	1277.50
					-	0.00
Church running expenses	8 Heat, light, water, insurance	11,792.72	-	-	11,792.72	14727.83
	Upkeep of services	395.38	-	-	395.38	198.10
	9 Bells, organists, virgers	1,435.00	-	-	1,435.00	2365.00
	10 Minor repairs, organ tuning	4,700.01	-	-	4,700.01	2344.08
	11 Churchyard maintenance	1,924.50	-	-	1,924.50	2761.72
	12 Admin	458.19	-	-	458.19	1191.22
	13 Magazine	2,875.80	-	-	2,875.80	3689.33
					-	0.00
Fees returned	Deposits	-	-	-	-	0.00
	14 to Diocese	958.20	-	-	958.20	1655.40
					-	0.00
Hall running costs			-	-	-	0.00
Mission Giving and donations		660.40		-	660.40	950.50
Sundries	15	860.76		-	860.76	1387.92
					-	0.00
NLHF Project						0.00
					-	
		48,142.98		-	48,142.98	56847.60
Costs of generating funds		309.92		-	309.92	240.19
					-	0.00
Total Payments		48,452.90		-	48,452.90	57087.79
Difference between receipts and payments					5575.06	1625.60
Cash in bank and at hand at 1 January 2024		£ 37,196.49				
Cash in bank and at hand at 31 December 2024		£ 42,771.55				

Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council for 2024 (continued).**Notes to the accounts**

- 1 Includes fees paid to PCC for payment to Diocesan Board of Finance for funerals. From Jan 2024, Diocesan Board of Finance required PCC to pay 70% directly to non-stipendiary ministers.
- 2 Wedding Fees may be paid in total or as part of staged payments. The PCC is no longer allowed to take a deposit. Some of this money is restricted to pay to the DBF, Organist, Vergers and Bells.
- 3 The church is moving to a new Parish Giving Scheme from Gift Aid claims made through Canterbury Diocese, the Gift Aid in the intervening period is due to be claimed directly from HMRC by the church
- 4 2024 saw a full year of Soup on Saturday. 2023 - kitchen had work on it to comply with Food Hygiene regulations to allow serving of food.
- 5 Warm space receipts included a grant of £1000 from the Methodist Church. The scheme was not run by the church in the Autumn of 2024.
- 6 Includes a refund from the National Lottery Heritage Fund of £12,998.86 , coffee machine £191.98 paid for by a donor.
- 7 Includes fees paid by PCC to non-stipendiary ministers for occasional offices, paid by PCC acting as an agent for DBF. Lower than 2023 as fewer weddings / funerals.
- 8 2023 accounts included a fee for examination of accounts by accountancy firm (£570), Savings also on fuel bills with new one year contracts.
- 9 Fewer weddings / funerals.
- 10 Includes boiler repair at Westbere £287.99, Organ tuning at both churches £468, Westbere repairs £1668.00, Gutter clearing at Sturry £550
- 11 2023 included quinquennial architect's fees
- 12 2023 included ministerial expenses and accountant's fees for 2022 accounts £570.00
- 13 Different printers used to produce Link Up Magazine.
- 14 Fewer weddings / funerals.
- 15 Includes leaving gifts for Revd Gillean Craig £356.45, payment of coffee machine 191.98, 2023 included payment for Payaz Card Machine £461.15

STURRY AND DISTRICT UNITED CHURCH

England & Wales - Charity number 1181753

Accounts

**The Ecumenical Church Council
of
Sturry and District United Church
within the parish of
Sturry with Fordwich and Westbere with Hersden
Charity Commission reg no: 1181753**

ANNUAL REPORT

for the year ended 31 December 2023

STURRY & DISTRICT ANGLICAN & METHODIST CHURCH



St Mary Fordwich



St Nicholas Sturry



All Saints Westbere

**The Ecumenical Church Council of Sturry
and District United Church**

**Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church
Council for 2023**

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Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council for 2023**The Ecumenical Church Council of Sturry
and District United Church**

This **Annual Report**, accompanying the parish and partnership annual accounts, is compiled in line with the requirements of the Charities Act 2006, the requirements of the Charity Commission and the public benefit reporting requirements that now apply to all charities.

Following the formal adoption of the new constitution on 20 February 2013, the responsibilities and the membership of the Parochial Church Council (PCC) of the Anglican Parish of Sturry with Fordwich and Westbere with Hersden and those of the Ecumenical Church Council (ECC) of Sturry and District United Church are inevitably closely linked, and accordingly the following is a joint report approved by both councils.

Administrative information

Sturry and District United Church is a joint Anglican-Methodist Church serving the above-named parish. The Local Ecumenical Partnership in this parish was set up in September 1970 and its Sponsoring Body is Churches Together in Kent. It meets in two parish buildings, St Nicholas' church in Sturry, and All Saints' church in Westbere, both Anglican-owned but the subject of sharing agreements signed in 1988. (The church building of St Mary the Virgin in Fordwich was declared redundant in 1996 and is vested in the Churches Conservation Trust.)

As an Anglican-Methodist partnership, Sturry and District United Church is part both of the Diocese of Canterbury and Deanery of Canterbury within the Church of England and also part of The Canterbury and East Kent Circuit of The Methodist Church. The correspondence address is:
C/O The ECC Secretary, 88, Sweechgate, Broad Oak, Canterbury, CT2 0QU

The Ecumenical Church Council which was set up alongside the new Parochial Church Council from 20 February 2013 fulfils within this parish and partnership the roles normally carried out by a Parochial Church Council and a Methodist Church Council, and is therefore a body corporate (PCC Powers Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2006). Sturry and District United Church was registered as a charity in January 2019.

Given the suspension of the right of Presentation dated 18 May 2021 which is still in force, Revd Preb. Gillean Craig was licensed as interim 0.2 part time priest in charge rather than incumbent in September 2022. . Revd Catherine Wagstaff was welcomed to the LEP as interim part time methodist minister also on 0.2 in September. Both had been in conversation with the church in the months leading up to their joining us.

Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council for 2023 (continued).
(1) PCC members who served during the period 1 January – 31 December 2023 were:

Part time interim Anglican Priest	Revd Preb Gillean Craig
Part time interim Methodist Minister	Revd Catherine Wagstaff
<i>Retired minister with Permission to Officiate</i>	The Revd Peter Freeman
<i>Churchwardens</i>	Mrs Anne Stevenson (until 28 May 2023) Mr Martin Pilgrim (from 28 May 2023) Mrs Jane Freeman (from 28 May 2023)
<i>Representatives on the Deanery Synod</i>	Mrs Georgina Glover
<i>Elected members</i>	Mr Paul Haines (lay vice-chair until 28 May 2023) Mr Gavin Kennett (secretary) Mrs Angela Pilgrim Mrs Pauline Louch
Co-opted	Mr Philip Lewis (from 19 Oct 2023)

(2) ECC members who served during the period 1 January – 31 December 2023 were:

Part time interim Anglican Priest	Revd Preb Gillean Craig
Part time interim Methodist Minister	Revd Catherine Wagstaff
<i>Retired minister with Permission to Officiate</i>	The Revd Peter Freeman
(The Circuit Superintendent minister, together with other ministers who have pastoral responsibility within the circuit, and the Bishop of Dover or her appointed representative, may also attend meetings)	
<i>Church Stewards & Churchwardens</i>	Mrs Anne Stevenson (until 28 May 2023) Mr Martin Pilgrim (from 28 May 2023) Mrs Jane Freeman (from 28 May 2023)
<i>Representatives on the Deanery Synod</i>	Mrs Georgina Glover. Mrs Angela Pilgrim (until 28 May 2023)
<i>Members of the Circuit Meeting (as churchwarden until 28 May 2023))</i>	Mrs Anne Stevenson Mrs Angela Pilgrim (<i>ex officio as circuit steward</i>) Mr Martin Pilgrim (<i>elected at AGM</i>)
<i>Elected members</i>	Mrs Jane Freeman (Church Steward / Churchwarden) Mr Paul Haines (lay vice-chair until 28 May 2023) Mr Gavin Kennett (secretary)
Co-opted	Mr Philip Lewis (from 19 Oct 2023)
In attendance	Mr Peter Bartlett

Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council for 2023 (continued).***Structure, governance and management***

Since 20 February 2013 the method of appointment of PCC members and ECC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules of the Church of England, the Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church and the constitution of the Sturry and District United Church within the parish of Sturry with Fordwich and Westbere with Hersden, with the exception that in this parish and partnership those whose names are on the Methodist membership list enjoy the same rights, privileges and responsibilities as those whose names are on the Anglican electoral roll.

There is no pre-determined 'quota' governing the balance between Anglican and Methodist members on the church councils; candidates are elected without regard to their formal denominational allegiance. All who attend worship regularly in our churches are invited to register on the electoral roll or Methodist membership list and stand for election to the PCC and ECC.

In 2007 a Joint Membership List was created, consisting of those who had registered on the electoral roll or Methodist membership list, and it is noteworthy that since that date all such church members have wished to regard themselves as joint members of both denominations. At the Joint Church Council (JCC) meeting of 30 March 2009 it was resolved that following the Annual General Meeting and Annual Parochial Church Meeting the numbers reported to our parent denominations would each be one-half of the total figure for the Joint Membership List.

Under the new constitution which came into force from 20 February 2013, the maximum number of elected representatives on each of the PCC and the ECC is nine. Elected representatives are elected to serve for three years. At the end of their first period of three years they are eligible for election for a further three years, but after a service of six consecutive years there must be a gap of at least one year before they can stand again for election.

Objectives and activities

As laid down by the PCC (Powers) Measure 1956, the PCC and ECC of Sturry and District United Church have the responsibility of co-operating with the Anglican and Methodist minister(s) in promoting in the parish and partnership the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. The PCC also has maintenance responsibilities for the church buildings of St Nicholas, Sturry, and All Saints, Westbere, and the churchyard only (not the church building) of St Mary the Virgin, Fordwich, and also exercises functions with respect to the Church of England Primary School in the parish.

The PCC and ECC met in person seven times during the year, including a brief meeting after the 2023 AGM and APCM. The PCC and ECC generally have joint meetings, at which the business of each council is handled separately, and a similar principle applies with respect to the AGM and APCM. The Standing and Finance Committee has generally met between meetings, and minutes of their deliberations were received by the full PCC and ECC and discussed where necessary.

The purpose of Sturry and District United Church as a charity

The purpose of the Sturry and District United Church as a charity is to advance the Christian Faith in the area of benefit in accordance with the principles and practices of both The Methodist and The Anglican Church. The charity identifies its work as a charity in six areas;

Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council for 2023 (continued).

The celebration of public worship – this included regular Sunday worship at Sturry, a return to regular monthly services at Westbere and special services at Fordwich.

The Teaching of the Christian Faith has been carried out through services, work in our local schools, and articles in the church magazine “Link Up”.

Mission and Evangelism has been reviewed and a plan of action drawn up.

Pastoral Work is carried out by our Ministers and others such as by members of the Pastoral Committee which includes phone calls / visits to those who need support.

The provision of facilities within a Christian Ethos for the local community: We encourage the use of the church by all members of the community and amongst other things hold weekly coffee morning, a warm space during the winter months, children’s activities during the school holidays, craft afternoons and hosting Sturry Singers. Sturry Church is also open on Wednesdays and Sundays all day for people to come and visit and the building to pray and find out about its history.

Support of Other Charities in the UK and Overseas. The church has supported other charities through raising recognition of their work, praying for them and raising money during special services and events. We have regularly donated money to the Church Army and have collected money for Action for Children, The Children’s Society, The Kajojeji Educational Trust Africa, The World Methodist Mission Fund amongst others. More details of how we meet our objectives as a charity are given in the different sections of this report.

Ministers’ reports

2023 was a year of consolidation, recovery and development. Consolidation, especially because it was the first full year for both my colleague Methodist Catherine Wagstaff and I to enjoy our interim ministries (each part time, 0.2 and non-resident) among you; recovery, because we enjoyed steady building up of life in our communities and church after the catastrophe of Covid 19 lockdown; development, because we enjoyed finding together new ways of being Christ’s Church to and for Sturry, Broad Oak, Fordwich, Westbere and Hersden.

A key development has been a renewed celebration of our joint Methodist/Anglican traditions – a learning curve for me as I discover over and over how ignorant about the riches of Methodist ethos and organisation. An example is the election of Jane Freeman and Martin Pilgrim as both Church Stewards and Churchwardens. We were saddened to say farewell to Anne Severson who until the ‘23 AGM had served our church faithfully over many years as Warden, and in many other capacities, in partnership with her late husband Dave whose early death still casts a shadow. We have sought to play a full part in the life of our local sponsoring churches – the Methodist Circuit and Church of England Canterbury Deanery to assure them of our current vitality and great potential for significant future growth. One particular triumph has been to sort out a longstanding error in the calculation of our Parish Share – the money we pay to the Diocese. As a result this was more than halved, the Circuit agreed a similar reduction, and we have been able for the first time for many years to pay the full amount, putting us in a far stronger position going forward.

A particular delight for me has been the recovery of regular worship at All Saints Westbere. Since September we have offered a first-Sunday-in-the-month 11.00am Communion, renewing old friendships and cementing new ones. Particularly memorable was the Christmas Morning Parish Eucharist there – nearly 50 people joined us. Our thanks to Georgina Glover for her tireless commitment to keeping the church clean

Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council for 2023 (continued).

and beautiful. St Mary the Virgin Fordwich is a Redundant Church – but with the constant energy of Philip Lewis we have offered there the absolute maximum number of services that we are allowed, attracting strong congregation from that community.

We enjoyed several special celebrations and events – in particular the Coronation of King Charles III in May, when many members of the congregation were surprised to find themselves similarly crowned, and the Christmas Tree Festival in December, which achieved enthusiastic involvement from a large number of local organisations and businesses. Our Remembrance Sunday attracted the largest congregation for many years.

For Catherine and me, ministry to local school is a key priority, leading assemblies and services at Sturry CofE School and Junior King's Canterbury – which worships in our church every week and has contributed special services in both Sturry and Fordwich including a Sung Evensong and Compline. Our ministry to children and families is promoted with marvellous energy and imagination by Angela Pilgrim and her team creating a series of terrific activities afternoons each school holiday. Our Warm Wednesday afternoons, responding to last winter's fuel crisis, offers week by week a varied programme embracing all tastes and interests, open to all.

Our new wardens/church stewards have embraced their great responsibilities with remarkable energy and tireless commitment: their various reports below indicate only the tip of the iceberg of all they actually do, day by day, hour by hour. Gavin Kennett offers a similarly absolute devotion to the life and work of the parish, embracing more responsibilities that I can count. We are greatly in their debt – as we are to my colleague Revd Peter Freeman, who despite major surgery in 2023 offers a remarkable pastoral and liturgical ministry, deeply rooted in our community. So many others – Phyllis Neaves, Pauline Louch, Ian Carmalt, Juliet Woolcombe – too many to name individually – offer a splendid range of week-by-week contributions to our worship and life in our villages. We thank them all.

Linda and I greatly appreciate the welcome and friendship you offer us. It is a great privilege to know the presence of God in you and through you. I commend this Report as a living-out – however much we may be aware of its shortcomings – of the grace of God, of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, of the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in and to and for this place.

Revd Preb. Gillean Craig.

Our Church Annual Report reflects a great deal of hard work on the part of many people. As a church we exist to worship God and to witness to the love of Jesus within our community and these reports demonstrate in some small way just how we are doing that day by day and week by week here in Sturry and District. There is much to celebrate; this report is not the same as it was last year because we are not the same people – we are 'growing up in to God' and as we do that we seek to serve God in ways that are appropriate not only for the times we live in but also for the individuals and church community that we are today.

The past year has brought us joys as well as challenges; our churchwardens/stewards and church officers have worked tirelessly to ensure not only the smooth running of the day-to-day life of the church but to help us as we seek to move forwards in God's work here. I would like to say a huge thank you to them for all their

Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council for 2023 (continued).

efforts. But of course Church is not just about those who are more 'up-front' as it were, it's together that we make the body of Christ in this place and we all have our own, invaluable, part to play. We can all encourage one another, support one another and above all pray for one another. Prayer is absolutely vital – indeed it is our life blood – and if you remember nothing else about this report, I would encourage you to remember that we are all called to pray, for prayer changes things! May everything that we do be undergirded by prayer.

Our weekly worship is a core part of all that we do and are at Sturry. We continue to be blessed by the music that is offered by our organist and his occasional assistants - and we are blessed also with a great team of readers and intercessors. The Anglican and Methodist traditions have continued to be reflected in our services with usually two Sundays in each tradition a month. They are generally services of Holy Communion although we do have lay-led services from time to time as well. It is right to say a special thank you to our visiting preachers as well as to those from this church who occasionally prepare all-age worship which is much appreciated by the congregation. It was a delight to share in our Annual Covenant service with Revd Preb Gillean Craig at the beginning of the New Year as we reminded ourselves of God's covenant faithfulness to us and reaffirmed our desire to be more fully committed to God. We have had several Baptism services during the year too which are always a great joy. It has been very good too that Westbere has been able to open its doors once again to regular monthly worship led by Gillean who has also been able to undertake one or two 'special' services in Fordwich as well.

Following the completion of work in the kitchen, our monthly 'Soup on Saturday' event returned much to our delight! Many thanks to Jane and Peter for taking up this work again. Wednesday coffee morning has continued throughout the year and as winter approached, as last year, the duration of this was extended, creating a 'warm space' where folk from the community could come and find a warm place to be together. Occasional children's events have taken place during the year when local children have had a lot of fun engaging in activities inside and outside the Church building – and the Sturry Singers have continued to meet - and to perform at various occasions. A big thank you to all involved in these endeavours. Our contact with the Junior King's and Sturry Primary schools continues – with Gillean and me going into Sturry Primary to lead assemblies and Junior King's coming into church regularly for school worship.

There is so much more that could be said about all that makes up Sturry – it is a great place to be! From embarking on becoming an eco-church to making connections with the new housing developments that are going up, we look to ourselves and who God wants us to be as well as to our community and where God wants us to serve. All that we do and engage in plays a valuable part in the life and work of the Church and our AGM is an opportunity to celebrate all that we are and do.

I will be very sad to say, 'Goodbye' to Gillean early in June when he must 'sit down' (to use a very Methodist term!) from his appointment here in Sturry. He has worked tirelessly since we started back in 2022 and leaves a very positive legacy for us to continue to build on. I do want to say a very big thank you to Gillean for his collegiality and to everyone who is involved in whatever way in the mission and ministry of the church in Sturry.

Revd Catherine Wagstaff

Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council for 2023 (continued).

Achievements and performance

Worship

The table below gives a summary of key numbers reported annually with the previous year's figures given by way of comparison. Following the pandemic, a few members of the congregation continued to 'worship at home', through the provision of printed or emailed worship resources, a live Zoom service held by the Methodist Circuit, pre-recorded services from other churches or broadcast worship on the BBC.

The figure for funerals included those conducted were held by parish ministers either in one of the church buildings, at a local cemetery or at a crematorium.

	2023	2022
Number on the Joint Membership List	43	46
Anglican Electoral Roll	21	23
Methodist Membership	22	23
October Count figure reported as part of Anglican Statistics for Mission	43	25
Usual Sunday figure reported as part of the Anglican Statistics for Mission	25	21
Baptisms	6	7
Weddings	5	6
Funerals	11	9

¹Churchwardens' / Church Stewards' Report

1. Communications

The church recognises the importance of good communications and the fact that these can reach very many more people than those who regularly attend church services.

We have an **online presence**. Our website is active, and we are working on making the site more accessible and linking it to other social media platforms. Our Facebook page is an important medium for many people.

We also produce an **A5 format magazine, Link Up**, 10 editions each year, 24 or 28 pages each edition, professionally printed in colour. Each print run is 450 copies and most of these are distributed to subscribers around our five villages by a team of helpers; other copies are available in our churches, in local schools and shops and at the Hersden Community Centre. The magazine can also be read for free online (from our website and our Facebook page).



¹We use the role tiles from both the Methodist and Anglican Churches to recognise our Local Ecumenical Partnership

Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council for 2023 (continued).

Our weekly noticesheets are available electronically and in hard copy. As well as paper copies in our churches, each week 36 are distributed by email and six printed versions are posted.

2. Community Payback



Community Payback at work in the Sturry Churchyard.

For some years, the church has worked with Community Payback. Community Payback is the scheme under which offenders carry out **unpaid work in the community** instead of undergoing a custodial sentence. Most Sundays, a team of between 10 and 20 offenders and their supervisors can be seen working in the churchyard and the Milner Ground. The Milner Ground is the land between the churchyard and the A28 road which the church holds on trust for the community. Since we brokered the relationship with CP, they have been working on projects for other organisations in our villages, including Sturry Parish Council and the Scouts. Also, most Sundays the congregation and the offenders share in the after-service tea, coffee and biscuits. We hope this shows that we are a welcoming and accepting body.

3. Sturry Church: A Well-Maintained Asset for the Whole Community

Building

We are entrusted with the **care and maintenance of two Grade 1 Listed Buildings**, St Nicholas' Church, Sturry and All Saints' Church Westbere. Every five years, an architect must inspect our buildings and identify the needs for repairs and improvements; these are called "Quinquennial Inspections".

The 2017 QI for Sturry church identified the need for urgent roof and other repairs. This was the stimulus for a £300,000 project financed by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and local donations and fundraising. Just before this, we had installed a new heating system.

The scope of the NLHF project went beyond the immediate repairs and included improvements to the kitchen, material to explain our heritage, and, a commitment to widening use of the church. The physical work was largely completed before the first coronavirus lockdown in March 2020. But it was not until February 2022 that most coronavirus restrictions were lifted, and life was slow to return to normal. 2023 was the first full year that we could use a warm, weathertight and improved church building for our Christian mission and for the extended use envisioned in the NLHF project.

We are now working on the issues identified in the 2022 Qis for Sturry and Westbere.

Care of the building is necessary, but not sufficient. As Christians, we are aware of our **responsibilities to protect and restore God's creation** and to be conscious of the impact we have on it.

Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council for 2023 (continued).

In total, our Church Council has stake in **two church buildings, three churchyards and an area of open space**, the Milner Ground. In October 2023, we registered with **Eco-Church**, a Christian charity working to inspire individuals and families; to equip churches and church leaders; to build partnerships, and to manage land for nature and people. In the face of accelerating climate change and species loss, we need more than ever to take action to protect and care for nature today. We aim to involve church members and the wider community in this work. We have regular suggestions in Link Up magazine and in our weekly church noticesheet (see above). And our activity afternoons for children (4-11yrs) encourage eco awareness.

We are also challenged to use cleaning products which are environmentally friendly. Here we need to thank the team of five **volunteer cleaners**, not all of whom are regular church-goers, who spend Thursday mornings keeping the church clean and tidy. We also must thank those who provide and arrange flowers in the church throughout the year. We rely greatly on artificial flowers but – thanks to donations – we have fresh flowers for the major festivals.

A Church for the Whole Community

As part of the NLHF project, we made some major improvements to the kitchen in Sturry church. New equipment includes a refrigerator, a hob, an oven, and an industrial-strength catering dishwasher. The new kit was not enough. To receive certification from the City Council's Environmental Health team, we carried out some further repairs and improvements to the kitchen walls and some colleagues did basic training in hygiene and kitchen practice. We now have **official five-star status** and can lawfully cook and serve hot food in the church. As well as our much-loved monthly Soup on Saturday, we plan further events making good use of this facility.

Open Church

The NLHF project also made us think about public access to the church – for private prayer and contemplation and to appreciate its heritage. The church is now open to all on Wednesdays, Thursday mornings and all-day Sunday after the service.

Events and Activities

The church is pleased to provide a home for a number of regular events, largely weekly. There is a Craft Group working on a range of skills, including knitting, sewing and papercrafts. Every Wednesday, there is a Coffee Morning providing a warm welcome and good company. Since winter 2022-23 and the hike in fuel prices, this has been extended to Winter Wednesday Afternoon Activities – talks, games, refreshments and – in school holidays – children's events.

In February, we ran a **half-term event for children** focussing on the history of St Nicholas' Church. The activities included making graffiti (without vandalism to our walls but echoing the medieval graffiti in the church), stone rubbing and exploring the graveyard. There was a **Celebration of Spring** event on 25 March. And there was the annual **pre-Easter cleaning** of the church and fish and chip lunch on 8 April for *how many people*.

King Charles III was crowned on Friday, 6 May. We recognised this in our services and in a special edition of Link Up (see *where in this Annual Report?*) where we published memories of past Coronations. One of our

Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council for 2023 (continued).

members recalled that a family friend, as the Bishop of Bath and Wells (“Uncle Billy”), actually participated in the Coronation of King George VI in 1937. We held a special service on Sunday, 8 May followed by a “bring and share lunch” and activities.

One other sign of the post-covid existence was the revitalisation of our villages’ **twinning links** with the town of Aire-sur-la-Lys in the north of France. Our French friends visited the church at the end of May and used the NLHF-funded heritage material, some of which we had translated into French, to learn about its history.

Our annual **Strawberry Tea** is a social event for the church family and the wider community; it is also a fundraiser. This year it took place on 2 July, in and around the church.

Sturry celebrated the **Harvest** at the service on 17 September and with a Harvest Supper. Our clergy also participated in Harvest services at the schools in our parish.



The approach to **Christmas** 2023 and Christmas itself were further evidence of our post-pandemic life. We hosted a concert by the City of Canterbury Band on 3 December, this was an event for the whole community. Over the weekend of 8/9 December we organised a Christmas Tree Festival in the church, once again aimed at all local people. We invited local businesses, schools and groups to submit decorated Christmas trees and had 25 trees on display from a range of people and organisations. At the beginning of the school Christmas break, we ran an activity afternoon making Christmas decorations. Our Christingle service on 17 December was well attended. Over all our services in the Advent and Christmas period, we had 314 worshippers.

Martin Pilgrim & Jane Freeman
Churchwardens & Church Stewards

Ecumenical links Sturry and District United Church is a member of Churches Together in Sturry and District, the other members being Broad Oak Chapel and the Roman Catholic parish of Hersden and Sturry. We are also associate members of Christians Together in Canterbury.

**Deanery Synod Report**

In the Church of England, all individual parishes (like ours) are grouped together into Deaneries – we are in Canterbury Deanery. It is the administrative level lying between each parish and the whole Diocese, and each Deanery has a Deanery Synod whose members are lay and the clergy of each individual congregation. It meets usually three times a year – but this year its regular programme has suffered from the prolonged long-covid illness of our Area Dean (Jo Richards, who visited a Sunday Service here in July) and the ill-health of our Lay Chair, Liz Morrison, well known to us. Perhaps our most interesting meeting was the occasion when David Montieth spoke at length about his vision of how the life and work of Canterbury Cathedral – he’s been Dean for over a year now – relates to its neighbouring parishes and our shared ministry to Canterbury as a whole. The Synod also sponsors an annual ‘Roadshow’ at which Diocesan officials present

Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council for 2023 (continued).

key items of information – usually the financial figures for the year ahead, but on this occasion also short workshops on the difficulties and available resources of caring for our buildings, and engaging with the Diocesan initiatives for growth and evangelism.

**Methodist Circuit**

Sturry Church is a Local Ecumenical Partnership between the Anglican and Methodist Churches and as such plays an active part of the Canterbury and East Kent Methodist Circuit. Our Circuit stretches from Faversham to Dover and across to Thanet. This year we have welcomed a new Superintendent minister for the Circuit, Rev Danny Wheadon. We look forward to his preaching at Sturry in the summer.

Our ministers, Catherine Wagstaff and Gillean Craig, our two churchwardens and church stewards, Jane Freeman and Martin Pilgrim, all attend the Circuit Meeting along with Angela Pilgrim, who is currently Senior Circuit Steward.

The Circuit Meeting is the local decision-making body for finances and the deployment of staff including ministers. Methodist ministers move churches regularly and this year we are looking ahead to work out how our human and financial resources can support God's work across East Kent including Sturry.

Angela Pilgrim

Pastoral Committee.

The pastoral committee meets usually three times a year. We have worked to establish an open, welcoming church and have been pleased that people have joined us for Sunday worship and our weekday and holiday activities. Wednesday coffee mornings and afternoon talks and activities have been well supported as have the children's holiday activities. We are considering how we could develop these further.

We are keen to set up a bereavement support group and are looking for support and guidance for this new venture. We try to keep in touch with our congregation and provide pastoral support where we can but are very aware that there are few of us and needs are many.

Angela Pilgrim

Safeguarding: Sturry and District United Church follows the safeguarding policy of the Church of England. Together with the Parish Safeguarding Officer the ECC discusses safeguarding on a regular basis. The parish's website has a link to safeguarding information on its home page, including contact details within the parish and at diocesan level for anyone who has a safeguarding concern. The ECC has complied with the duty to have 'due regard' to the House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy and Practice Guidance. There were no major incidents during 2023 and the diocese has provided us with helpful advice.

Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council for 2023 (continued).

Junior King's School: The preparatory school for the King's School, Canterbury is a very near neighbour. Over the past 18 months the Junior School has continued to build up a strong relationship with St Nicholas church. The school uses the church at least once a week for an act of worship often including the participation of Fr Gillean. We also use the church for special services including harvest, Christmas, Easter, and the end of each term. On some Sundays the boarding community attends morning worship in the parish and on two occasions the school choir has sung choral evensong. The school knows the importance of this link with its neighbour and delighted to be able to support the parish in different ways whether that be the sharing of resources, the chaplains covering worship when no parish clergy are available or putting on joint services. We hope that the arrival of a new chaplain will help build this link further, especially as Revd Preb Gillean Craig steps down from his Sturry role in June 2024. Future ideas for the partnership include the supporting of joint local causes and developing a series of services for all-ages which are accessible for all.

Revd Thomas Pote
Chaplain, The King's School, Canterbury.

Sturry Singers Tuesdays 2.00 - 3.30 pm

Sturry Singers have been busy. Apart from the practices on Tuesday afternoons, the group has travelled out on several occasions to the wider community to sing to: Age UK (Canterbury) We have had several bookings for Age UK, and for the St. Valentine Fair, and the upcoming Spring Fair at the Church The group continue to increase their repertoire with a variety of familiar songs, Songs from the musicals and Songs from the 1940s. We aim to get those toes tapping whatever the age!!

The Annual Lunch was held at the Crown Cherry Brandy House, Sarre.

Sturry Singers is a non-profit group and is grateful to St. Nicholas Church and committee for the use of the church for practices. The Singers practice on Tuesday afternoons 2-3.30pm

All newcomers are welcome to join us

Pauline Louch

CraftyAllsorts - Monday 2.00 – 4.00 pm

CraftyAllsorts is a group of lovers of all things crafty. It began with a group of Knitters and Stitchers, however, it is now open to all types of craftiness. At present there are lace work, crochet, knitting, crystal art, colouring, lino cutting, machine embroidery and a variety of cross stitch and embroidery.. We also have had patchers, quilters and rug makers.

Currently, the group is putting together a panel depicting places of interest in Sturry – (new and old) completed in machine embroidery with some fabric painting. It is hoped to be ready very soon. It has been an experience to do some fabric painting and have finished a cushion cover and have produced 2023 Christmas Cards.

The group is grateful to the church for the to use the church on Monday afternoons.

Pauline Louch

Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council for 2023 (continued).**Sturry Bell Ringers**

The bell ringers continue to maintain a high standard of ringing. Practice takes place each Tuesday and the bells are rung every Sunday for the 10am service. The band also rang for two weddings and for the King's coronation. Further, in May, a visiting party from France were entertained with a display of English change ringing, which was well received by all.

The Sturry band won the annual Canterbury District (East Kent) striking competition held at Chislet, a recording of which subsequently featured on the radio (BBC Radio 4 "Bells on Sunday"). The band then went on to win the Kent County Striking Competition, held at Monkton. Regarding expenditure, this year entailed no maintenance costs, although we may need to replace some ropes in due course. Finally, the ringers undertook the various CoE safeguarding courses required of the bell ringing community.

Stephen J. Marsh

Fordwich

For the first time in very many years it has felt that St Mary's Fordwich has felt part of the Parish. As well as enjoying a Palm Sunday Service in 2023, we had the first Harvest Festival Service for very many years. This was followed by a Carol service. But beyond the relationship with the building that is held by the Churches Conservation Trust, it has been the interest taken in the churchyard - which is the responsibility of the parish as it is a 'living' churchyard. The 'new' grave area has been excellently plotted, with details for each grave added by Kitty Bennett as a project for her Duke of Edinburgh award. That was completed just as the original plans came to light. There is still much work to be done, but the plan has been begun to have the Community Payback team involved again in bringing into order those bit that are presently a mess, not rewilded!. There is also some more extensive tree work required, for which a very sensible quote has been received, which, hopefully, the community may be able to raise in part, if not in its entirety. We have also been approached to see whether we might begin the Bronze award as an eco-churchyard.

Philip Lewis



Pilgrim Cross made and Blessed in 2023
Fordwich Church

Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council for 2023 (continued).

Financial review We are grateful to those church members who reviewed their giving through the church over the year, and to all who have organised and supported fundraising events. However, we need to increase our income if we are to become truly sustainable. Details of our receipts and expenditure, including our parish share and circuit assessment by which we contribute to ministry costs not only in this parish but in the wider churches, will be available in the financial accounts.

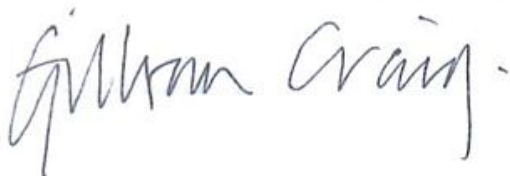
At the end of 2022 Liz Morrison stepped down as Treasurer. Gavin Kennett agreed to take on the role of “book keeper” and with the guidance of Martin Pilgrim and others, has produced the end of year accounts. The ye 31/12/20 and ye 21/12/21 2022 accounts were independently examined and filed with the the Charity Commission during 2023

Given the late filing of the accounts, we have not yet been able to finally account for the NLHF project to NLHF because of the lack of financial information for the financial years 2020 and 2021. At the time of writing the report Martin Pilgrim is progressing work on this.

We are very grateful for those who give generously both in terms of time and of money.

Reserves policy The PCC has reviewed the church's needs for reserves in line with the Operational Guidance No 43 (Charity Income Reserves) issued by the Charity Commission. The income of the Parish, as well as its financial demands, are subject to fluctuation. Maintaining two listed buildings can be costly and in order to meet the cost of major repairs and other calls upon parish funds, the PCC consider it prudent to maintain substantial reserves.

Report approved by the Parochial Church Council and the Ecumenical Church Council on 5th March 2024 and signed on its behalf by Revd. Preb. Gilleen Craig

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Gilleen Craig". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath.

Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council for 2023 (continued).

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of the Ecumenical Church Council of Sturry and District United Church

I report on the accounts of the church for the year ended 31 December 2023 which are set out on pages 17 to 19.

Respective Responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner

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

It is my responsibility to:

- Examine the accounts (under section 145 of the 2011 Act);
- To follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners (under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act); 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. 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 you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below. Independent examiner's statement

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

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
 - 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.

(Name) (Date) MRS. CLARE SUTCLIFFE - 8.4.2024 .

(Relevant professional qualification or body)

(Address)

128, SANDWICH ROAD, WHITFIELD, DOVER, KENT. CT16 3JP.

Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council for 2023 (continued).

SADAMC							
Receipts and Payments Summary 2023						2023	2022
		Unrestricted	Restricted	Endowment	Total funds	Total funds	
RECEIPTS							
Voluntary receipts		£	£	£	£	£	£
Planned giving		12111.00	-	-	12111.00	16,755.00	
Giving at services		2640.68	-	-	2640.68	702.43	
All other giving / voluntary receipts	KSC	5,040.00	-	-	5040.00	5,040.00	
	Donations (general)	4,214.45	-	-	4214.45	1,763.89	
	Fees to PCC	1,912.00	-	-	1912.00	1,631.50	
	1 Fees due to DBF		2,430.00	-	2430.00	1,783.00	
	2 Wedding staged payments	962.00	1,688.00	-	2650.00	4,803.00	
Tax Recovered	3 Gift Aid (planned giving)	11,024.20	-	-	11024.20	2,934.00	
	VAT (NLHF project)	-	-	-	0.00	1,188.40	
		37,904.33	4,118.00	-	42,022.33	36,601.22	
Activities for generating funds	Coffee	589.95	-	-	589.95	663.29	
	Fundraising events	1,368.83	-	-	1,368.83	1,675.00	
	Soup lunches	166.50	-	-	166.50	584.96	
	4 Warm Space	1,422.26	-	-	1,422.26	859.31	
	Diocesan heating grants	-	-	-	-	2,400.00	
	5 Sundries	3,428.15	-	-	3,428.15		
Investment Income		3,919.17	-	-	3,919.17	4,063.69	
Church Activities	Magazine	1,911.50	-	-	1,911.50	1,475.60	
	Charity Collections	633.50	-	-	633.50		
Total Receipts		55,462.19	-	-	55,462.19	48,323.07	
PAYMENTS							
Church Activities							
Stipend contribution/share/assessment		24,299.00	-	-	24,299.00	10,000.00	
Clergy and staffing costs	6 Ministry Costs	1,277.50	-	-	1,277.50	-	
Church running expenses	Heat, light,water,insurance	14,727.83	-	-	14,727.83	16,835.63	
	Upkeep of services	198.10	-	-	198.10	177.38	
	Bells,organists, virgers	2,365.00	-	-	2,365.00	2,515.00	
	Minor repairs, organ tuning	2,344.08	-	-	2,344.08	1,679.27	
	Churchyard maintenance	2,761.72	-	-	2,761.72	2,610.00	
	7 Admin	1,191.22	-	-	1,191.22	68.00	
	8 Magazine	3,689.33	-	-	3,689.33	2,378.24	
Fees returned	Deposits to Diocese	-	-	-	-	-	
		1,655.40	-	-	1,655.40	3,000.00	
Hall running costs			-	-	-	-	
Mission Giving and donations		950.50	-	-	950.50	651.75	
Sundries	9	1,387.92	-	-	1,387.92	-	
NLHF Project							5,114.10
		56,847.60	-	-	56,847.60	45,029.37	
Costs of generating funds		240.19	-	-	240.19	-	
Total Payments		57,087.79	-	-	57,087.79	45,029.37	
Difference between receipts and payments					- 1,625.60	3,293.70	
Cash in bank and at hand at 1 January 2023		£ 38,822.09					
Cash in bank and at hand at 31 December 2023		£ 37,196.49					

Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council for 2023 (continued).**Notes to the accounts.**

1. Includes fees paid to PCC for payment to Diocesan Board of Finance for funerals. From Jan 2024, Diocesan Board of Finance required PCC to pay 70% directly to non-stipendary ministers.
2. Wedding Fees may be paid in total or as part of staged payments. The PCC is no longer allowed to take a deposit. Some of this money is restricted to pay to the DBF, Organist, Virgers and Bells.
3. Gift Aid claimed back for previous three years for planned giving (£11024.20)
4. Warm space receipts included a grant of £1000 from the Methodist Church
5. Includes a refund from British Gas of £3118.15 for overpayment of incorrectly estimated gas bills.
6. Includes fees paid by PCC to non-stipendary ministers for occasional offices, paid by PCC acting as an agent for DBF.
7. Includes fee for examination of accounts by accountancy firm (£570) and payment of expenses to minister (£282.90)
8. Printing costs have risen.
9. One off payments for Payaz Giving Card station (£461.15) , Kitchen Equipment (£106.77), Childrens Activity Day (£175.00)

STURRY AND DISTRICT UNITED CHURCH

England & Wales - Charity number 1181753

Accounts

**The Ecumenical Church Council
of
Sturry and District United Church
within the parish of
Sturry with Fordwich and Westbere with Hersden
Charity Commission reg no: 1181753**

ANNUAL REPORT

for the year ended 31 December 2022

**The Ecumenical Church Council of Sturry
and District United Church**

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The Ecumenical Church Council of Sturry and District United Church

Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council for 2022.

This Annual Report, accompanying the parish and partnership annual accounts, is compiled in line with the requirements of the Charities Act 2006, the requirements of the Charity Commission and the public benefit reporting requirements that now apply to all charities.

Following the formal adoption of the new constitution on 20 February 2013, the responsibilities and the membership of the Parochial Church Council (PCC) of the Anglican Parish of Sturry with Fordwich and Westbere with Hersden and those of the Ecumenical Church Council (ECC) of Sturry and District United Church are inevitably closely linked, and accordingly the following is a joint report approved by both councils.

Administrative information

Sturry and District United Church is a joint Anglican-Methodist Church serving the above-named parish. The Local Ecumenical Partnership in this parish was set up in September 1970 and its Sponsoring Body is Churches Together in Kent. It meets in two parish buildings, St Nicholas' church in Sturry, and All Saints' church in Westbere, both Anglican-owned but the subject of sharing agreements signed in 1988. (The church building of St Mary the Virgin in Fordwich was declared redundant in 1996 and is vested in the Churches Conservation Trust.)

As an Anglican-Methodist partnership, Sturry and District United Church is part both of the Diocese of Canterbury and Deanery of Canterbury within the Church of England and also part of The Canterbury and East Kent Circuit of The Methodist Church. The correspondence address is: C/O The ECC Secretary, 88, Sweechgate, Broad Oak, Canterbury, CT2 0QU

The Ecumenical Church Council which was set up alongside the new Parochial Church Council from 20 February 2013 fulfils within this parish and partnership the roles normally carried out by a Parochial Church Council and a Methodist Church Council, and is therefore a body corporate (PCC Powers Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2006). Sturry and District United Church was registered as a charity in January 2019.

Given the suspension of the right of Presentation dated 18 May 2021 which is still in force, Revd Preb. Gillean Craig was licensed as interim 0.2 part time priest in charge rather than incumbent in September 2022. . Revd Catherine Wagstaff was welcomed to the LEP as interim part time methodist minister also on 0.2 in September. Both had been in conversation with the church in the months leading up to their joining us. It is a blessing that we have been joined by Catherine and Gillean. We thank Revd. Mark Griffin for his work in supporting the LEP during the interregnum,

The Ecumenical Church Council of Sturry and District United Church

Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council for 2022 (continued)

(1) PCC members who served during the period 1 January – 31 December 2022 were:

Part time interim Anglican Priest	Revd Preb Gillean Craig	Sept '22 onwards
Part time interim Methodist Minister	Revd Catherine Wagstaff	Sept '22 onwards
<i>Retired minister with Permission to Officiate</i>	The Revd Peter Freeman (<i>co-opted</i>)	
<i>Churchwardens</i>	Mrs Anne Stevenson	
	Mr Darren Delo (until the AGM on 1 May 2022)	
<i>Representatives on the Deanery Synod</i>	Mrs Georgina Glover	
	Mrs Angela Pilgrim	
<i>Elected members</i>	Mrs Jane Freeman	
	Mr Paul Haines (lay vice-chair)	
	Mr Gavin Kennett (secretary)	
	Mr David Stevenson (until death Nov 28th 2022)	
	Mrs Brenda Williams (Until Dec 2022)	

(2) ECC members who served during the period 1 January – 31 December 2022 were:

Part time interim Anglican Priest	Revd Preb Gillean Craig	Sept '22 onwards
Part time interim Methodist Minister	Revd Catherine Wagstaff	Sept '22 onwards

Retired minister with Permission to Officiate The Revd Peter Freeman (*co-opted*)

(The Circuit Superintendent minister, together with other ministers who have pastoral responsibility within the circuit, and the Bishop of Dover or her appointed representative, may also attend meetings)

<i>Churchwardens</i>	Mr Darren Delo (until the AGM on 1 May 2022)	
	Mrs Anne Stevenson	
<i>Representatives on the Deanery Synod</i>	Mrs Georgina Glover	
	Mrs Angela Pilgrim	
<i>Members of the Circuit Meeting</i>	Mrs Anne Stevenson (<i>as churchwarden</i>)	
	Dr Liz Morrison (<i>as treasurer</i>)	
	Mrs Angela Pilgrim (<i>ex officio as circuit steward</i>)	
	Mr Martin Pilgrim (<i>elected</i>)	
<i>Elected members</i>	Mrs Jane Freeman	
	Mr Paul Haines (lay vice-chair)	
	Mr Gavin Kennett (secretary)	
	Mr David Stevenson (until death Nov 28th 2022)	
	Mrs Brenda Williams (until Dec 2022)	

PCC and ECC Dr Liz Morrison (Treasurer) was an officer of the PCC and ECC but not a voting member of either. She was a trustee of the Sturry and District United Church charity as are all other PCC and ECC members.

The Ecumenical Church Council of Sturry and District United Church

Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council for 2022 (continued)

We were very saddened to hear of the death of David Stevenson. As well as having been in the choir, he was a member of the Church Council, where he served as a valued Chair of the Property Committee. He was a server, assisting the priest in preparing for Holy Communion and in the ceremonial of other services. With his wife, Anne, he was a safeguarding officer, with responsibility for children and other vulnerable people. Dave will be greatly missed – by Anne, by his children and grandchildren and by the many people who worked with him through more than 40 years of service to our local community

Structure, governance and management

Since 20 February 2013 the method of appointment of PCC members and ECC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules of the Church of England, the Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church and the constitution of the Sturry and District United Church within the parish of Sturry with Fordwich and Westbere with Hersden, with the exception that in this parish and partnership those whose names are on the Methodist membership list enjoy the same rights, privileges and responsibilities as those whose names are on the Anglican electoral roll.

There is no pre-determined ‘quota’ governing the balance between Anglican and Methodist members on the church councils; candidates are elected without regard to their formal denominational allegiance. All who attend worship regularly in our churches are invited to register on the electoral roll or Methodist membership list and stand for election to the PCC and ECC.

In 2007 a Joint Membership List was created, consisting of those who had registered on the electoral roll or Methodist membership list, and it is noteworthy that since that date all such church members have wished to regard themselves as joint members of both denominations. At the Joint Church Council (JCC) meeting of 30 March 2009 it was resolved that following the Annual General Meeting and Annual Parochial Church Meeting the numbers reported to our parent denominations would each be one-half of the total figure for the Joint Membership List.

Under the new constitution which came into force from 20 February 2013, the maximum number of elected representatives on each of the PCC and the ECC is nine. Elected representatives are elected to serve for three years. At the end of their first period of three years they are eligible for election for a further three years, but after a service of six consecutive years there must be a gap of at least one year before they can stand again for election.

Objectives and activities

As laid down by the PCC (Powers) Measure 1956, the PCC and ECC of Sturry and District United Church have the responsibility of co-operating with the Anglican and Methodist minister(s) in promoting in the parish and partnership the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. The PCC also has maintenance responsibilities for the church buildings of St Nicholas, Sturry, and All Saints, Westbere, and the churchyard only (not the church building) of St Mary the Virgin, Fordwich, and also exercises functions with respect to the Church of England Primary School in the parish.

The Ecumenical Church Council of Sturry and District United Church

Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council for 2022 (continued)

The PCC and ECC met in person six times during the year, including a brief meeting after the 2021 AGM and APCM. The PCC and ECC generally have joint meetings, at which the business of each council is handled separately, and a similar principle applies with respect to the AGM and APCM. The Standing Committee has generally met between meetings, and minutes of their deliberations or from December 2022 a summary of actions were received by the full PCC and ECC and discussed where necessary.

Ministers' reports

Sturry church is a great place to be! When I came back from my sabbatical at the end of last May and it was confirmed that I would be adding Sturry to my existing group of churches down in the Dover end of the Canterbury and East Kent Methodist Circuit, my response was twofold. I felt somewhat daunted at the prospect of adding to an already full time calling, coupled with the excitement and challenge of having a new place in which to serve. Of course I knew that I would be sharing the work with my Anglican colleague Gillean and that has been a real privilege and blessing.

First I want to say a huge thank you for the very warm welcome you gave at the lovely gathering that we all shared in at the beginning of September. In what was left of 2022 I managed to lead you in worship only 3 or 4 times but each was a great joy – particularly I think the Christmas Eve midnight Communion service, always a very special time as we move in to the day of celebration of our Lord Jesus' birth.

For Gillean and me it became the story of the knee replacements as I went in just shortly before he did, same hospital and surgeon(!), to have mine done, so no sooner had I started than I was off for a few weeks. We didn't need to worry – the strong fellowship at Sturry managed beautifully! Thank you for all your love and care at that time. So what stood out for me in those few weeks? Well, some highlights have been the conversation at coffee mornings where an obvious open welcome is there for all who come - and for your readiness to engage with the 'Warm Spaces' initiative, the planning for which began before Christmas. I have really appreciated getting involved with Sturry Church of England School and leading assemblies there, going back to my Primary School teaching roots. It is a very happy school, with a deep Christian ethos, evident the moment you walk in through the doors. It will be good to build up the links between St Nicholas and the school – also with Junior Kings School of course, sitting right on your door step!

At our visioning day in October it became very clear that there is a desire to grow as disciples of Christ and to serve him by reaching out to the Community as we discussed together what our next steps as the body of Christ here in Sturry might be. I would urge your prayers for the ongoing work that this day triggered as we continue to seek God's will and way for us.

Sturry Church is undoubtedly a beautiful building – but the people make the Church... the greatest blessing of being called to serve here has been to discover your tremendous commitment to the work – from the Pastoral Committee, the ECC and the production of Link Up magazine - to those who read or lead intercessions in our worship, those who open up, lock up, ensure the place is warm, tidy and welcoming - to those who keep us firmly on track with all that 'must be done' to keep the wheels turning. Sturry is most certainly a good place to be - and I look forward to working with you as we seek to discover together who God wants us to be and where God wants to lead us in the days ahead.

The Ecumenical Church Council of Sturry and District United Church

Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council for 2022 (continued)

It was my privilege to be Licenced as your Interim part-time Priest In Charge on 4 September 2022, joining partnership with my (as far as Sturry is concerned) equally part-time Methodist colleague Revd Catherine Wagstaff [nb, she's far more than full-time in all the other churches where she serves]. After 41 years of parish ministry in London Linda and I moved to retirement in Whitstable. Church of England clergy must leave full-time ministry at 70 – but between 70 and 75 there is an option to take up part-time 'interim' ministry, so here I am! I'm only employed on a 0.2 basis, which the mathematically challenged CofE translates as Sunday + one weekday's work each week - far less than Sturry, Fordwich, Westbere, Hersden and Broad Oak deserve from its clergy – especially one who lives a good halfhour's drive away, even when half the roads aren't closed for repair. My lack of adequate time for your ministry has been compounded by two longstanding appointments I had to honour: immediately following my Licensing I disappeared to conduct a Pilgrimage to the Oberammergau Passion Play, and a knee replacement enforced my absence throughout the whole of November. Despite these frustrations, the Autumn with you has been a very fulfilling time, building on the warm welcome you gave us. Highlights have been appreciating how fully you seek to live out your ministry to the community – evidenced in the immediate and whole-hearted decision, in response to the fuel and cost-of-living crisis, to set up the 'Warm Wednesdays' open church initiative; your love and care for your splendid churches; and your openness to different styles of worship. It has been a delight to get to know Sturry Primary school and Junior Kings school and to lead services in church and assemblies for them. The Readings and Carols, the Christmas Eve Crib Service and Christmas Day worship were all very special occasions, and with the Fordwich Carol Service and Westbere Playgroup Christmas event demonstrated how much we want to recover from the cancellations of Covid, across the whole parish. I had not realised how much Revd Peter Freeman had contributed to the life and worship of the church, and Catherine and I have been delighted to realise that with him we are in effect a team of three ordained ministers – even if he's paid nothing at all! I want to pay tribute to our lone churchwarden Anne Stevenson for her remarkable commitment to our church, despite serious health problems and even more acutely the most distressing death of her husband Dave – whose constant work for St Nicholas' over the decades is greatly missed. Among a marvellous group that makes up day by day and week by week so many aspects of the life of our church I particularly single out parish secretary Gavin Kennett, without whom we would simply grind to a halt! We work in partnership as we look and plan ahead, rejoicing in our calling as the Body of Christ in this place, and seeking God's inspiration in our ministry to our communities. St Nicholas

Revd Preb. Gilleen Craig.

Achievements and performance

Worship In the following three paragraphs, relevant figures for 2021 are inserted in italics and in brackets, for comparison. At the time of the 2022 Annual General Meeting and Annual Parochial Church Meeting, there were 46(48) members of the Joint Membership List. Accordingly, for the purposes of annual denominational returns, 23 (24) members of the electoral roll were reported to the Church of England and 23 (24) members on the membership list were reported to the Methodist Church.

The Ecumenical Church Council of Sturry and District United Church

Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council for 2022 (continued)

Following the pandemic, a few members of the congregation continued to ‘worship at home’, through the provision of printed or emailed worship resources, a live Zoom service held by the Methodist Circuit, pre-recorded services from other churches or broadcast worship on the BBC. This impacted upon the number of regular worshippers actually attending church but 2022-figures show an average of 25 for the “October count” with a usual average figure of 21.

With restrictions enforced during the pandemic lifted, we aim to enable our community to celebrate and thank God at the milestones of the journey through life. Through baptism we give older children and adults, or parents and godparents on behalf of younger children, the opportunity to declare their loyalty to Christ and we ask God’s blessing on their discipleship; in marriage, public vows are exchanged with God’s blessing and through funeral services friends and family express their grief and give thanks for the life that is now complete in this world and commend the person into God’s keeping. During the year we celebrated seven (ten) baptisms of adults or children and six (two) marriages in the parish; and funerals were held by parish ministers for nine (seven) persons either in one of the church buildings, at a local cemetery or at a crematorium.

The ECC maintains an overview of worship within the parish and is committed to enabling as many people as would wish to worship within the church buildings of the parish and also, where appropriate, in their own home and to grow as disciples of Jesus Christ. Our services and worship aim to put faith into practice through prayer and scripture, music and sacrament. In line with the Charity Commission’s guidance on public benefit to charities for the advancement of religion, we aim to enable people to live out their faith as part of our parish community through worship and prayer, learning about the Gospel, and developing their knowledge of and trust in Jesus Christ. We try to provide pastoral care, primarily for those living within the five villages; we engage in outreach work within the villages that we serve; and we support in prayer and, when possible, in financial giving to Christian missionary work elsewhere in the UK and overseas.

On 9 October 2022, twenty plus congregation members including two children, stayed back after the Sunday 10am service to work on the first steps of our **Vision and Mission Initiative** as we seek to discern where God is calling us in the future. The group were guided by Revd. Steve Coneys, Mission and Growth Adviser of the Diocese of Canterbury and Revd. Adrian Roux, Regional Learning and Development Officer from the Methodist Connexional Team. The group spent four hours working collectively: brainstorming ideas on building community within the Church and developing our understanding of the challenges and opportunities ahead. The members were treated to a shared lunch! This is the Summary of the Outcomes of the workshop 1) Building relationships; actively listening and learning all the time 2) Commitment to inclusion and learning from difference: listening and learning 3) Curiosity about what is important about church, what church can be – the form church takes (e.g., what we could let go of; what we need to travel with).

It is important that we maintain the **church buildings** at St Nicholas, Sturry, and All Saints, Westbere. Quinquennial reports for both buildings were carried out in the autumn of 2022 The project to carry out urgent repairs and maintenance of Sturry church, largely funded by the **National Lottery Heritage Fund** but supplemented by generous gifts from individuals in the community and a grant from the Friends of St Nicholas, was mostly completed a week before the lockdown of March 2020. With improvements to the kitchen with new cooker, dishwasher and fridge being completed at the end of last year we have seen huge benefits for coffee mornings / Warm Wednesday and Soup on Saturday.

The Ecumenical Church Council of Sturry and District United Church

Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council for 2022 (continued)

We are already being asked to hire out the church building and hope to develop this. The project also included significant expenditure on heritage and education objectives and on community engagement, and we are taking that forward whenever opportunities arise. In June, Patrick McKeating, Head of History at JKS, and George Morris, an archaeology student from Christchurch led an event in the church similar to the one held in December 2021 with more outside explanations (church walls, graveyard etc.) and additional information from George Morris's work on the graffiti. Mr McKeating has also brought Y6 students to the church to look at its History. Martin Pilgrim is thanked for all his hard work in continuing to promote the use of the church that was very much part of our NLHF bid.

In May we held a very well attended Easter Fair. We were pleased to be joined by Sturry Primary school who supported the venture.

We are extremely grateful for work undertaken in maintaining and tidying the **Milner Ground** over the past year. Grounds staff of Junior King's School have continued to cut the grass, and both we and the village as a whole have benefited from the work of Community Payback who have continued their good work, so that the Milner Ground is tidy and attractive. We are also very grateful to those who ensure the regular cleaning of both Sturry and Westbere churches and to those who provide flowers.

We have been glad that a number of parishioners were again able on a rota basis to open the redundant church building of **St Mary the Virgin, Fordwich**, for prayer and visiting in daylight and for the carols by candlelight and civic service. Whilst it wasn't possible to open up Westbere Church on a regular basis during 2022, it is hoped that we shall be able to do so in 2023. However, the Westbere preschool playgroup have met in the church several times during the year.

Sturry churchyard and the two churchyards at Westbere are closed and the responsibility for maintaining those falls accordingly to Sturry Parish Council and Westbere Parish Council respectively. Both of these in fact sub-contract the work to others and we are grateful for the tidy appearance that they ensure. We are appreciative also of the work of a number of volunteers who maintain the churchyard at Fordwich.

The ECC is keen to offer a range of worship opportunities over the course of the year that different members of the regular congregations and the wider community find helpful and spiritually fulfilling. The weekly Sunday service at Sturry has remained at 10.00am which has been logistically easier for some of the congregation. We were pleased that weekday use of the church by **Junior Kings School** has restarted. We continue to ensure the traditions of both of our parent denominations are honoured; once opportunities permit, we look forward again to welcoming the uniformed organisations four or five times a year, and to welcoming the boarders and staff of the Junior King's School to share in our service at Sturry once or twice in every term. We look forward to rebuilding the close links with the Junior King's School, in shared worship, in meeting regularly with the Headteacher and the school's Church Committee and in exploring how the school and the church can work in partnership with regard to maintaining and developing the Sturry church building.

The Ecumenical Church Council of Sturry and District United Church

Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council for 2022.

The monthly pattern of services within the parish and partnership will continue to be kept under review, taking into account changes in attendance figures and also issues of staffing. Although we no longer run a children's group parallel with our main service at Sturry, we provide facilities for young children and their parents in the church.

In today's world it is essential that all organisations keep the effectiveness of their **communications** under constant review. The key elements are the United Church's website, its Facebook page, and the monthly magazine *Link-Up* which is delivered to around 450 homes in our villages, with additional free copies available at venues such as schools, shops and the Hersden Community Centre. We are grateful for the great commitment made by Martin Pilgrim in editing *Link Up* to its professional, interesting and extremely attractive standard month by month.

The **pastoral committee** has continued to meet regularly. Their remit included the setting up and managing a system of pastoral visiting, drawing up a rota of welcomers for church services, to be responsible for welcome letters and information which can be given out to new residents in our areas, to keep a watch on the community events the church organises, to be aware when events need support and to suggest new events as appropriate.

We have been delighted that we have been able to restart links with **Sturry Primary and Water Meadows Primary** (ex-Hersden CP School). Both Gillean and Catherine have led assemblies in the schools and Sturry Primary were due to have held a Christmas service in the church, sadly this didn't take place with snow and ice intervening. We enjoy cordial relationships with Sturry Parish Council and are glad that Sturry Parish Council and Hersden Parish Council, as well as the uniformed organisations, normally share in the wreath-laying ceremonies on Remembrance Sunday. The church held a Christingle Service, a Crib service, a Blue Christmas Service, where we remembered before the Lord those who have died in the last year, and a Midnight Service on 24 December. All the services were well attended and much appreciated by the congregations.

Safeguarding: Sturry and District United Church has agreed to follow the safeguarding policy of the Church of England, partly because the Rector and Methodist minister served as a member of the Diocese of Canterbury's Safeguarding Management group for over twenty years. Together with the Parish Safeguarding Officers the ECC discusses safeguarding on a regular basis. The parish's website has a link to safeguarding information on its home page, including contact details within the parish and at diocesan level for anyone who has a safeguarding concern. The ECC has complied with the duty to have 'due regard' to the House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy and Practice Guidance.

Ecumenical links Sturry and District United Church is a member of Churches Together in Sturry and District, the other members being Broad Oak Chapel and the Roman Catholic parish of Hersden and Sturry. We are also associate members of Christians Together in Canterbury.

Deanery Synod In addition to the Rector and Methodist minister, two members represent the parish and partnership on the Canterbury Deanery Synod which provides an important link between the parish and the wider structures of the Church of England. Indeed we hosted a meeting of the Deanery Synod in the autumn.

Circuit Meeting Sturry and District United Church forms a part of the Canterbury and East Kent Circuit of The Methodist Church. The Circuit Meeting and regular meetings of the circuit ministers and the Circuit Leadership Team facilitate our collaboration in mission and ministry with other churches in the Circuit.

The Ecumenical Church Council of Sturry and District United Church (continued)

Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council for 2022 (continued)

One of our church members is a circuit steward and thus shares in meetings of the Circuit Leadership Team. In addition to her, our Anglican-Methodist partnership is entitled to be represented at Circuit Meetings by the interim priest in charge and Methodist minister, a churchwarden, the treasurer and one other elected church member.

Events We have been delighted to welcome back our regular weekly / monthly events. The weekly Coffee Morning in Sturry church, on Wednesdays, has provided a warm welcome and meeting-place for the wider community, as well as raising funds for the parish; and a monthly 'Soup on Saturday' also provided a welcome opportunity for church members and others to meet. We look forward to being able to hold occasional social and fundraising events, although there are fewer church members able to share in the hard work that fetes, fairs and the like necessarily entail. Having a range of events hosted by the parish and by the Friends of St Nicholas helps to build community and raises funds for the ongoing ministry of the church and our running costs. In the Autumn of last year, we extended our Coffee morning to run as a Warm Space from 10.00 am to 4.00 pm. We were grateful to the Methodist Circuit for giving us a grant of £1000 towards heating and food. The Diocese provided grants to both Sturry and Westbere churches towards heating costs to help with the increased rates. We were also very grateful to members of our regular congregation who donated money to the Warm Wednesday scheme.

Other Reports

Flowers: Unfortunately, we no longer have a flower arrangers rota providing flowers each week, as happened in the past, but we have managed extra displays for Harvest Festival, Christmas and Easter. At other times we compromise by using artificial flowers.

A Church of England tradition is not to have flowers in church during Advent and Lent and from a practical point this is helpful! I personally feel that it makes the flowers a more notable part of our joyful celebrations at Christmas and Easter.

Without donations from members of the congregation towards the cost of flowers we would not be able to do as much as we do so a big thank you to those who regularly contribute financially. At Easter we had more lilies donated in memory of loved ones than ever before.

The highlight of the year was the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebration weekend when there were more than twenty-five displays depicting aspects of the Queen's reign and arranged by different groups and organisations from our community.

Looking to the future it would be wonderful to have extra arrangers and there are already a couple of volunteers willing to help occasionally and hopefully there will be more. No experience is necessary.

Jane Freeman

The Ecumenical Church Council of Sturry and District United Church

Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council for 2022.

St Nicholas Cleaning Team

Thursday mornings is our special time for cleaning St Nicholas Church. We currently have four regular members and occasional help from one or two others. Most weeks we have time for a chat and a laugh and, very occasionally, a cup of tea. The church is open from 10 until 11.30am and we frequently welcome visitors during the time we are there. One local resident comes for a time of quiet prayer and reflection every Thursday.

A huge thank you goes to Joyce, Celia, and Pauline. We would happily welcome new volunteers.

Jane Freeman

Sturry Singers

Sturry Singers have been busy this last year. Apart from the practices on Tuesday afternoons, the group has travelled out on several occasions to the wider community to sing to: Age UK (Canterbury); Bradbury Grange; (Whistable) and Meadow View (Hersden). The group continue to increase their repertoire with a variety of familiar songs, Songs from the musicals and Songs from the 1940s.

The Annual Lunch was held at the Golden Lion in January.

Sturry Singers are a non profit group and is grateful to St. Nicholas Church and committee for the use of the church for practices. The Singers practice on Tuesday afternoons 2-3.30pm

All new comers are welcome to join us

Pauline Louch

CraftyAllsorts -Monday 2pm – 4pm

CraftyAllsorts is a group of lovers of all things crafty. It began with a group of Knitters and Stitchers, however, it is now open to all types of craftiness. At present there are lace makers, crochet, Knitting, crystal art, colouring, lino cutting, machine embroidery and a variety of cross stitch and embroidery. We also have had patchers, quilters and rug makers.

Currently, the group is putting together a panel depicting interesting places of Sturry done in embroidery/fabric painting/machine embroidery and is hoped to be ready soon.

The group is grateful to the Church and committee to be able to use the church on Monday afternoons. A suggested donation of £2 each session per person to cover cost of cuppa and the use of the heating.

Pauline Louch

The Ecumenical Church Council of Sturry and District United Church

Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council for 2022 (continued)

Financial review We are grateful to those church members who reviewed their giving through the church over the year, and to all who have organised and supported fundraising events. However, we need to increase our income if we are to become truly sustainable

Details of our receipts and expenditure, including our parish share by which we contribute to ministry costs not only in this parish but in the wider churches, will be available in the financial accounts.

As at the end of 2022 we are without a Treasurer. We are grateful to the work of Liz Morrison who agreed to help out as Treasurer for a period of two years. An ad-hoc group of the ECC has worked with advisers from the Methodist church to get the 2020 and 2021 accounts to a position where they can be independently examined. At the time of writing this report, both the 2020 and 2021 accounts have been filed with the Charity Commission.

Given the late filing of the ye 31/12/20 and ye 21/12/21 accounts as, we have not yet been able to finally account for the NLHF project to NLHF because of the lack of financial information for the financial years 2020 and 2021. At the time of writing the report Martin Pilgrim is progressing work on this.

We are very grateful for those who give generously both in terms of time and of money. The parish and partnership have developed a legacies policy and encourage church members and others to make a bequest in their wills to the work of the church in this parish, but inevitably the results of that work will not be seen (we hope!) until sometime into the future.

Reserves policy The PCC has reviewed the church's needs for reserves in line with the Operational Guidance No 43 (Charity Income Reserves) issued by the Charity Commission. The income of the Parish, as well as its financial demands, are subject to fluctuation. Maintaining two listed buildings can be costly and in order to meet the cost of major repairs and other calls upon parish funds, the PCC consider it prudent to maintain substantial reserves.

**Report approved by the Parochial Church Council and the Ecumenical Church Council on
28th May 2023 and signed on its behalf by Revd. Preb. Gillean Craig**



The Ecumenical Church Council of Sturry and District United Church

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of the Ecumenical Church Council of Sturry and District United Church

I report on the accounts of the church for the year ended 31 December 2022 which are set out on pages 13 to 14.

Respective Responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner

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

It is my responsibility to:

- Examine the accounts (under section 145 of the 2011 Act);
- To follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners (under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act); 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. 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 you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below. Independent examiner's statement

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

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
 - 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.

C. Dean

CLARE DEAN FCCA

Chartered Certified Accountant

18/20 Canterbury Road

Whitstable

Kent

CT5 4EY

Receipts and Payments summary 2022

		Unrestricted	Restricted	Endowment	2022.00 Total funds	2021.00 Total funds
		£	£	£	£	£
RECEIPTS						
Voluntary receipts						
Planned giving		16755.00	0.00	0.00	16755.00	20645.90
Giving at services		702.43	0.00	0.00	702.43	698.83
All other giving/voluntary receipts	KSC	5040.00	0.00	0.00	5040.00	5040.00
	Donations (general)	1763.89	0.00	0.00	1763.89	4555.96
	Fees to PCC	1631.50	0.00	0.00	1631.50	3472.22
	Fees due to DBF	0.00	1783.00	0.00	1783.00	3688.00
	1 Wedding staged payments	2303.00	2500.00	0.00	4803.00	2000.00
Tax recovered	2 Gift Aid (planned giving)	2934.00	0.00	0.00	2934.00	5666.06
	VAT (NLHF project)	0.00	1188.40	0.00	1188.40	-
		31129.82	5471.40	0.00	36601.22	45766.97
Activities for generating funds						
	Coffee	663.29	0.00	0.00	663.29	22.00
	Fundraising events (inc. craft)	1675.00	0.00	0.00	1675.00	100.27
	Soup lunches	584.96	0.00	0.00	584.96	23.20
	3 Warm Space/heating donations	859.31	0.00	0.00	859.31	
	Diocesan heating grants	2400.00	0.00	0.00	2400.00	
Investment Income		0.00	0.00	4063.69	4063.69	4056.98
Interest		270.15	0.00	0.00	270.15	51.50
Church activities						
	Magazine	1475.60	0.00	0.00	1475.60	507.40
	Charity collections	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	165.00
Total receipts		39058.13	5471.40	4063.69	48593.22	50693.32
PAYMENTS						
Church Activities						
Stipend contributions/share/assessment	4	10000.00	0.00	0.00	10000.00	10000.00
Clergy and staffing costs	5 Ministry costs	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	735.15
Church running expenses						
	Heat, light, water, insurance	16835.63	0.00	0.00	16835.63	12632.78
	Upkeep of services	177.38	0.00	0.00	177.38	169.65
	Bells, organists, virgins	2515.00	0.00	0.00	2515.00	1480.00
	Minor repairs, organ tuning	1679.27	0.00	0.00	1679.27	4261.30
	Churchyard maintenance	2610.00	0.00	0.00	2610.00	1080.00
	Admin	68.00	0.00	0.00	68.00	406.56
	Magazine	2378.24	0.00	0.00	2378.24	666.22
Fees returned	Deposits to Diocese	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	500.00
		0.00	3000.00	0.00	3000.00	776.00
Hall running costs		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Mission giving and donations		651.75	0.00	0.00	651.75	600.50
	6 Sundries	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1000.00
NHLF Project		0.00	5114.10	0.00	5114.10	15229.10
		36915.27	8114.10	0.00	45029.37	49537.26
Costs of generating funds		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Revaluation of Investments		0.00	0.00	18941.51	18941.51	(13419.00)
Internal transfers		8515.39	(4551.70)	(4053.69)	0.00	-
Total Payments		45530.66	3562.40	14877.82	63970.88	36118.26
Excess of Receipts over Payments		(6472.53)	1909.00	(10814.13)	(15377.66)	14575.06
Cash in bank and at hand at 1 January 2022		46169.81	10536.00	156493.00	213198.81	198623.00
Cash in bank and at hand at 31 December 2022		47824.66	12445.00	137551.49	197821.15	213198.00

SADAMC

Statement of Assets and Liabilities

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	TOTAL FUNDS	
	£	£	£	2022	2021
	£	£	£	£	£
Cash Funds					
Lloyds Bank Current Account	26,377.09	12,445.00		38,822.09	35,528.39
Lloyds Magazine Account	6 434.42			434.42	434.42
Cash in hand	15.00			15.00	15.00
Other monetary assets					
Gift Aid recoverable	2	work in progress			
Investment Assets at 31/12/22					
CCLA 1 606061001 D Development Fund	19,560.54				19,307.00
CCLA 2 606061001 F Sale of Rectory Site			27,201.23		
CCLA 3 606061001 S Mission Room Recoupment Order			17,718.39		156,493.00
CCLA CBF Investment 1060016875-21911 STURRY			92,631.87		
CFB Deposit 06982010	1,437.61				1421
Totals					
Fixed Assets retained for church use			n/a		
Liabilities					Arrears of Anglican Parish Share and Methodist Assessment yet to be determined

Notes:

- 1 **Wedding Staged payments.**
Previous description as 'DEPOSIT' no longer acceptable to Diocese. £250 of this payment is still regarded as restricted because of the mandatory fee payable to the diocese, but it can be returned if the wedding does not take place. Other fees (bells etc) are in general accounts.
- 2 **Gift Aid**
Collected as described. Claims have not yet caught up with current year's planned giving. Estimate unavailable for asset calculation.
- 3 **Warm Space/Heating donations**
ECC initiative to make the church available as a warm space, intended to offset heating bills. Together with diocesan heating grants this is considered designated rather than restricted funding.
- 4 **Stipend contributions**
Anglican and Methodist churches have made an appointment of two Interim Part-Time priests to oversee the LEP with effect from 1st September 2022. £5000 paid to each authority represents a 0.2 share of Ministry costs for the 4 months. No contribution or assessment is made for any shared costs.
- 5 **Clergy and staffing costs**
Paid directly to individuals by diocese and the Methodist church.
- 6 **Magazine account**
Lloyds bank account ('Magazine Account') previously assumed to be closed was found to be still holding a balance of £434.42. Statement obtained via a long-retired signatory. Transfer to a working account not yet achieved. Information in bank statements file.

STURRY AND DISTRICT UNITED CHURCH

England & Wales - Charity number 1181753

Accounts

**The Ecumenical Church Council
of
Sturry and District United Church
within the parish of
Sturry with Fordwich and Westbere with Hersden
Charity Commission reg no: 1181753**

Financial Statements

for the year ended 31 December 2021

**The Ecumenical Church Council of Sturry
and District United Church**

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The Ecumenical Church Council of Sturry and District United Church

Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council for 2021.

This Annual Report, accompanying the parish and partnership annual accounts is compiled in line with the requirements of the Charities Act 2006, the requirements of the Charity Commission and the public benefit reporting requirements that now apply to all charities.

Following the formal adoption of the new constitution on 20 February 2013, the responsibilities and the membership of the Parochial Church Council (PCC) of the Anglican Parish of Sturry with Fordwich and Westbere with Hersden and those of the Ecumenical Church Council (ECC) of Sturry and District United Church are inevitably closely linked, and accordingly the following is a joint report approved by both councils.

Administrative information

Sturry and District United Church is a joint Anglican-Methodist Church serving the above-named parish. The Local Ecumenical Partnership in this parish was set up in September 1970 and its Sponsoring Body is Churches Together in Kent. It meets in two parish buildings, St Nicholas' church in Sturry, and All Saints' church in Westbere, both Anglican-owned but the subject of sharing agreements signed in 1988. (The church building of St Mary the Virgin in Fordwich was declared redundant in 1996 and is vested in the Churches Conservation Trust.)

As an Anglican-Methodist partnership, Sturry and District United Church is part both of the Diocese of Canterbury and Deanery of Canterbury within the Church of England and also part of The South-East District and the Canterbury and East Kent Circuit of The Methodist Church. The correspondence address is:

C/O The ECC Secretary, 88, Sweechgate, Broad Oak, Canterbury, CT2 0QU

The Ecumenical Church Council which was set up alongside the new Parochial Church Council from 20 February 2013 fulfils within this parish and partnership the roles normally carried out by a Parochial Church Council and a Methodist Church Council, and is therefore a body corporate (PCC Powers Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2006). Sturry and District United Church was registered as a charity in January 2019.

The Rector, when one is appointed, is officially recognised as an Authorised Minister within the Methodist Church and represents both denominations within the United Church. From September 2012 the Diocese of Canterbury reduced the post of Rector to three-quarters of full-time. In order for him not to be disadvantaged financially, and in order to maintain his stipend at 100%, the Circuit contributed 25% of his stipend, in return for which 25% of his time was allocated to work in the wider Circuit outside our five villages, principally with ministerial responsibilities at Herne Bay United Church (Methodist and URC)

There follows a list of members of the PCC and the ECC in the calendar year 2021, all of whom act as trustees of the charity:

The Ecumenical Church Council of Sturry and District United Church

Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council for 2021 (continued)

(1) PCC members who served during the period 1 January – 31 December 2021 were:

Retired minister with Permission to Officiate The Revd Peter Freeman (*co-opted*)

<i>Churchwardens</i>	Mrs Anne Stevenson Mr Darren Delo
<i>Representatives on the Deanery Synod</i>	Mrs Georgina Glover Mrs Angela Pilgrim
<i>Elected members</i>	Mrs Jane Freeman Mr Paul Haines (lay vice-chair) Mr Gavin Kennett (secretary) Mr Martin Pilgrim. Mr David Stevenson Mrs Brenda Williams

(2) ECC members who served during the period 1 January – 31 December 2021 were:

Rector and Methodist Minister The Revd Peter Cornish (to May 2021)

Retired minister with Permission to Officiate The Revd Peter Freeman (*co-opted*)

(The Circuit Superintendent minister, together with other ministers who have pastoral responsibility within the circuit, and the Bishop of Dover or her appointed representative, may also attend meetings; but none of them did so in 2021.)

<i>Churchwardens</i>	Mr Darren Delo Mrs Anne Stevenson
<i>Representatives on the Deanery Synod</i>	Mrs Georgina Glover Mrs Angela Pilgrim
<i>Members of the Circuit Meeting</i>	Mrs Anne Stevenson (<i>as churchwarden</i>) Dr Liz Morrison (<i>as treasurer</i>) Mrs Angela Pilgrim (<i>ex officio as circuit steward</i>) Mr Martin Pilgrim (<i>elected</i>)
<i>Elected members</i>	Mrs Jane Freeman Mr Paul Haines (lay vice-chair) Mr Gavin Kennett (secretary) Mr David Stevenson Mrs Brenda Williams

PCC and ECC Dr Liz Morrison (Treasurer) is an officer of the PCC and ECC but not a voting member of either. She is a trustee of the Sturry and District United Church charity as are all other PCC and ECC members.

The Ecumenical Church Council of Sturry and District United Church

Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council for 2021 (continued)

Structure, governance and management

Since 20 February 2013 the method of appointment of PCC members and ECC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules of the Church of England, the Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church and the constitution of the Sturry and District United Church within the parish of Sturry with Fordwich and Westbere with Hersden, with the exception that in this parish and partnership those whose names are on the Methodist membership list enjoy the same rights, privileges and responsibilities as those whose names are on the Anglican electoral roll.

There is no pre-determined 'quota' governing the balance between Anglican and Methodist members on the church councils; candidates are elected without regard to their formal denominational allegiance. All who attend worship regularly in our churches are invited to register on the electoral roll or Methodist membership list and stand for election to the PCC and ECC.

In 2007 a Joint Membership List was created, consisting of those who had registered on the electoral roll or Methodist membership list, and it is noteworthy that since that date all such church members have wished to regard themselves as joint members of both denominations. At the Joint Church Council (JCC) meeting of 30 March 2009 it was resolved that following the Annual General Meeting and Annual Parochial Church Meeting the numbers reported to our parent denominations would each be one-half of the total figure for the Joint Membership List.

Under the new constitution which came into force from 20 February 2013, the maximum number of elected representatives on each of the PCC and the ECC is nine. Elected representatives are elected to serve for three years. At the end of their first period of three years they are eligible for election for a further three years, but after a service of six consecutive years there must be a gap of at least one year before they can stand again for election.

Objectives and activities

As laid down by the PCC (Powers) Measure 1956, the PCC and ECC of Sturry and District United Church have the responsibility of co-operating with the Anglican and Methodist minister(s) in promoting in the parish and partnership the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. The PCC also has maintenance responsibilities for the church buildings of St Nicholas, Sturry, and All Saints, Westbere, and the churchyard only (not the church building) of St Mary the Virgin, Fordwich, and also exercises functions with respect to the Church of England Primary School in the parish.

The business of the ECC and PCC was inevitably disrupted by the coronavirus pandemic from March 2020 but nevertheless the PCC and ECC met eight times during the year, either in person or remotely by Microsoft Teams, including a brief meeting after the 2021 AGM and APCM. The PCC and ECC generally have joint meetings, at which the business of each council is handled separately, and a similar principle applies with respect to the AGM and APCM. The Standing Committee met between meetings, and minutes of their deliberations were received by the full PCC and ECC and discussed where necessary.

The Ecumenical Church Council of Sturry and District United Church

Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council for 2021 (continued)

Achievements and performance

Worship

In the following three paragraphs, relevant figures for 2021 are inserted in italics and in brackets, for comparison.

At the time of the 2021 Annual General Meeting and Annual Parochial Church Meeting, there were 48(48) members of the Joint Membership List. Accordingly, for the purposes of annual denominational returns, 24 (24) members of the electoral roll were reported to the Church of England and 24 (24) members on the membership list were reported to the Methodist Church.

Because of the pandemic, many members of the congregation continued to self-isolate at home, worshipping through the provision of printed or emailed worship resources, a live Zoom service held by the Methodist Circuit, pre-recorded services from other churches or broadcast worship on the BBC, having an effect on the number of regular worshippers actually attending church, but 2021-figures show an average of 25.

Subject to restrictions enforced during the pandemic, we aim to enable our community to celebrate and thank God at the milestones of the journey through life. In the service of Thanksgiving and Blessing for the Gift of a Child we thank God for the gift of children and ask God's blessing on them and on their parents; in baptism we give older children and adults, or parents and godparents on behalf of younger children, the opportunity to declare their loyalty to Christ and we ask God's blessing on their discipleship; in marriage public vows are exchanged with God's blessing; and through funeral services friends and family express their grief and give thanks for the life that is now complete in this world and commend the person into God's keeping. During the year we celebrated ten (five) baptisms of adults or children and two (*two*) marriages in the parish; and funerals were held by parish ministers for 7 (*16*) persons either in one of the church buildings, at a local cemetery or at a crematorium.

The ECC maintains an overview of worship within the parish and is committed to enabling as many people as would wish to worship within the church buildings of the parish and also, where appropriate, in their own home and to grow as disciples of Jesus Christ. Our services and worship aim to put faith into practice through prayer and scripture, music and sacrament. In line with the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit to charities for the advancement of religion, we aim to enable people to live out their faith as part of our parish community through worship and prayer, learning about the Gospel, and developing their knowledge of and trust in Jesus Christ. We try to provide pastoral care, primarily for those living within the five villages; we engage in outreach work within the villages that we serve; and we support in prayer and, when possible, in financial giving to Christian missionary work elsewhere in the UK and overseas.

As part of this work it is important that we maintain the church buildings at St Nicholas, Sturry, and All Saints, Westbere. The project to carry out urgent repairs and maintenance of Sturry church, largely funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund but supplemented by generous gifts from individuals in the community and a grant from the Friends of St Nicholas, was mostly completed a week before the lockdown of March 2020

The Ecumenical Church Council of Sturry and District United Church

Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council for 2021 (continued)

with improvements to the kitchen with new cooker, dishwasher and fridge being completed 2022 and we look forward to being able to benefit more from that in the future.

The kitchen work has already seen huge benefits for coffee mornings and Soup on Saturday as well as making the possibility of hiring the church building out

looking more attractive to outside users. The project also included significant expenditure on heritage and education objectives and on community engagement, and we are taking that forward whenever opportunities arise. In the autumn the church hosted a very popular and well attended book launch from a local historian. The proposed residential developments in Sturry, Broad Oak and Hersden are likely to produce a virtual doubling in population of the ecclesiastical parish over the coming years and it is important that we both prepare for that and that we can present St Nicholas' church as a base for Christian mission, as a venue for community events and as a celebration of our local history and heritage. On 17 December, as a concluding public event for the NLHF project 2021, Patrick McKeating, Head of History at JKS led an event in the church entitled "Over 1000 years of History on Your Doorstep". This made much use of the material curated during the NLHF project.

Martin Pilgrim is thanked for all his hard work in driving the project forwards in the difficult circumstances of the past couple of years

We are extremely grateful for work undertaken in maintaining and tidying the Milner Ground over the past year. Grounds staff of Junior King's School have continued to cut the grass, and both we and the village as a whole have benefited from the work of Community Payback who have (when circumstances have made it possible) continued their good work, so that the Milner Ground is tidy and attractive. We are very grateful also to those who ensure the regular cleaning of both Sturry and Westbere churches and to those who provide flowers.

We have been glad that a number of parishioners were again able on a rota basis to open the redundant church building of St Mary the Virgin, Fordwich, for prayer and visiting in daylight

hours in 2021 as circumstances permitted. Because of the pandemic it was only possible to open All Saints' church, Westbere, for visitors and the local community to a limited extent in 2021. At Sturry we were able to open St Nicholas' church for private prayer / visitors during the pandemic on Sundays and Wednesdays as restrictions allowed with the church staffed by volunteers. Later in the year we moved to leaving the church open and unstaffed after services on Sunday, on Wednesday following the weekly coffee morning and Thursdays when church is cleaned. It is clear that many residents and visitors appreciate this.

Sturry churchyard and the two churchyards at Westbere are closed and the responsibility for maintaining those falls accordingly to Sturry Parish Council and Westbere Parish Council respectively. Both of these in fact sub-contract the work to others and we are grateful for the tidy appearance that they ensure. We are appreciative also of the work of a number of volunteers who maintain the churchyard at Fordwich; Community Payback have helped here too.

The ECC is keen to offer a range of worship opportunities over the course of the year that different members of the regular congregations and the wider community find helpful and spiritually fulfilling, but inevitably the pandemic in 2020 -2021 had a major impact on regular worship. Numbers attending the early morning 8.00am service at Sturry had been falling through death and infirmity, and so that service was not restarted after the first lockdown. The same applied to services at Westbere. It has also been difficult to find people to lead services in the parish since the retirement of the last Rector in May 2021 so the decision was made not to re-open Westbere for regular Sunday worship, but services were held over the Christmas period. The weekly 9.30am service at Sturry remains at 10.00am which has been logistically easier for some of the congregation. We continue to aim for a balance between eucharistic and non-eucharistic worship, and the traditions of both of our parent denominations are honoured; Once opportunities permit, we look forward again to welcoming the uniformed organisations four or five times a year, and to welcoming the boarders and staff of the Junior King's School to share in our service at Sturry once or twice in every term. The monthly pattern of services within the parish and partnership will continue to be kept under review, taking into account changes in official restrictions, attendance figures and also issues of staffing. Although we no longer run a children's group parallel with our main service at Sturry, we provide facilities for young children and their parents in the church.

In today's world it is essential that all organisations keep the effectiveness of their communications under constant review. The key elements are the United Church's website, its Facebook page, and the monthly magazine *Link-Up* which is delivered to around 450 homes in our villages, with additional free copies available at venues such as schools, shops and the Hersden Community Centre.

In the second half of the year a pastoral committee was established. Their remit included the setting up and managing a system of pastoral visiting, drawing up a rota of welcomers for church services, to be responsible for welcome letters and information which can be given out to new residents in our areas, to keep a watch on the community events the church organises, to be aware when events need support and to suggest new events as appropriate. The committee also explored how the views of people in our villages as to what they would like to be involved with at our church could be gathered.

A major loss caused by the pandemic is that we have been obliged to pause special services and visits made by Sturry CE Primary School at Sturry church., We look forward to restarting links with Sturry Primary and Water Meadows Primary (ex-Hersden CP School) which had decreased over the years prior to the pandemic.

Similarly, we look forward to rebuilding the close links with the Junior King's School, in shared worship, in meeting regularly with the Headteacher and the school's Church Committee and in exploring how the school and the church can work in partnership with regard to maintaining and developing the Sturry church building.

We enjoy cordial relationships with Sturry Parish Council and are glad that Sturry Parish Council and the new Hersden Parish Council, as well as the uniformed organisations, normally share in the wreath-laying ceremonies on Remembrance Sunday. At our Blue Christmas Service, we remembered before the Lord those who have died in the last year. The service was much appreciated by those who attended.

The Ecumenical Church Council of Sturry and District United Church

Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council for 2021 (continued)

Safeguarding

Sturry and District United Church has agreed to follow the safeguarding policy of the Church of England, partly because the Rector and Methodist minister served as a member of the Diocese of Canterbury's Safeguarding Management group for over twenty years. Together with the Parish Safeguarding Officers the ECC discusses safeguarding on a regular basis. The parish's website has a link to safeguarding information on its home page, including contact details within the parish and at diocesan level for anyone who has a safeguarding concern. The ECC has complied with the duty to have 'due regard' to the House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy and Practice Guidance.

Ecumenical links

Sturry and District United Church plays a key role in Churches Together in Sturry and District, the other members being Broad Oak Chapel and the Roman Catholic parish of Hersden and Sturry. We work with them in the annual Christian Aid Week collections in May. We are also associate members of Christians Together in Canterbury.

Deanery Synod

In addition to the Rector and Methodist minister, two members represent the parish and partnership on the Canterbury Deanery Synod which provides an important link between the parish and the wider structures of the Church of England.

Circuit Meeting

Sturry and District United Church forms a part of the Canterbury and East Kent Circuit of The Methodist Church. The Circuit Meeting and regular meetings of the circuit ministers and the Circuit Leadership Team facilitate our collaboration in mission and ministry with other churches in the Circuit. One of our church members is a circuit steward and thus shares in meetings of the Circuit Leadership Team. In addition to her, our Anglican-Methodist partnership is represented at Circuit Meetings by the Rector and Methodist minister, a churchwarden, the treasurer and one other elected church member.

Events

We look forward to exploring how we can restart all our events within the confines of the pandemic guidelines bearing in mind that the kitchen will be developed later in 2021. In the past a weekly Coffee Morning in Sturry church, on Wednesdays, provided a warm welcome and meeting-place for the wider community, as well as raising funds for the parish; and a monthly 'Soup on Saturday' also provided a welcome opportunity for church members and others to meet. We look forward to being able to hold occasional social and fundraising events, although there are fewer church members able to share in the hard work that fetes, fairs and the like necessarily entail. Having a range of events hosted by the parish and by the Friends of St Nicholas helps to build community and raises funds for the ongoing ministry of the church and our running costs.

Financial review

We are grateful to those church members who reviewed their giving through the church over the year, and to all who have organised and supported fundraising events.

Details of our receipts and expenditure, including our parish share by which we contribute to ministry costs not only in this parish but in the wider churches, will be available in the financial accounts.

At the time of writing this report, the annual return to the Charity Commission for 2020, due on 31st October 2021, has not been made. The AGM is also not able to receive accounts for the year ended 31 December 2021 as they are not yet in a position to be independently examined. An ad-hoc group of the ECC is now working with advisers from the Methodist church to get the 2020 and 2021 accounts to a position where they can be independently examined.

Given the position of the accounts ye 31/12/20 and ye 31/12/21 accounts as detailed above, we have not been able finally to account for the NLHF project to NLHF because of the lack of financial information for the financial years 2020 and 2021; the report to NLHF was due by 31 December 2021 (the date already having been shifted several times before that).

We are very grateful for those who give generously both in terms of time and of money. The parish and partnership have developed a legacies policy and encourage church members and others to make a bequest in their wills to the work of the church in this parish, but inevitably the results of that work will not be seen (we hope!) until sometime into the future.

Reserves policy

The PCC has reviewed the church's needs for reserves in line with the Operational Guidance No 43 (Charity Income Reserves) issued by the Charity Commission. The income of the Parish, as well as its financial demands, are subject to fluctuation. Maintaining two listed buildings can be costly and in order to meet the cost of major repairs and other calls upon parish funds, the PCC consider it prudent to maintain substantial reserves.

**Report approved by the Parochial Church Council and the Ecumenical Church Council on
1st May 2022 and signed on its behalf by:**

AEM. Stevens
Churchwarden

The Ecumenical Church Council of Sturry and District United Church

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of the Ecumenical Church Council of Sturry and District United Church

I report on the accounts of the church for the year ended 31 December 2021 which are set out on pages 10 to 14.

Respective Responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner

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

It is my responsibility to:

- Examine the accounts (under section 145 of the 2011 Act);
- To follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners (under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act); 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. 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 you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below. Independent examiner's statement

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

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
 - 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.

C Dean
CLARE DEAN FCCA
Chartered Certified Accountant
18/20 Cranbury Road
Whitstable
Kent
CTS 464

STURRY CHURCH

DETAILED ACCOUNTS TO 31 DECEMBER 2021

	Unrestricted Funds		Restricted Funds		Endowment	Total	2020
	General	Designated	NLHF	Other	Fund		Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
RECEIPTS							
Planned giving	20636					20636	20491
Collections	699					699	1195
Junior Kings	5040					5040	5040
Donations	4456		100			4556	12015
Charity collections	310					310	113
VAT repaid	-					-	11757
Gift Aid	3173		2393			5566	(7913)
Fees	3472					3472	1836
Wedding deposits				2000		2000	1020
Diocesan fees	3688					3688	2858
Rent	-					-	300
Parish magazine	501					501	1299
Investment income	4057					4057	4166
Interest	52					52	108
	<u>46084</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2493</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>50577</u>	<u>54285</u>
EXPENSES							
Per attached schedule	<u>33442</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>17568</u>	<u>750</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>51760</u>	<u>55645</u>
OTHER ITEMS							
Revaluation of Investments					13419	13419	8187
Inter fund transfers	(15075)		15075			-	-
	<u>(15075)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>15075</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>13419</u>	<u>13419</u>	<u>8187</u>
SURPLUS/ (DEFICIT)	<u>(2433)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1250</u>	<u>13419</u>	<u>12236</u>	<u>6827</u>

SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS

	Unrestricted Funds		Restricted Funds		Endowment		Total £
	General £	Designated £	NLHF £	Other £	Fund £	Total £	
Ministry expenses	735					735	1455
Utilities and insurance	12633					12633	10058
Repairs and organ tuning	4011					4011	1378
Graveyard maintenance	1080					1080	360
Upkeep of services	1650					1650	524
Administration	407					407	459
Parish share							
Paid	10000					10000	10000
Accrual reversed	-					-	(26179)
Circuit assessment							
Accrual reversed	-					-	(9750)
Parish magazine	665					665	1224
Fee deposits repaid	-			750		750	1135
Fees to Diocese	660					660	
3252							
Gift to retiring clergy	1000					1000	-
Charity payments	601					601	99
Project expenses			17568			17538	61630
	<u>33442</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>17568</u>	<u>750</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>51760</u>	<u>55645</u>

STURRY CHURCH

BALANCE SHEET AT 31 DECEMBER 2021

	Unrestricted Funds		Restricted Funds		Endowment	Total	Total
	General	Designated	NLHF	Other	Fund		2020
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Investments					156493	156493	143074
Cash in hand	15					15	15
Lloyds current	22,903			10286		33189	34226
Lloyds magazine	434					434	630
CCLA deposit	12340	6967				19307	19266
Methodist Central	1421					1421	1412
Total Assets	<u>37113</u>	<u>6967</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>10286</u>	<u>156493</u>	<u>210859</u>	<u>198623</u>
Fund Movement							
Balance at 1.1.21	39546	6967	-	9036	143074	198623	191796
Surplus/Deficit	(2433)	-	-	1250	13419	12236	6827
Balance at 31.12.21	<u>37113</u>	<u>6967</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>10286</u>	<u>156493</u>	<u>210859</u>	<u>198623</u>

Analysis of Other Restricted Funds

Heating Fund	630	630
Organ Fund	380	380
Rector's Fund (W H Bird)	683	683
Sturry Church Fund	470	470
Wedding Deposits	4295	3045
Westbere Fabric Fund	3828	3828
	<u>10286</u>	<u>9036</u>

**THE ECUMENICAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF STURRY
AND DISTRICT UNITED CHURCH**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
for the year ended 31 December 2021**

1. Accounting Policies

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

Basis of Accounting

The accounts for 2019 were prepared on the Accrual Basis as required by the Charity Commissioners based on the level of total revenue. The Trustees were satisfied that the revenue for the 2019 and for the foreseeable future (a minimum of three years) would permit them to produce the accounts on a Receipts and Payments Basis. Having considered this option they decided that it was preferable to change the basis of accounting to a Receipts and Payments Basis for the 2019 and future years.

A contributing factor to this decision concerns the significant creditors that were accrued at 31 December 2019 which have been established as not due and payable.

Funds

General funds represents the funds of the ECC that are not subject to any restrictions regarding their use and are available for application on the general purposes of the PCC. Funds designated for a particular purpose by the ECC are also unrestricted.

The accounts include all transactions for which the PCC is responsible in law. They do not include the accounts of church groups that owe their main affiliation to another body nor those that are informal gatherings of church members.

Incoming Resources

Voluntary income and capital resources

Collections are recognised when received on behalf of the ECC.

Planned giving receivable under covenant is recognised only when received.

Income tax recoverable on covenants or gift aid donations is recognised when received.

Grants and legacies to the ECC are accounted for when received.

Funds raised by events are accounted for gross.

Sales of magazines from the church are accounted for gross.

Resources Expended

The Diocesan Quota or Parish Share is accounted for when paid.

STURRY CHURCH
COMMENTARY ON DETAILED ACCOUNTS
YEAR TO 31 DECEMBER 2021

1. It is believed that the donations of £4556 all relate to the general fund. A final review has checked that there are no donations attributable to the restricted funds.
2. The NLHF restricted fund was overspent during the year by £15,075. As a restricted fund cannot be overdrawn this amount was transferred from the general fund as shown on page 1, thus leaving the NLHF balance at zero at 31 December 2021. If in a future year the NLHF fund is adequately in surplus this transfer will be reversed.
3. The expenditure on Repairs and Organ Tuning of £4011 includes £2500 of roof work following the damage caused by lead theft in December 2001. This event was the subject of an insurance claim and the amount recovered will be included in the year of receipt.
4. The expense shown under Parish Share of £10000 was the amount paid in the year. This was less than the amount requested, a similar situation existed in previous years. This matter will be subject to discussion with the Diocese and any further payments will be shown in the accounts of the year when payment is made. A similar situation exists for the Methodist Circuit Assessment where nothing was paid in the year to 31 December 2021.
5. It is the intention to close the Lloyds Magazine account which is shown on page 3 at £434 and for the funds to be transferred to the current account.
6. A list of the Other Restricted Funds is shown on page 3. Some of these funds have been in existence for many years. It would be within the authority of the ECC to agree that the balances could be transferred to general funds if they are no longer required. Each fund should be considered individually, and due regard should be taken of both future needs and historical restrictions.
7. The Endowment Fund is shown on page 3 at £156493. There is uncertainty over how these monies can be used, and enquiries are continuing into the future possibilities for these funds.
8. The full accounts for the year to 31 December 2020 have been agreed and the Examiner's report received. These accounts have been filed with the Charities Commission.

STURRY AND DISTRICT UNITED CHURCH

England & Wales - Charity number 1181753

Accounts

**The Ecumenical Church Council
of
Sturry and District United Church
within the parish of
Sturry with Fordwich and Westbere with Hersden
Charity Commission reg no: 1181753**

Financial Statements

for the year ended 31 December 2020

**The Ecumenical Church Council of Sturry
and District United Church**

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The Ecumenical Church Council of Sturry and District United Church

Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council for 2020 (continued)

<i>Representatives on the Deanery Synod</i>	Mrs Georgina Glover Mrs Angela Pilgrim
<i>Elected members</i>	Mrs Jane Freeman (<i>to 30 October</i>) Mr Paul Haines (lay vice-chair) Mr Gavin Kennett (<i>from 30 October</i>)(secretary) Mr Martin Pilgrim Mr David Stevenson Mr Andrew Webster (treasurer to 30 October) (<i>to 30 October</i>) Mrs Brenda Williams

(2) ECC members who served during the period 1 January – 31 December 2020 were:

Rector and Methodist Minister The Revd Peter Cornish (Retired May 2021)

Retired minister with Permission to Officiate The Revd Peter Freeman (*co-opted*)

(The Circuit Superintendent minister, together with other ministers who have pastoral responsibility within the circuit, and the Bishop of Dover or his appointed representative, may also attend meetings; but none of them did so in 2020.)

<i>Churchwardens</i>	Mr Darren DeLo Mrs Anne Stevenson
<i>Representatives on the Deanery Synod</i>	Mrs Georgina Glover Mrs Angela Pilgrim
<i>Members of the Circuit Meeting</i>	Mrs Anne Stevenson (<i>as churchwarden</i>) Mr Andrew Webster (<i>as treasurer, to 30 October</i>) Mrs Angela Pilgrim (<i>ex officio as circuit steward</i>) Mr Martin Pilgrim (<i>elected</i>)
<i>Elected members</i>	Mrs Jane Freeman (<i>to 30 October</i>) Mr Paul Haines (lay vice-chair) Mr Gavin Kennett (<i>from 30 October</i>)(secretary) Mr David Stevenson Mrs Brenda Williams

The Ecumenical Church Council of Sturry and District United Church

Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council for 2020 (continued)

Structure, governance and management

Since 20 February 2013 the method of appointment of PCC members and ECC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules of the Church of England, the Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church and the constitution of the Sturry and District United Church within the parish of Sturry with Fordwich and Westbere with Hersden, with the exception that in this parish and partnership those whose names are on the Methodist membership list enjoy the same rights, privileges and responsibilities as those whose names are on the Anglican electoral roll. There is no pre-determined 'quota' governing the balance between Anglican and Methodist members on the church councils; candidates are elected without regard to their formal denominational allegiance. All who attend worship regularly in our churches are invited to register on the electoral roll or Methodist membership list and stand for election to the PCC and ECC.

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Under the new constitution which came into force from 20 February 2013, the maximum number of elected representatives on each of the PCC and the ECC is nine. Elected representatives are elected to serve for three years. At the end of their first period of three years they are eligible for election for a further three years, but after a service of six consecutive years there must be a gap of at least one year before they can stand again for election.

Following the 2020 Annual General Meeting and Annual Parochial Church Meeting (delayed because of the pandemic to 30 October 2020) there remained four vacancies for elected PCC members and there remained five vacancies for elected ECC members.

Objectives and activities

As laid down by the PCC (Powers) Measure 1956, the PCC and ECC of Sturry and District United Church have the responsibility of co-operating with the Anglican and Methodist minister(s) in promoting in the parish and partnership the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. The PCC also has maintenance responsibilities for the church buildings of St Nicholas, Sturry, and All Saints, Westbere, and the churchyard only (not the church building) of St Mary the Virgin, Fordwich, and also exercises functions with respect to the Church of England Primary School in the parish.

The business of the ECC and PCC was inevitably disrupted by the coronavirus pandemic from March 2020 but nevertheless the PCC and ECC met seven times during the year, either in person or remotely by Microsoft Teams, including a brief meeting after the 2020 AGM and APCM. The PCC and ECC generally have joint meetings, at which the business of each council is handled separately, and a similar principle applies with respect to the AGM and APCM. The Standing Committee met between meetings, and minutes of their deliberations were received by the full PCC and ECC and discussed where necessary.

The Ecumenical Church Council of Sturry and District United Church

Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council for 2020 (continued)

Achievements and performance

Worship

In the following three paragraphs, relevant figures for 2019 are inserted in italics and in brackets, for comparison.

At the time of the 2020 Annual General Meeting and Annual Parochial Church Meeting, there were 48 (*49*) members of the Joint Membership List. Accordingly, for the purposes of annual denominational returns, 24 (*25*) members of the electoral roll were reported to the Church of England and 24 (*24*) members on the membership list were reported to the Methodist Church.

Because of the pandemic regular Sunday worship was suspended for most of the year, from mid-March onwards, and in those periods where public worship was possible there were many members of the congregation self-isolating at home and worshipping through the provision of printed or emailed worship resources, a live Zoom service held by the Methodist Circuit, pre-recorded services from other churches or broadcast worship on the BBC. Unlike in previous years, therefore, it is not possible to give a 'usual Sunday attendance' figure for 2020. The relevant figures in 2019, including both Anglicans and Methodists, were nil children and young people (aged under 16) and 35 adults.

Subject to restrictions enforced during the pandemic, we aim to enable our community to celebrate and thank God at the milestones of the journey through life. In the service of Thanksgiving and Blessing for the Gift of a Child we thank God for the gift of children and ask God's blessing on them and on their parents; in baptism we give older children and adults, or parents and godparents on behalf of younger children, the opportunity to declare their loyalty to Christ and we ask God's blessing on their discipleship; in marriage public vows are exchanged with God's blessing; and through funeral services friends and family express their grief and give thanks for the life that is now complete in this world and commend the person into God's keeping. During the year we thanked God for the gift of five (*four*) children; we celebrated three (*four*) baptisms of adults or children and two (*five*) marriages in the parish; and funerals were held by parish ministers for 14 (*16*) persons either in one of the church buildings, at a local cemetery or at a crematorium.

The ECC maintains an overview of worship within the parish and is committed to enabling as many people as would wish to worship within the church buildings of the parish and also, where appropriate, in their own homes (including regular services of Holy Communion in a sheltered housing complex in Sturry and regular worship in a care-home for residents with dementia), and to grow as disciples of Jesus Christ. Our services and worship aim to put faith into practice through prayer and scripture, music and sacrament. In line with the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit to charities for the advancement of religion, we aim to enable people to live out their faith as part of our parish community through worship and prayer, learning about the Gospel, and developing their knowledge of and trust in Jesus Christ. We try to provide pastoral care, primarily for those living within the five villages; we engage in outreach work within the villages that we serve; and we support in prayer and, when possible, in financial giving to Christian missionary work elsewhere in the UK and overseas.

The Ecumenical Church Council of Sturry and District United Church

Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council for 2020 (continued)

As part of this work it is important that we maintain the church buildings at St Nicholas, Sturry, and All Saints, Westbere. The project to carry out urgent repairs and maintenance of Sturry church, largely funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund but supplemented by generous gifts from individuals in the community and a grant from the Friends of St Nicholas, was mostly completed a week before the lockdown of March 2020 - so the building has seen comparatively limited use since then but we look forward to being able to benefit more from that in the future. There are elements outstanding in the development of the church building, including a replacement of kitchen facilities and the installation of telephone and broadband. The project also included significant expenditure on heritage and education objectives and on community engagement, and we anticipate taking that forward as opportunities arise with the expected lifting of coronavirus restrictions. The proposed residential developments in Sturry, Broad Oak and Hersden are likely to produce a virtual doubling in population of the ecclesiastical parish over the coming years and it is important that we both prepare for that and that we can present St Nicholas' church as a base for Christian mission, as a venue for community events and as a celebration of our local history and heritage.

We are extremely grateful for work undertaken in maintaining and tidying the Milner Ground over the past year. Grounds staff of Junior King's School have continued to cut the grass, and both we and the village as a whole have benefited from the work of Community Payback who have (when circumstances have made it possible) continued their good work, so that the Milner Ground is tidy and attractive. We are very grateful also to those who ensure the regular cleaning of both Sturry and Westbere churches and to those who provide flowers.

We have been glad that a number of parishioners were again able on a rota basis to open the redundant church building of St Mary the Virgin, Fordwich, for prayer and visiting in daylight hours in 2020, as circumstances permitted. Because of the pandemic it was only possible to open All Saints' church, Westbere, for visitors and the local community to a limited extent in 2020. Following the NLHF project at Sturry we have often been able to open St Nicholas' church for private prayer and we hope to be able to do that more regularly in the future. It is clear that many residents and visitors would appreciate that.

Sturry churchyard and the two churchyards at Westbere are closed and the responsibility for maintaining those falls accordingly to Sturry Parish Council and Westbere Parish Council respectively. Both of these in fact sub-contract the work to others and we are grateful for the tidy appearance that they ensure. We are appreciative also of the work of a number of volunteers who maintain the churchyard at Fordwich; Community Payback have helped here too.

The ECC is keen to offer a range of worship opportunities over the course of the year that different members of the regular congregations and the wider community find helpful and spiritually fulfilling, but inevitably the pandemic in 2020 had a major impact on regular worship. Numbers attending the early morning 8.00am service at Sturry had been falling through death and infirmity, and so that service was not restarted after the first lockdown. The same applied to services at Westbere. That has made it possible for the weekly 9.30am service at Sturry to be retimed to 10.00am which has been logistically easier for some of the congregation. We continue to aim for a balance between eucharistic and non-eucharistic worship, and the traditions of both of our parent denominations are honoured; sadly, at the time of writing, we are not allowed to sing in public worship services.

The Ecumenical Church Council of Sturry and District United Church

Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council for 2020 (continued)

Once opportunities permit, we look forward again to welcoming the uniformed organisations four or five times a year, and to welcoming the boarders and staff of the Junior King's School to share in our service at Sturry once or twice in every term. The monthly pattern of services within the parish and partnership will continue to be kept under review, taking into account changes in official restrictions, attendance figures and also issues of staffing. Although we no longer run a children's group parallel with our main service at Sturry, we provide facilities for young children and their parents in the church.

In today's world it is essential that all organisations keep the effectiveness of their communications under constant review. The key elements are the United Church's website, its Facebook page, and the monthly magazine *Link-Up* which is delivered to around 600 homes in our villages, with additional free copies available at venues such as schools, shops and the Hersden Community Centre.

A major loss caused by the pandemic is that we have been obliged to pause special services and visits made by Sturry CE Primary School at Sturry church, as well as our regular involvement in collective worship at Sturry Primary and at Water Meadows Primary (ex-Hersden CP School); we look forward to those links restarting. Similarly we look forward to rebuilding the close links with the Junior King's School, in shared worship, in meeting regularly with the Headteacher and the school's Church Committee and in exploring how the school and the church can work in partnership with regard to maintaining and developing the Sturry church building.

We enjoy cordial relationships with Sturry Parish Council and are glad that Sturry Parish Council and the new Hersden Parish Council, as well as the uniformed organisations, normally share in the wreath-laying ceremonies on Remembrance Sunday. On the same date, the Annual Memorial Service, at which we remember before the Lord those who have died in the last year, is also well-appreciated by those who attend - although, sadly, we were obliged to cancel that in 2020..

Safeguarding

Sturry and District United Church has agreed to follow the safeguarding policy of the Church of England, partly because the Rector and Methodist minister served as a member of the Diocese of Canterbury's Safeguarding Management group for over twenty years. Together with the Parish Safeguarding Officers the ECC discusses safeguarding on a regular basis. The parish's website has a link to safeguarding information on its home page, including contact details within the parish and at diocesan level for anyone who has a safeguarding concern. The ECC has complied with the duty to have 'due regard' to the House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy and Practice Guidance.

The Ecumenical Church Council of Sturry and District United Church

Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council for 2020 (continued)

Ecumenical links

Sturry and District United Church plays a key role in Churches Together in Sturry and District, the other members being Broad Oak Chapel and the Roman Catholic parish of Hersden and Sturry. We work with them in the annual Christian Aid Week collections in May. We are also associate members of Christians Together in Canterbury.

Deanery Synod

In addition to the Rector and Methodist minister, two members represent the parish and partnership on the Canterbury Deanery Synod which provides an important link between the parish and the wider structures of the Church of England.

Circuit Meeting

Sturry and District United Church forms a part of the Canterbury and East Kent Circuit of The Methodist Church. The Circuit Meeting and regular meetings of the circuit ministers and the Circuit Leadership Team facilitate our collaboration in mission and ministry with other churches in the Circuit. One of our church members is a circuit steward and thus shares in meetings of the Circuit Leadership Team. In addition to her, our Anglican-Methodist partnership is represented at Circuit Meetings by the Rector and Methodist minister, a churchwarden, the treasurer and one other elected church member.

Events

During the building works in Sturry church, from late April 2019 onwards until March 2020, regular midweek events in the church building were necessarily suspended, and following on from that they had to be paused because of the pandemic. We look forward therefore to exploring how we can restart them, bearing in mind that the kitchen will be developed later in 2021. In the past a weekly Coffee Morning in Sturry church, on Wednesdays, provided a warm welcome and meeting-place for the wider community, as well as raising funds for the parish; and a monthly 'Soup on Saturday' also provided a welcome opportunity for church members and others to meet. We look forward to being able to hold occasional social and fundraising events, although there are fewer church members able to share in the hard work that fetes, fairs and the like necessarily entail. Having a range of events hosted by the parish and by the Friends of St Nicholas helps to build community and raises funds for the ongoing ministry of the church and our running costs.

Financial review

We are grateful to those church members who reviewed their giving through the church over the year, and to all who have organised and supported fundraising events.

Details of our receipts and expenditure, including our parish share by which we contribute to ministry costs not only in this parish but in the wider churches, are given in the financial accounts.

We are very grateful for those who give generously both in terms of time and of money. The parish and partnership have developed a legacies policy and encourage church members and others to make a bequest in their wills to the work of the church in this parish, but inevitably the results of that work will not be seen (we hope!) until some time into the future.

**The Ecumenical Church Council of Sturry
and District United Church**

**Joint Annual Report of the Ecumenical Church Council and of the Parochial Church Council
for 2020 (continued)**

Reserves policy

The PCC has reviewed the church's needs for reserves in line with the Operational Guidance No 43 (Charity Income Reserves) issued by the Charity Commission. The income of the Parish, as well as its financial demands, are subject to fluctuation. Maintaining two listed buildings can be costly and in order to meet the cost of major repairs and other calls upon parish funds, the PCC consider it prudent to maintain substantial reserves.

**Report approved by the Parochial Church Council and the Ecumenical Church Council on 17
September 2022 and signed on its behalf by:**

Anne Stevenson (Churchwarden)

AEM. Stevenson

The Ecumenical Church Council of Sturry and District United Church

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of the Ecumenical Church Council of Sturry and District United Church

I report on the accounts of the church for the year ended 31 December 2020 which are set out on pages 10 to 17

Respective Responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner

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

It is my responsibility to:

- Examine the accounts (under section 145 of the 2011 Act);
- To follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners (under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act); 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. 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 you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below. Independent examiner's statement

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

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
 - 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.

(Name) (Date)

Sara Endicott - Clarke

(Relevant professional qualification or body)



10.01.23

(Address)

14 NASH ROAD
MARGATE
CT9 4BT

**THE ECUMENICAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF STURRY
AND DISTRICT UNITED CHURCH**

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
for the year ended 31 December 2020**

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	Total 2020 £	Total 2019 £
Incoming Resources 2							
Voluntary Income							
From donors		21607		9294		30901	65650
Activities for generating funds		1299				1299	6725
Church activities		1876				1876	2437
Other income		2858		12777		15635	193732
Investment income		4574				4574	4867
Total Incoming Resources		32214		22071		54285	273411
Resources Expended 3							
Cost of generating funds:							
Fund-raising and publicity		1224				1224	2720
Charitable activities;							
Grants made		99				99	1270
Direct ministry		-24474				-24474	48295
Church running expenses		12110		61840		73950	207429
Administration		459				459	1342
Other		3252		1135		4387	4345
Total Resources Used		-7330		62975		55645	265401
Net incoming/ outgoing		39544		-40904		-1360	8010
Transfers		18251	-20000	1749			
Increase/decrease in value of investments					8187	8187	16952
Net Movement in Funds		57795	-20000	-39155	8187	6827	24962
Balances at 1 January 2020		-18249	26967	48191	134887	191796	166834
Balances at 31 December 2020		39546	6967	9036	143074	198623	191796

**THE ECUMENICAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF STURRY
AND DISTRICT UNITED CHURCH**

BALANCE SHEET AT 31 DECEMBER 2020

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	Total 2020 £	Total 2019 £
Fixed Asset							
Investment assets					143074	143074	134887
<hr/>							
Current Assets							
Debtors and prepayments	5						13559
Cash in hand		15				15	15
Lloyds current account		25190		9036		34226	47967
Lloyds magazine account		630				630	630
CFB deposit		12299	6967			19266	39178
Methodist Central Board Finance		1412				1412	1412
		39546	6967	9036		55549	102761
Creditors	6						-45852
<hr/>							
Net Current Assets		39546	6967	9036		55549	56909
<hr/>							
Net Assets		39546	6967	9036	143074	198623	191796
<hr/>							
Funds							
Unrestricted		39546				39546	-18249
Designated	7		6967			6967	26967
Restricted	8			9036		9036	48191
Endowment	9				143074	143074	134887
Total Funds		39546	6967	9036	143074	198623	191796

Approved by the Ecumenical Church Council on 17th September 2022 and signed on its behalf by:

Churchwarden

A.C.M. Sturmer

**THE ECUMENICAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF STURRY
AND DISTRICT UNITED CHURCH**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
for the year ended 31 December 2020**

1. Accounting Policies

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

Basis of Accounting

The accounts for the previous year were prepared on the Accrual Basis as required by the Charity Commissioners based on the level of total revenue. The Trustees are satisfied that the revenue for the current year and for the foreseeable future (a minimum of three years) will permit them to produce the accounts on a Receipts and Payments Basis. Having considered this option they have decided it is preferable to change the basis of accounting to a Receipts and Payments Basis for the current and future years.

A contributing factor to this decision concerns the significant creditors that were accrued at 31 December 2019 which have been established as not due and payable. These accounts reflect the reversal of these creditors as set out in note 4. Any debtors and creditors from the previous year that remained outstanding at 31 December 2020 have also been reversed as set out in note 4. Where debtors and creditors were settled during the current year the appropriate adjustment has been made in these accounts.

Funds

General funds represents the funds of the ECC that are not subject to any restrictions regarding their use and are available for application on the general purposes of the PCC. Funds designated for a particular purpose by the ECC are also unrestricted.

The accounts include all transactions for which the PCC is responsible in law. They do not include the accounts of church groups that owe their main affiliation to another body nor those that are informal gatherings of church members.

Incoming Resources

Voluntary income and capital resources

Collections are recognised when received on behalf of the ECC.

Planned giving receivable under covenant is recognised only when received.

Income tax recoverable on covenants or gift aid donations is recognised when received.

Grants and legacies to the ECC are accounted for when received.

Funds raised by events are accounted for gross.

Sales of magazines from the church are accounted for gross.

Resources Expended

The Diocesan Quota or Parish Share is accounted for when paid.

2. Incoming Resources

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	Total 2020 £	Total 2019 £
Incoming Resources							
From Donors							
Planned giving		20491				20491	22250
Collections		1195				1195	3714
Collections for charities		113				113	670
Income tax recovered	4	-7913				-7913	6491
Donations and legacies		7721		9294		17015	32525
		21607		9294		30901	65650
Activities for Generating Funds							
Fundraising							3400
Coffee mornings							566
Messy church							35
Magazine		1299				1299	2734
		1299				1299	6725
Receipts for Church Activities							
Fees		1876				1876	2437
Miscellaneous							
Diocesan fees		2858				2858	3095
3 rd party grants							178933
VAT recovered				11757		11757	8190
Sundry income							644
Restricted funds				1020		1020	2870
		2858		12777		15635	193732
Investment Income							
Bank interest		108				108	10
CBF funds		4166				4166	4557
Rent from land		300				300	300
		4574				4574	4867
Total Receipts		32214		22071		54285	273411

3. Resources Used

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Designate Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	Total 2020 £	Total 2019 £
Fund Raising Event Costs							
Fund raising expenses							206
Magazine		1224				1224	2514
		1244				1244	2720
Donations (Grants)							
Charitable giving		99				99	1270
Direct Ministry Expenditure							
Parish Share to Diocese of Canterbury		10000				10000	45701
Parish Share accrual reversed	4	-26179				-26179	
Methodist Circuit accrual reversed	4	-9750				-9750	
Clergy working expenses		1455				1455	2594
		-24474				-24474	48295
Church Running Expenses							
Upkeep of services		524				524	2055
Organ/piano repairs and tuning		1378				1378	674
Utilities and insurance		9848		210		10058	10513
NLHF Project				61630		61630	192704
Repairs and maintenance - to PCC		360				360	1483
		12110		61840		73950	207429
Administration							
Admin expenses		373				373	303
Independent Examiner							940
Miscellaneous		86				86	99
		459				459	1342
Other							
Other Restricted Funds				1135		1135	1250
Fees paid out		3252				3252	3095
		3252		1135		4387	4345
Total Payments		-7330		62975		55645	265401

4. Reversal of Debtors and Creditors

The change of the basis of accounting is explained in note 1. The financial impact of this change is reflected in note 2 on Incoming Resources by the reversal of the debtor for Income Tax Recovered of £7913. Also in note 3 on Resources Used by the reversal of the creditors for Parish Share and the Methodist Circuit of £26179 and £9750 respectively.

5. Debtors

	2020	2019
	£	£
Income Tax recoverable	0	13059
Sundry debtors	0	500
	<u>0</u>	<u>13559</u>

The nil amount for debtors in 2020 reflects the change to Receipts and Payments Basis of accounting as described in note 1.

6. Creditors

Diocese of Canterbury – Parish Share	0	26179
Methodist Circuit	0	9750
Sundry creditors	0	9923
	<u>0</u>	<u>45852</u>

The nil amount for creditors in 2020 reflects the change to Receipts and Payments Basis of accounting as described in note 1.

7. Movements on Designated Funds

	Balance 1.1.20 £	Monies In £	Monies Out £	Balance 31.12.20 £
Church Development Fund	26967		20000	6797

8. Movements on Restricted Funds

Heating Fund	840		210	630
NLHF Project	40274	19607	61630	-1749
NLHF Project transfer		1749		1749
Organ Fund	380			380
Rector's Fund (W H Bird)	683			683
Sturry Church Fund	470			470
Wedding Deposits	3160	1020	1135	3045
Westbere Fabric Fund	2384	1444		3828
	<u>48191</u>	<u>23820</u>	<u>62975</u>	<u>9036</u>

9. Movement on Endowment Funds

	Balance 1.1.20 £	Increase in value £	Balance 31.12.20 £
Mission Room Recoupment Order 1974	16439	1130	17569
Capital Repayment – Fixed Interest Securities	32507	1147	33654
Investment Income Fund Shares	85941	5910	91851
	<hr/> 134887	8187	<hr/> 143074