



The Parish of St James and St Basil  
Fenham

# Annual Meetings 2024

## & Reports of our parish life in 2023



[www.jamesbasilfenham.org.uk](http://www.jamesbasilfenham.org.uk)

# **Welcome to the Annual Report for 2023 &**

## **Annual Parochial Church meetings 2024**

**The purpose of this document is to give details of all necessary reports and accounts and to provide an overview of the life of the parish in 2023. This booklet also includes the agendas and various papers for the annual meetings to be held on the 17<sup>th</sup> March 2024 as part of the main 10am service.**

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## **Introduction & Vicar's Report**

Following a personally turbulent 2022, I began 2023 once again with time 'off sick' as I finally made it to the top of the list for my COVID delayed eye surgery. The Parish was diligently cared for by Ryan, Nicky, Margaret and Tony.

It was also the year I finally reached 'middle age' and turned 40(!), and in true mid-life crisis mode, I took delivery of a 'new to me' motorbike to replace my aging old Moto-Guzzi and went on a pilgrimage to the grave of James and Basil Knott in Ypres and onward to the shrine of St James in Santiago de Compostela.

The Revd Ryan McKeon and I travelled overseas to the Diocese of Sodor and Man to lead a retreat day in May. There we not only reconnected with friends from my former parish, but we discovered again how large a footprint Js & Bs has had through the years as we encountered people who were taught to ring bells in the tower here in Fenham, and the Chancellor and Vicar General (also the Legislator to the Attorney General on the Isle of Man), who was prepared for confirmation within our own vestry! I formed new links with colleagues in the Diocese of More in Norway as part of a research project in church growth and development with the Church of Norway, and following my visit there in August, we were pleased to welcome a group here to Fenham before our onward trip to the Diocese of Southwark in October.

The year was a year of change and transition for a number of reasons... not just my age. Our APCM saw a change in Churchwarden as Nicky Walter stepped down following her move out to the coast. Nicky helped to guide the parish through final years of my predecessor, an interregnum, a global pandemic and more. I am thankful to have had such a good partner in life here in the ups and downs of life. Margaret Cutting kindly agreed to serve another year in order to help the transition to a new 'team'. Tim and Jeanette continued for another year as Treasurer and PCC Secretary respectively, giving a further season of continuity in a changing context.

We anticipated 2023 being a challenging year, and it was. The turbulence and war in Europe (and from the autumn, also in Israel) continued to challenge our understanding of humanity, and perhaps securing our resolve to be a people of hope, even though it seemed that there was little we could do.

The financial markets, and in particular utility costs, have had a significant impact on our ability be as creative - not to mention, warm – as might have liked, and as a Church Council, we're thankful for those who have helped out financially, and also those who have stuck with us despite freezing temperatures.

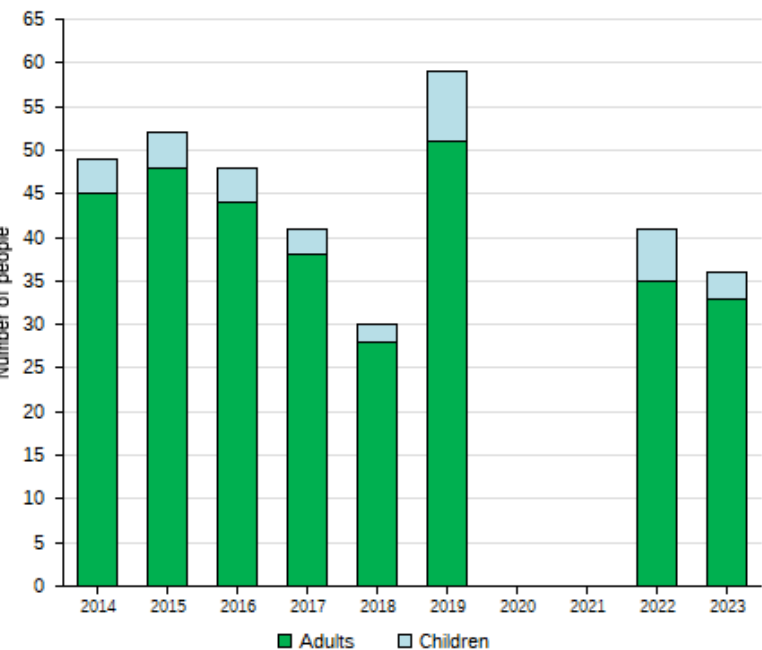
As always, these pages tell a little more of the events of the year and the business of the parish: the challenges and the successes and perhaps also woven in the reports, there is something of our relationships, hopes and dreams too – these are the jewels and the treasure\* that continues to shine even if they sometimes seem lost, or hidden from sight.

James ~ 7<sup>th</sup> March 2024 Commemoration Billfrith – Jeweller of the Lindisfarne Gospels  
\* Bilfrith was a hermit of Lindisfarne and a skilled worker in jewels and precious metals. When the pages of the Lindisfarne Gospels had been written and painted they were bound in leather by Bishop Aethelweald, who then asked Billfrith to make a pattern of jewels embedded in the outer cover of the book. It must have been rather sumptuous, because at the Reformation the cover with its jewels disappeared. Who got it, we wonder? Although we know little in detail about Bilfrith, his story remind us of the great numbers of hermits in the history of the Church, and of their importance in keeping alive the ideals of austerity, devoted prayer and spiritual warfare

**A snapshot of attendance and membership**

Parish Electoral Roll = 78 (2022 = 79)

1. Usual Sunday Attendance, (2014-2023)



The Usual Sunday Attendance figure in 2023 included those who attended our 10am Services. (Information was not collated to include the attendance at the African Chaplaincy Services or Evening Prayer as it was in 2022). This collation has restarted from January 2024)  
In 2023 our 10am services continued to be streamed online and average numbers of those joining in were between 6-12.

**Easter Day 2023**

- 2022 = Attendance in the Parish – 55 (not including the African Chaplaincy)
- 2022 = Attendance in the Parish - 111
- 2021 = Attendance in the Parish - 114
- 2020 = Attendance in the Parish – service held online – no data available

## Christmas 2023 (including all Christmas Eve and Christmas Day services)

Attendance in the Parish 2023 – 390

Attendance in the Parish 2022 – 297

Attendance in the Parish 2021 – 178\*

Attendance in the Parish 2020 – 174\*

Attendance across the Parish 2019 – 328.

\* numbers restricted at some services due to COVID 19 regulations.

**October Count** Nationally the Church of England uses the month of October as a sample month to calculate average attendance at all church services per week. This figure excludes ‘non average’ attendance, for example if Harvest Festival is held in October. This figure does include the African Chaplaincy

2019 = 74

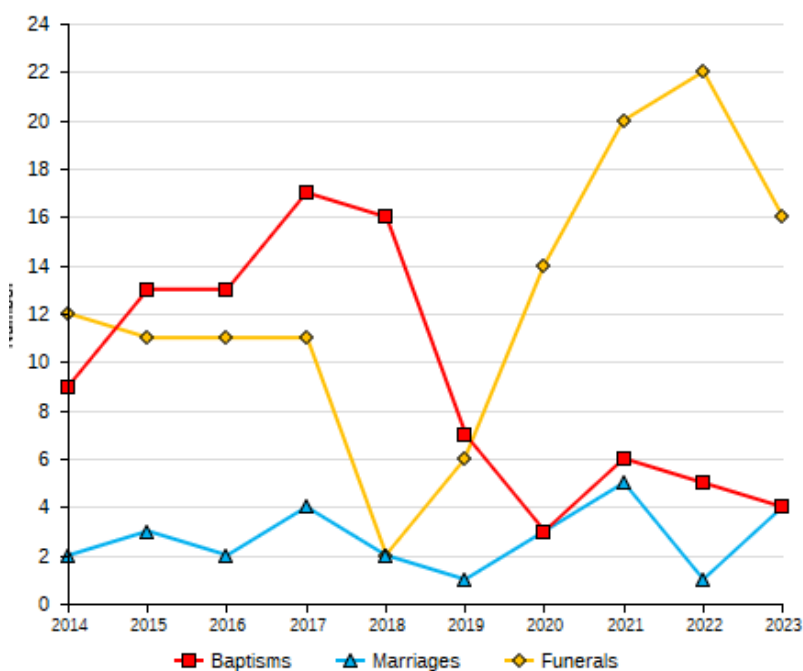
2020 = 44

2021 = 39

2022 = 42

2023

Baptisms, marriages and funerals, (2014-2023)



**In 2023 4 weddings, 16 funerals and 4 baptisms were held in the Parish.**

These figures include Funeral services held at the Crematorium, but not those held in other burial grounds or other churches.

### Administration, publicity and website.

In 2023 parish administration was completed by the Vicar and Churchwardens, assisted by Jeanette Welsh (as PCC Secretary).

Administration in the parish is a significant task and we remain thankful to those who help out with small jobs to share the load around a little.

Our online presence continues as our virtual ‘shop window’ to both the local community and further afield. In 2023, our webpage was accessed 23,535 times by 8,299 unique users, this is broadly the same as in 2022. Our website is due for a renewal and we hope to launch a new site in the spring of 2024.

Our Facebook community ended the year with over 900 people ‘following’ us, this represents a significant growth on the 2022 figures.



In the late summer of 2022, the parish began using a new data management tool *iKnowChurch* to help with diary bookings and events and to start bringing our various mailing lists together. This tool is also the Church of England's preferred software for dealing with administration relating to Baptisms, Funerals and Weddings (following the introduction of the Marriage and Civil Partnership Act 2022). We will also start using *iKnowChurch* for e-ticketing and our public calendars once a new website is live.

### **The African Chaplaincy From The Revd Osaro Omobude**

The group gathered every Sunday at 2 pm in the parish for Liturgical service and fellowship. The attendees comprise of Africans and friends of Africans from all age groups, ranging from less than a year old to 85 years old, with an average attendance of 12 people per Sunday. The service and fellowship attract people from both near and far, including regular attendees from Hebburn near Jarrow and Billington near Morpeth.

In January 2023, the group was fortunate to receive a grant of £2600 from the “Church Institute Charity of Newcastle Diocese”. The grant was meant to provide musical activities and promote well-being during such activities.

The group was able to organize a day trip to Holy Island in Northumberland on Easter Monday, 2023. It was a day of Easter celebration with music and food.

In the summer of 2023 (July), the group organized a musical event with an African flavour in the church building. Everyone was welcome, and around 50 people attended the event.

The last Sunday before Christmas 2023 was a Christmas carols event with celebration. However, on the 7th of January 2024, due to the cold weather and the condition of the church building, the group decided to put the service of 2 pm on hold until the spring of 2024. Instead, they decided to join the 10 am Eucharist.

### **Café & Fenham Markets from Vicky Pitt**

In April 2023, we reopened the cafe after the Easter break with a new leadership and bit of a revamp. We went back to ‘The Cafe’, revised costs and pricing structures, added some new touches like name labels and menu boards.

The cafe operates from 10am to 1pm on Thursdays, the Jellyfish & Bees music group operates from 9.30am to 10.30am with Paige, we have on average 10 children a week plus parents and sometimes up to 15 or more. The group is a suggested donation

system and unfortunately rarely covers its cost, however everyone does stay and uses the cafe facilities, so we have increased revenue when the music group is on. We get a flurry of customers after the fitness group and art classes which take place in the hall, and it is a regular meet up for many people in the community. The cafe still relies heavily on volunteers to run, we now operate with 3 people on the cafe serving and an additional person to operate the payments as much as possible to keep up with demand.

We reintroduced soup in October with the purchase of a new heated cabinet, and we also added a 'posh' coffee machine enabling us to serve cappuccinos and lattes at the press of a button. We felt it important that moving to the posh coffees was easy and that everyone could do it. Both the soup and posh coffees has increased profit and the weekly turnover is up year on year.

We are set to lose a few volunteer hours this coming year, so we are on the lookout for more help. The cafe closes for 2 weeks at Christmas and Easter and we have decided to close for the month of August this year as it is very quiet historically and volunteers are thin on the ground due to school holidays, children and grandchildren. Concerts refreshments prove profitable on a donation basis and again are run by volunteers. We are looking to streamline the offering of refreshments at events and concerts to ensure profitability and professionalism at all times.

Markets made a comeback post covid with a bang in 2023 with 3 spring/summer markets plus a Christmas offering. We started with about 6/8 stalls and now we have waiting lists to get a space. We run these from inside the church and weather permitting stall holders choose to be inside or outside. We run the cafe from 10 till 3 on these days and they are very profitable for us. Along with the revenue generated from stall holders it has been a huge success. Running these markets in house means the church gets all monies and none is lost to an organiser. In 2024 we have 6 markets booked in with commitments from all our regular stall holders. We are also having a Christmas market which again is already fully booked by stall holders. In summary the cafe/events are going from strength to strength and is a good source of regular income. The question is where / what next?

### **Children and Young People**

Whilst we regularly have children and young people present in church, these are often small in number and in the absence of a regular group of people to prepare and lead anything specifically for this age group, the number attending is often very low. This is a priority area to address and the joining together of our 10am Congregation and the

African Congregation might provide an opportunity to seek to re-establish something more intentional in 2024.

Our 'special' services (for example, Harvest & Christmas), saw large numbers of family groups attending, perhaps suggesting a desire by families to keep some contact with us, even if they cannot be here very often.

'Jellyfish and Bees @ Js & Bs' (our early years, weekly music session) ran throughout the year. As children grew older, numbers tailed off towards the summer, but we were pleased to welcome increasing number of new babies and toddlers in the autumn.

### **Deanery Synod Report**

Rachel Gill and Margaret Green continue to represent the parish on the Newcastle West Deanery Synod following their re-election at the last APCM.

The Deanery Synod resolved to reduce the number of meetings from four per year, to three – one per academic term. As has been custom, it continues to meet in a different venue each time. Our meetings begin with business and conclude with a short 15 minutes service of compline at 8:30pm – with 'lights – out' at 9pm.

The Focus for the 2023 meetings was continued discussion regarding the Deanery Development Plan. This process is reviewing the current pattern of ministry across the diocese and the Plan produced will be used to inform future appointments and pastoral reorganisation. Whilst it will always be something of a working document, it highlight (and perhaps also celebrated) our great diversity as a deanery and collection of parishes.

The Vicar continues to work as Area Dean, supporting parishes in vacancy or moments of need as requested and working alongside the Bishop and Archdeacon in a 'lite-touch' oversight of the churches in the area.

### **Electoral Roll** *From Margaret Green, Electoral Roll Officer.*

Every 6 years the Electoral Roll is renewed & the next renewal will take place in 2025. All members names will be removed from the Roll and everyone who wishes to be on the new one has to complete an application form. New forms will be available in church for several weeks before the 2025 APCM which will probably be in the March. There are instructions on the forms as to how members not resident in the Parish should complete the forms if they have been unable to attend worship in the preceding 6 months.

This year we welcome 4 new members, Terry Boyle, Alex Bell, Malcolm Macourt & Helen Wilson. As they have enrolled as members by 3 March, 2 full weeks before the APCM on 17 March, they will be able to vote at the APCM. Any one else eligible to be



on the Roll can still join after this date but they cannot vote until the 2025 APCM. Some members are no longer able to attend because of distance & have resigned from the Roll. We thank Ian Gumm for his service as church warden some years ago & Nicki Walters for her long membership & service up until recently as church warden. We remember with love those who have died, Doreen Wardropper & June Brogan. With the loss of these members & the 4 new ones we now have 78 members on the Electoral Roll.

### **Engagement with Schools**

A shared role for the Vicar in partnership with Dame Allan's Schools continued in 2023. In the Summer Term the Vicar and Curate ran The Archbishop of York's Young Leadership Programme in the Junior School as an after school club for a group 8 year students, and they continued to conduct Collective Worship when requested and Officiate at the half termly Evensong held in church on the penultimate Friday of each term.

We welcomed school curriculum visits from Dame Allan's Junior School, Wingrove Primary School and we visited the senior school to support their Religious Studies Curriculum.

At the end of the Summer term, the Vicar resigned from the Governing Body of Thomas Walling Primary Academy in Blakelaw (part of the Laidlaw School's Trust) after four years on the board. He continued as a Director of the Pele Academy Trusts, whose schools serve the outer west of the city, Ponteland and it's surrounding villages, and following an expansion at the very end of the year, John Spence Community High in North Shields and The Duchess's Community High School in Alnwick.

### **Fabric**

No significant works were undertaken in 2023. Some minor repairs and maintenance were carried out.

### **Church**

As in previous years, routine works were carried throughout the year including, servicing of the Clock, the heating system and the organ was tuned towards the end of the year by Woods of Huddersfield.

Following the success of 'Tidy-up Tuesdays' in the summer of 2022, in the summer of 2023, our 'Working Wednesdays, gave a time to catch up on some housekeeping, and our volunteers assisted with clearing, cleaning and polishing!

Following the death of our previous consulting architect, Mr Ian Lucas, in 2022, the PCC were pleased to appoint Ms Kal Gill-Faci of the Gately/SmithersPurslow partnership as our new architect. Kal works from her office in Manchester, but the company has

surveyors based in Team Valley. Kal visited Fenham in the early summer to inspect the site and catch up with our recent thoughts on development.

### **Fabric – Hall (including hall users)**

Routine servicing continued in 2023. Our regular users continued to meet and activities included an after school Children's Drama Group, Zumba classes, daytime exercise groups and yoga, an art group for children who are homeschooled, the local History Society, English and Maths Tuition, early morning weekend yoga and our resident Scout Group the 82<sup>nd</sup> Newcastle.

Our two studio spaces (the Upper Room and the Basement) continue to be home to two local businesses. The basement is occupied by Derek Farrell and is home to his joinery workshop. Derek is much in demand locally, but offers his workshop to the community on a Saturday morning and is often around to offer a loan of tools or tips, advice and guidance. Derek has supported the parish through his offer of time and labour to help carry out some routine maintenance and work. Towards the end of 2023, Derek extended his use of the space by creating a 'mini workshop' in the Old Kitchen in the hall that allowed a second space for smaller projects to be completed.

The Upper Room remained the home of Petals & Power, a local floristry and art studio run by Vicky Foreshaw. Vicky also runs several workshops and groups throughout the week in her studio and offers some of her time to the parish through her talent and time.

The redevelopment of the Parish Hall– initially conceived pre COVID-19, but on hold since – should remain a priority. However, a changing financial context and community use may well mean that in 2024, the Parish will revisit this project anew.

### **Finance**

The Parish continues to pay its way – though we run on ever increasingly narrow margins. Our parish share offer was reduced by the PCC in 2023 to reflect the anticipated challenges that we were facing with utility costs towards the end of the year. The Parish Share is a contribution to the provision of clergy across the diocese – in our parish in 2023, the provision of clergy was 'subsidised' by over £30,000 from contributions from other parishes and the national church. This is the only cost that is covered by the 'Church of England'; all other expenses must be found locally within the parish. Js & Bs is often perceived to be a 'wealthy' parish due to our relatively high cash turnover – in reality we have no real investments, endowments or historic assets like many of our neighbouring parishes. We spend a lot, because we have a lot going on here, and our practice continues to be one balancing income generating activity with free services and activities in order that finance might not be a barrier to people joining

in. Our accounts at the end of 2023 show the lowest end of year balance for many years and reflect the challenging times that we're in.

### **Gardens**

In 2023 The Church Gardens continued to be a valuable asset shared with the community. Our paid gardener, Penny Hunter continued to work with volunteers to manage the gardens throughout the year. It was with some sadness that we received news of one of Penny's co-workers, Emma, who was involved in a serious accident resulting in a brain injury; by the end of the year Emma was still recovering, through progress has been slow – we look forward to seeing her back around sometime in 2024.

Another one of regular volunteers – Kim Cargill – started making preparations to leave us at the year end as she continued to explore a new life as part of the Order of The Holy Paraclete in Whitby.

By the end of the year, we finally took delivery of two new memorial benches to commemorate two significant members of our congregation. The families of Margaret Johnson and Eunice Davidson both donated benches in their memory to mark their life and work in the parish over many years.

### **Godly Play**

We continue to hold a large stock of Godly Play resources and these continue to be used on occasional school visits, and also on some occasion during our church services. With nobody here to run regular sessions, these paused in the late spring of 2022 and did not restart throughout 2023.

### **Hospitality**

As always, the parish mission continues to place a high priority on its mission to create space for all whether through services, events, concerts or simply over coffee and food. Of note, was an increase in our shared lunches after services. During the spring and summer and part of the autumn we aimed to have a lunch together once a month. These times included shared lunches in church on a Sunday Morning, gatherings in the local pub after Sunday Communion for lunch together, a picnic in the Vicarage Garden or a fish and chips delivered in perfect time as the final hymn note sounded – creating opportunity just be together as we share a little more of our lives together.

### **Jazz @ Js & Bs** *from Tony Roberts*

We put on five concerts in 2023 during the summer and although the weather was not very kind we managed to have two in the garden. They were return visits by pianist

Dean Stockdale and vocalist Lindsay Hannon. Concerts inside the church were with American trumpet player and singer Pete Tanton, drummer Abbie Finn and a great concert with Jan Spencelayh vocalist from Hartlepool.

### **Liturgy & Worship**

Morning and evening prayer and Midweek Eucharist from *The Revd Ryan McKeon*

The act of meeting together to pray morning and evening prayer was reestablished when the curate first turned up, the timings have changed recently to reflect the changing patterns. Most of the time it is just the parish clergy who meet to pray but everyone is welcome to attend if they are around or would value praying as a group. People still come in to the church to light candles and leave notes for things they would like prayer for. These are prayed at the next service of Morning or evening prayer.

The midweek Eucharist was well attended at first, attaching it own group of people who valued the early morning shorter service or for whom due to commitment Sunday attendance was unlikely. Of late, the service has been poorly attended. And so, a conversation will need to be had regarding times that are appropriate for people midweek and whether a change is needed.

Sunday Services and Occasional Offices from *The Revd James McGowan*

We started the year continuing with our practice of producing individual service booklets for each week. However, mindful of our need to be good stewards of our resources, we moved back to seasonal booklets with individual service sheets produced for special events and services.

Our 10am Sunday services continued to be streamed online. Though we changed platforms away from Vimeo to YouTube. Vimeo was reliable, but it was also expensive and whilst this had been sponsored in recent years, as we returned to life much closer to our pre-pandemic pattern, the use of the service continued to reduce. We retained the option of being able to stream to families on private pages if requested.

Services continued to accompanied by a mix of the St James Consort, visiting organists and some of the choir who call Js & Bs their home. By the summer it was felt that there was enough interest to re-form a Sunday Morning 'house' choir that would help lead our service once a month. This continued to meet through the autumn term and as the year ended it was hoped that this might become a much more familiar feature of our monthly pattern of services.

### **Music** *From Simon Davies Fidler*

This year the organ duties on Sunday mornings have continued to be split between Robin and Paul, with singing from the St James' Consort on the first Sunday of the month. In the latter part of the year an 'in-house' choir (yet to be named) began singing on the third Sunday of month and formed the core of a choir for our Christmas Eve service. In January Simon stepped down from his role as Director of Music and we are grateful to Paul for taking over the choir.

The church continues to be the base for several choirs and music groups. J's & B's Singers continues to grow, now with around 80 singers who perform in our three concerts a year. This year's Christmas concert was a particular highlight with a programme of music for choir and brass ensemble which was very well received by a large audience. It was gratifying to note that our Christmas events were back to pre-Covid levels of audience numbers.

Jellyfish & Bees, our Thursday morning children's singing group continues to be a popular service for local families.

Voices of Hope, Fenham Ensemble and The Morning Chorus continue to use the church or hall, for rehearsals and concerts.

Newcastle Phoenix Choir continues to meet on Friday afternoons in the church/hall. During the year they performed several times - alongside The Morning Chorus in concert, in a service of Remembrance at Brunswick Methodist Church and in the homelessness awareness service at J's & B's. At the moment the choir is preparing for a concert in Hexham, in which it will perform alongside other local choirs. More than 50 singers have attended choir, with around 30 coming regularly.

The church continues to be a popular choice for musicians looking to perform their music. We welcomed many of our regular groups back and also enjoyed debut visits from Vox Populi and Steve Jinski amongst others.

### **Equipment and Resources** In 2023 some new items included,

- 1) a replacement 'hot tap' (providing boiling water) in the church kitchen
- 2) portable lighting in some parts of the church
- 3) 6 electric patio heaters to be used in church
- 4) a used grand piano for the church hall

## Property (Vicarage & Auburn Gardens)

### **The Vicarage**

*As the official 'Benefice Property', maintenance of the Vicarage remains the responsibility of the Diocese, day to day running costs are met by the Vicarage Household.*

As reported for a fifth consecutive year, electrical problems persist in the house, with fuses tripping and supply failures regularly occurring. (This has been apparent during a number of PCC meetings when the electric supply in the dining room has 'sparked' and caused burn marks on the carpet!).

Attempted repairs to the guttering were only partially successful and there is still a leak in at the side of the house causing damp and moss to build up.

The Vicarage is a large, listed (Grade 2) building that proves to be very difficult and expensive to heat. The significant rise in gas markets towards the end of the year saw gas bills in excess of £500 per month during the winter – this provided a limited number of hours of heat each day and often to a maximum just 16 degrees. This is noted for the record as this extra burden not faced by some clergy households in more modern or efficient vicarages in effect meant a reduction in stipend for the incumbent here, (all parish clergy in the diocese receive the same 'package in terms of payment, pension and the provision of an official house).

In the spring of 2023, the diocese funded extra heating controls to allow most rooms to be heated independently. This was a short term fix to manage heating costs as parts of the house were closed off and consequently began suffering with a lack of heat and ventilation. Secondary Glazing was installed in three ground floor rooms in the April 2023 (the Study, main living room and Dining Room), and also in the main bedroom in September 2023. As the year ended these changes did appear to be having a positive impact. It is hoped that in 2024 some further rooms will receive secondary glazing. By the year end work had begun to replace the main entrance gate (some five years after it had been intended).

On a more positive note, the arrival of Chickens in the Vicarage Garden in April added life to a redundant and unused 'hidden space' which benefited the Church Café through provision of organic, low 'food miles' eggs when production allowed, (and a lunch for the Fenham Fox towards the end of the year!).

*The house is larger than most in the diocese and fails to meet the recommended standards for clergy housing as it does not offer accessible entrance routes, nor a separately accessed office space. The house is due for its 5 yearly inspection in 2024.*



### **32 Auburn Gardens**

The house is owned by the PCC on Auburn Gardens and under the terms of a trust deed, retains its designation as housing for an Assistant Curate if one is appointed to the Parish.

The works to the first floor (started at the very end of 2022) were largely completed by the spring and Ryan McKeon (curate) moved into the property in March. The work included changes to the first floor layout to create a 'family bathroom' rather than a separate WC and very small bathroom. A window was enlarged and replaced at the back of the house to create a third 'small' double bedroom rather than the former layout of two doubles and a single – the space being taken from a very large landing area. Minor repairs to the chimney stack were also carried out to try and stop the ingress of water into the front bedroom. The works were financed by a loan from the Diocese repaid in monthly payments by a reduction in rental income for the duration of Ryan's curacy.

The house is likely to require a new kitchen before a tenant can take possession if the parish will realize a full market income at the end of Ryan's tenure.

### **Safeguarding and Health and Safety**

Ensuring our buildings and communities are as safe as they can be is of upmost importance

#### *Health and Safety*

In line with our insurance requirements and with national Church policy, we continue to review risk assessments for activities and events.

#### *Safeguarding - from Margaret Green, Parish Safeguarding Officer*

In the parish safeguarding handbook the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Revd Justin Welby says safeguarding is at the heart of the Christian faith & it is the action the church takes to promote a safer culture in all our churches. To achieve this the welfare of children, young people & adults will be promoted by working to prevent abuse from occurring, responding well to those who have been abused & also identify & give support where a person may present a risk to others & take steps to mitigate such risks. By safe recruitment for people working or volunteering with children & adults it is hoped to reduce this risk & case histories shown on the training courses on this subject are useful.

Safe guarding Policies & procedures for the Anglican Church are outlined nationally by the House of Bishops & can be seen in the Parish Safeguarding Handbook, a copy of which is displayed on the church notice board . Carol Butler is the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor & she or members of her team are constantly in touch with any new issues & instructions. Any serious concerns are reported to her. Safeguarding is

always on the agenda of PCC meetings & policies agreed upon by the PCC are reviewed as necessary

All members of the PCC, as trustees of the church, & anyone in close contact with children, young people & vulnerable adults, are subject to DBS checks, ( the Disclosure & Baring Service ) every 5 years & those checked in this way have to attend training courses, on line initially & then in groups, either face to face or on Zoom thereafter. Information about safeguarding & useful numbers can be seen on the churchh notice board & website, - jamesbasilfenham.org. uk. & my name as Safeguarding Officer is on the Sunday pew sheet.

### **Scouts – 82<sup>nd</sup> Newcastle From Carol Preston, Group Scout Leader**

As always, we have had a busy year busy year for the Scout group, our numbers continue to be healthy and there is always a waiting list for young people to join Beavers and start their Scouting journey with us. In September we were joined by Squirrels, the youngest and newest section in Scouting aged 4 to 6 years old. We were very fortunate when we put the call out for leaders for the section to get 3 people come forward to take on the role which was shortly after enhanced with another adult. It is a delight to have the Squirrels and their leaders join our Scouting family, the section is proving popular with a waiting list to join.

In the summer we had our annual Group Camp at Moor House Adventure Centre near Durham. It was a busy camp with everyone having a fab time. It is always so lovely having young people spending the weekend together, enjoying the activities, Scouts cooking for themselves and of course coming together for Camp fire. In October we had hoped to repeat the Expedition camp for Scouts at Dilston near Corbridge to complete their Expedition Challenge, unfortunately this was cancelled due to the camping being water logged and has been rescheduled for this coming April.

The commitment of the leaders and young leaders to support the Beavers, Cubs and Scouts is second to none. Our Scout leaders are working hard to offer a fantastic programme to the Scouts but we still need some additional support, so as always the plea is if you know of anyone that may be interested let me know. Kate & Liam have now achieved and been awarded their Wood badges making them fully trained Scout leaders, a sign of their ongoing commitment to Scouting and the young people.

In November the Beavers took part in the annual Beaver Collage Competition in memory f our former Beaver Leader and Group Scout Leader, Pauline Armstrong, and I'm delighted to say our Beavers won. Pauline's daughter Becky is one of our Squirrel leaders now and Pauline would be so delighted that the family's connection to the group has continued.

As always, we are incredibly grateful for the continued support of the church with our group, we love being part of the community, thank you.

### **Study Groups/personal reflection & prayer** *From The Revd Ryan McKeon*

The bible study fellowship was introduced late last year and has been well attended. We meet together over a meal and share in conversation and joy before studying together. we have switched between studying themes, and studying books of the bible. We have looked at the theme of Fellowship, the book of Isaiah, and studied the sacraments, the word, and why we engage in mission and evangelism. This fellowship has met together bi-weekly at the curate's house. There is always space for more people, and depending on volunteers and space to meet, growth for other groups to spring up is possible.

The Church studies meet usually in advent and lent, the theme or books studied usually relate to the theme of the liturgical season; Advent, we looked at the prophecy of Isaiah related to the coming messiah, and in lent we have looked at those typical Lenten disciplines of prayer, fasting, abstinence, and almsgiving. These have been added to this report as the latest lent study has been following the pattern of the bible reading fellowship, albeit weekly rather than bi-weekly. This change was introduced because meeting in church were poorly attended. Because of this the most recent lent study has been well attended and warm!

### **Annual Meeting of Parishioners**

*In accordance with the Churchwardens Measure 2001 a meeting of the parishioners of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Fenham: St James and St Basil, will be held for the purpose of appointing 2 churchwardens of the parish.*

*The following persons are entitled to attend the meeting and vote:*

- (a) persons whose names are entered on the church electoral roll of the parish; and*
- (b) persons resident in the parish whose names are entered on a register of local government electors by reason of such residence.*

*To be appointed churchwarden a person must be baptized and;*

- (a) entered on the church electoral roll of the parish;*
- (c) an actual communicant;*
- (d) 21 years of age or upwards;*
- (e) not disqualified as outlined in section 2 of the Churchwardens Measure (2001).*

### **Agenda**

**1) Minutes of the last meeting** *Appendix 1*

**2) Election of Churchwardens**

## Annual Parochial Church Meeting Church Representation Rules 2021

### Agenda

- 1) Apologies
- 2) Minutes of the last meeting *Appendix 2*
- 3) Matters arising
- 4) Election of
  - a. Diocesan Synod representatives (2 needed)
  - b. Members of the Parochial Church Council (PCC)
  - c. Sidespeople / Welcomers *under the new rules, these positions are to be filled at the first meeting of the PCC in accordance with section 2(2)(f) of the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956.*
- 5) Appointment of Auditor
- 6) Report on the proceedings of the Church Council  
*this document to be taken as such a report*
- 7) Treasurer's Report *Accounts attached in appendix 3*
  - a. Examination of audited accounts
  - b. Statement of funds & property *no verbal report given. Church Log books and accounts will be available and opportunity for question given.*
- 8) Fabric Report *A brief summary will be given. Further details to specific buildings will be given in this document. Opportunity for question or comment will be given.*
- 9) Chairman's Report *to be presented as a review of the year during the service*
- 10) Any Other Business – *To be notified at the start of the meeting*

## **Appendix 1. Annual General Meeting of Parishioners 2023 (Vestry meeting)**

### **Minutes**

#### **Election of Churchwardens**

The parish of Fenham, St James and St Basil has two (2) Churchwardens.

- 1) the minutes of the 2020 meeting were received and approved.
- 2) Two nominations were received for Mr Antony (Tony) Roberts and Mrs Margaret Cutting.

All were duly elected by unanimous agreement.

## **Appendix 2**

**The Parish of St James & St Basil, Fenham**

**The Annual Parochial Church Meeting (AGM)**

**Sunday 26th March 2023**

**During 10am Service in Church**

**Minutes of Meeting**

#### **Present & Apologies**

**Present:** There were 25 members of the Electoral Roll present (see attached signatory list) including Revd James McGowan (Chair)

**Apologies:** Bonnie Brinn, David Welch

#### **Annual General Meeting of Parishioners (Vestry Meeting)**

Revd J. McGowan opened the meeting in accordance with the Churchwardens Measure 2001

#### **1. Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting of Parishioners (Vestry Meeting) held on 10th April 2022**

The minutes were received as true and correct with no amendments

Proposed by: Rachel Gill

Seconded by: Lesley Crawford

**All in attendance agreed & the minutes were duly signed by Revd J. McGowan**

#### **Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising

#### **2. Election of Churchwardens**

There were two nominations received

- Mrs Margaret Cutting
- Mr Anthony Charles Roberts

There being no other nominations both nominations were:

Proposed by: Tim Bradbury

Seconded by: Joanne Ayre

**All in attendance agreed & therefore both nominations were duly elected.**

### **3. Annual Parochial Church Meeting**

Revd J. McGowan opened the APCM in accordance with the Church Representation rules of 2021 & advised that there would not be any spoken/verbal presentation of reports as they were all contained within the APCM printed booklet (see attached)

#### **Minutes of the previous APCM held on 10th April 2022**

The minutes were received as true and correct with no amendments

Proposed by: Joo Li Ng

Seconded by: Margaret Reid

**The minutes were agreed by all & duly signed by Revd J. McGowan**

#### **Matters Arising**

There were no Matters Arising

1

### **4. Election of:**

#### **a) Deanery Synod Representatives (2 required)**

There were two nominations:

- Rachel Gill
- Margaret Green

**Agreed by all**

#### **b) Members of the Parochial Church Council (PCC)**

There were three nominations:

- Marjorie Rochester
- Jeanette Welch
- Sarah Williamson

**Agreed by all**

#### **c) Sidespersons/Welcomers**

Under the new rules, these positions are to be filled at the first meeting of the PCC in accordance with the Church Representation Rules 2021 M6(6)

### **5. Appointment of Examiner of Accounts**



Jane Makepeace examined 2022 accounts and has agreed to stand again as Independent Examiner of Accounts for 2023.

**This position was unanimously agreed by all**

## **6. Report on the proceedings of the Church Council**

These reports were received in the form of a booklet which had been printed and distributed to members of the Electoral Roll in advance of the APCM and this booklet to be taken as such a report (see attached).

Revd J. McGowan also advised the Reports on:

- **Church Bells** Report had only recently been received & therefore will be shared & attached separately.
- **African Worship** Report has NOT yet been received by Revd Osaro Omobude

All were invited to ask any questions. There were no comments or questions

## **7. Treasurer's Finance Report & Accounts (Jan-Dec 2022)**

These are reported in the booklet (attached) which were discussed and accepted by the PCC at a previous PCC meeting & were then independently examined by Jane Makepeace and the completed & signed report of the accounts is in the booklet (attached). These will also be available online (after the service today).

Tim Bradbury, Treasurer gave an update/overview of Finances:

- Major expenditure on Trees in Church Gardens of £3,000
- Gas bill for both Church & Hall combined was in excess of £2,000 per month
- Cash in hand at the beginning of 2023 has fallen by £5,000
- Income from Cafe & Concerts will hopefully increase as the year goes on

Gift aid is yet to be reclaimed which always helps the financial position a little

Also advised the picture/forecast is not entirely rosy, but not to panic just yet.

Appealed for anyone who doesn't give regularly currently, or who gives but doesn't gift aid & is able to do so, or is able to increase what they give, fully appreciating financial times are hard for everyone, then any increase in giving to the Church would be gratefully received.

e always the leaner. 2

## **7b. Statement of Funds & Property**

Revd J McGowan advised the Church Log Books, Terrier & Inventory and accounts were available to view & all were invited to ask any questions or comment on Church assets/property.

There were no questions or comments.

## **8. Fabric Report**

There is a report included in the booklet (see attached) for the Church & Hall. The Quinquennial Inspection/report 3years ago identified the Flagpole on the Church Tower was an item of significant risk and is now in a condition where it needs to be removed. This was initially going to be a hugely expensive project involving a Building Contractor & scaffolding. However after conducting a skills analysis it was discovered that a Tree Surgeon can undertake the project much cheaper than a Building Contractor, therefore the Flagpole will be removed in the coming weeks.

There were no questions or comments.

## **9. Chairman's Report**

This is in the form of the Introduction & Vicars Report which is also included in the booklet (see attached). There was nothing else to add to what was written in the Chairman's Report & all were invited for comments or to ask questions.

There were no questions or comments.

## **10. Any Other Business**

There was no other business

There being no other business Revd J. McGowan closed the meeting &

announced: **NEXT PCC MEETING: Wednesday 26th April 2023 in Vicarage at 7pm**

### **Appendix 3 Financial statements**

These include a statement of Assets and Liabilities at the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023, together with the financial statements for 2022. *NB at the time of printing, these statements, whilst approved by the PCC, were awaiting Inspection. If this has not been completed by the date of the APCM, it will be proposed that these statements are 'received' and then are later 'approved' at an Extra-ordinary Meeting called for this purpose sometime before the 31<sup>st</sup> May 2023 whose date and time will be published in accordance with rule M13 of the Church Representation Rules 2020.*

### **Employee Pensions Liability**

#### **Church Workers Pension Fund (CWPF) December 2023 Year End**

The Parish of St James and St Basil Fenham participates in the Pension Builder Scheme section of CWPF for lay staff. CWPF is administered by the Church of England Pensions Board, which holds the CWPF assets separately from those of the Employer and other participating employers. The Parish participates in the *Pension Builder 2014 Scheme*. *Pension Builder 2014* is a cash balance scheme that provides a lump sum which members use to provide benefits at retirement. Pension contributions are recorded in an account for each member. Discretionary bonuses may be added before retirement, depending on investment returns and other factors. The account, plus any bonuses declared is payable, unreduced, from age 65.

There is no sub-division of assets between employers in each section of the Pension Builder Scheme.

The scheme is considered to be a multi-employer scheme as described in Section 28 of FRS 102. This is because it is not possible to attribute the Pension Builder Scheme's assets and liabilities to specific employers and means that contributions are accounted for as if the Scheme were a defined contribution scheme.

A valuation of the Pension Builder Scheme is carried out once every three years. The most recent valuation was carried out as at 31 December 2019. The next valuation is due as at 31 December 2022.

For the Pension Builder 2014 section, the valuation revealed a surplus of £5.5m on the ongoing assumptions used. There is no requirement for deficit payments at the current time. The legal structure of the scheme is such that if another employer fails, The Parish of St James and St Basil Fenham could become responsible for paying a share of the failed employer's pension liabilities.

### **Assets**

Property owned by the Parochial Church Council is detailed in the Inventory and Terrier (Church Logbook).

32 Auburn Gardens

This property is held in trust by the PCC for the purpose of providing accommodation for an Assistant Curate if one is appointed. The property generates rental income for the parish which is detailed in the financial statement. The property (or any assets arising from a sale of the property) may not be used for any purpose other than housing for an Assistant Curate without the express consent of the Charity Commission, the Church Commissioners, the Incumbent, and the Bishop of Newcastle.

Account Summary

Paxton	Assets and Liabilities Report - December 2023		Page 1 of 1
All fund codes consolidated			
St James' and St Basil's PCC Fenham		Printed: 01/03/2024	
= December 2023			
All fund codes consolidated			
		<u>Value</u>	
Cash Funds			
Bank current account	8,072.68		
Bank savings account	3,430.65		
CBF 1	879.86		
CBF2	2,970.09		
			-----
			15,353.28
Other Monetary Assets			
			-----
			0.00
Investment Assets			
			-----
			0.00
Other Tangible Assets			
			-----
			0.00
Liabilities			
			-----
			0.00
			-----
Net assets/liabilities			15,353.28

## St James' and St Basil's PCC Fenham

Printed: 01/03/2024

December 2023 year to date turnover

## Voluntary Receipts

	<u>General</u>	<u>SJKT</u>	<u>Auburn</u>	<u>Hall</u>	<u>Music</u>	<u>Cafe</u>	<u>Phoenix Choir</u>	<u>Path</u>	<u>Bell</u>	<u>Total</u>
Donations received	4,090.57	0.00	0.00	600.00	13,253.00	1,700.00	2,473.01	0.00	15.00	22,131.58
Collections	1,046.18	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,046.18
African communion collection	165.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	165.00
Planned Giving	16,834.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	16,834.00
Gift aid tax received	7,910.42	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	7,910.42
Grants received	3,234.17	10,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	13,234.17
	33,280.34	10,000.00	0.00	600.00	13,253.00	1,700.00	2,473.01	0.00	15.00	61,321.35

## Receipts from Fundraising Activities

Fundraising income	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,924.23	0.00	425.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3,349.23
	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,924.23	0.00	425.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3,349.23

## Receipts from Charitable Activities

Fees	6,888.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	6,888.00
Rent	212.50	0.00	3,500.00	17,305.50	1,425.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	22,443.00
Charitable Activity Receipts	443.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	250.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	693.00
Cafe	30.65	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	15,141.18	0.00	0.00	0.00	15,171.83
Choir subs	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	4,152.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	4,152.00
Concert income	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	11,428.73	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	11,428.73
	7,574.15	0.00	3,500.00	17,305.50	17,005.73	15,391.18	0.00	0.00	0.00	60,776.56

## Receipts from Investments

Interest received	33.47	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	33.47
	33.47	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	33.47

## Other Receipts

## St James' and St Basil's PCC Fenham

Printed: 01/03/2024

December 2023 year to date turnover

	<u>General</u>	<u>SJKT</u>	<u>Auburn</u>	<u>Hall</u>	<u>Music</u>	<u>Cafe</u>	<u>Phoenix Choir</u>	<u>Path</u>	<u>Bell</u>	<u>Total</u>
Miscellaneous receipts	1,049.78	0.00	1,702.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,751.78
	1,049.78	0.00	1,702.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,751.78
Fundraising Costs										
Social Events	0.00	0.00	0.00	151.75	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	151.75
Charitable Donations	0.00	0.00	0.00	500.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	500.00
	0.00	0.00	0.00	(651.75)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	(651.75)
Charitable Activities Costs										
Heat, Light and Power	11,515.58	0.00	236.92	3,941.70	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	15,694.20
Maintenance	4,550.75	0.00	718.50	0.00	833.28	154.48	0.00	0.00	0.00	6,257.01
Hall Maintenance	0.00	0.00	0.00	239.47	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	239.47
Grounds Maintenance	6,314.08	7,016.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	13,330.58
Insurance	180.00	9,541.52	245.64	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	9,967.16
Development	3,832.08	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3,832.08
Worship	3,469.87	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,150.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	4,619.87
African communion expenses	2,035.63	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,035.63
Diocesan fees	3,095.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3,095.00
Parish Share	20,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	20,000.00
Clergy Expenses	648.92	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	648.92
Council Tax	2,296.93	0.00	2,568.42	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	4,865.35
Water rates	491.87	0.00	610.58	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,102.45
Volunteer expenses	40.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	264.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	304.00
Cafe expenses	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	6,617.78	0.00	0.00	0.00	6,617.78
Office costs	2,685.59	0.00	0.00	445.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3,131.09
Printing & stationery	528.20	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	528.20
Publicity costs	48.46	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	48.46
Music expenses	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	25,105.13	0.00	8,431.38	0.00	0.00	33,536.51
	(61,732.96)	(16,558.02)	(4,380.06)	(4,626.67)	(27,088.41)	(7,036.26)	(8,431.38)	0.00	0.00	(129,853.76)



## St James' and St Basil's PCC Fenham

Printed: 01/03/2024

December 2023, year to date turnover

	<u>General</u>	<u>SJKT</u>	<u>Auburn</u>	<u>Hall</u>	<u>Music</u>	<u>Cafe</u>	<u>Phoenix Choir</u>	<u>Path</u>	<u>Bell</u>	<u>Total</u>
Governance Costs										
Sum up charges	781.24	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	17.99	0.00	0.00	0.00	799.23
Bank charges	303.68	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	303.68
	(1,084.92)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	(17.99)	0.00	0.00	0.00	(1,102.91)
Other Costs										
Miscellaneous costs	451.23	0.00	0.00	50.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	501.23
	(451.23)	0.00	0.00	(50.00)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	(501.23)
Transfers										
Transfers between funds	(41,500.00)	0.00	6,000.00	20,500.00	2,365.50	15,000.00	(2,365.50)	0.00	0.00	0.00
	41,500.00	0.00	(6,000.00)	(20,500.00)	(2,365.50)	(15,000.00)	2,365.50	0.00	0.00	0.00
Net receipts/payments	20,168.63	(6,558.02)	(5,178.06)	(4,998.69)	804.82	(4,538.07)	(3,592.87)	0.00	15.00	(3,877.26)
Cash funds at start of year	-19,860.86	-620.44	6,453.91	8,065.68	5,540.74	7,940.18	5,136.76	3,000.00	3,574.57	19,230.54
Cash funds at end of year	307.77	-7,178.46	1,275.85	3,066.99	6,345.56	3,402.11	1,543.89	3,000.00	3,589.57	15,353.28



CHARITY COMMISSION  
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

## Independent examiner's report on the accounts

### Section A

### Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/  
members of

St James' and St Basil's PCC

On accounts for the year  
ended

31/12/2023

Charity no  
(if any)

1184511

Set out on pages

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above  
charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/12/2023.

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").

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.

Independent  
examiner's statement

[The charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 and I am qualified to  
undertake the examination by being a qualified member of [insert name of  
applicable listed body]]. *Delete [ ] if not applicable.*

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:

Jane Makepeace

Date:

4.3.24

Name:

Jane Makepeace

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