



ANNUAL REPORT

2024 - 2025



Registered charity no 1184805

CHURCH COUNCIL 2024-2025

Members

Revd Eva Walker	Minister
Owen Lumsdon	Treasurer (to 30.09.24)
Debbie Mathieson	Treasurer (from 1.10.24)
Susan Wood	Secretary
Carol Baggaley	Senior Steward, Safeguarding Officer
Sally Clark	Steward
Margaret Rushton	Steward
Susan Sabourn	Steward
Noreen Rees	Steward
John Liddle	Steward
Una Miller	Pastoral Secretary
Margaret Stephenson	Worship Leader
Andrew Lowe	Chair, Finance and Property Committee
Colin Raistrick	Safeguarding Officer, Data Protection, We Give You A Warm Welcome
Carole Firth	Elected Member representative
Noreen Rees	Elected Member representative
Jackie Tallon	Elected Member representative
Margaret Lumsdon	Elected Member representative
Lesley Thompson	Elected Member representative
Jenny Fothergill	Elected Member representative

Independent Examiner

Rachel Hunter (to 31 .09.24)
Sue Mason (from 1.10.24)

We are in partnership with

Action for Children

All We Can

Friday Cuppa (Warm Space)

St John's Methodist Church

Registered Charity no: 1184805

For more information about any of our Church activities please contact

Church Office - Opening hours Monday-Friday 9am-4pm

Ilfracombe Gardens
Whitley Bay
NE26 3ND
Telephone 0191 251 2355
stjohnsmethodistoffice@gmail.com

Minister

Revd Eva Walker
Telephone Home – 0191 280 8060
revevawalker@gmail.com

Staff

Colin Raistrick - Office Administrator
Patricia Kamba - Cleaner
Karen Morley - Church Family Worker

Church Family Worker

For children's activities contact
churchfamilyworker@gmail.com 0755 266 4747

Media

www.facebook.com/StJohnsMethodistChurchWhitleyBay/
stjohnsmethodistchurchwhitleybay.co.uk



Staff – Karen, Patricia and Colin

Our Minister – Revd Eva Walker





It is time again to receive this booklet that holds within it: encounters, God's presence, faithfulness, tears, goodbyes, welcomes, service, gratitude, humility, testimony of God at work in our lives, and so much more.

We receive this booklet soon after we received the special edition of Focus, celebrating 100 years of the cornerstone being put down. And that Focus edition was full of stories, testimonies of life with God and with each other throughout the years. And within those years, and since we last met like this in June last year, we remember our own Harold Robson, Sheila Hay, Joan Agnew and Angela Allen who went to be home with Jesus. People who have affected our lives and today we remember the words Harold left us, inviting us to live fully in the present, without forgetting the past. And that is what we do today.

I am writing this reflection on the afternoon of Maundy Thursday and soon I will be coming to St John's to sit down at the table with my brothers and sisters and with our Jesus, to hear once again that commandment that Jesus gave us: 'Love one another.'

Jesus gave that command sitting at the table, doing life with all, the friend and the betrayer. Jesus washed the feet of them all, including the feet of Judas. Jesus broke the bread and said: 'Take, eat. This is my body.' The body of God given over, broken, vulnerable and offered in trust.

And in our walk of faith, we are invited to do the same, to make ourselves vulnerable for the sake of God and the other, to give ourselves in service and love and to give all we give in trust.

And so, page after page, there is that giving. The welcoming, the cooking, the cleaning, the sorting, the maintaining of buildings and gardens and finances, the standing in for someone else, the making of tea and coffee, the knitting and chatting, the sitting alongside, the being present, the leading of worship, the crafts, the making of music, the singing, the sewing, the dancing, the partying, the playing, and so, so much more.

Vulnerable giving, giving in love and in trust. All for the sake of God and community.

And this year has been extra special, as we have celebrated and continue to celebrate with and in community the centenary. Allow me to share this one moment with you. In January with the Uniformed Organisations we organised a Ceilidh. We provided the food, the Uniformed Organisations paid for the band, and we offered a free evening to our community on Burns Night. I remember standing up for the first dance with a member of the community, and next to me two children dancing together. And then the call was made for all to swap partners. I saw their faces. They were confused, they were meant to hold hands with strangers? And yet it took a few minutes for them to learn that this is what community is all about, all ages trusting each other and supporting each other and all the children never stopped being part of the dance routines and by the end of the night I believe their world had become a bit bigger. We can do it friends, change each other's world, one little thing at a time.

So thank you, thank you for giving in love, thank you for giving yourself to God and to this community. I love ministering alongside each and every one of you, I love being part of an amazing leadership team, I love being called 'our Eva' and belonging to this community, for there is no better thing than to know you belong. I love seeing God at work in this place and beyond. What joy, what humbling and life giving joy.

Thank you dear friends for being you and enjoy reading the stories of faithfulness shared in the following pages.

Love and God's blessings, **Eva**





Pastoral

Pastoral Leadership Team

Revd Eva Walker
 Revd Tony Farrar
 Revd Gary Ridley
 John Morley
 Una Miller

Pastoral Visitors

Una Miller
 Pat Turnbull
 Pat Brown
 Margaret Stephenson
 Margaret Lumsdon
 Val Farrar
 Valerie Todhunter
 Pauline Hurse
 Doris Miller
 Heather Hindmarsh
 Anita Lambert
 Monica Hayden

Members Transferred

Maureen Stewart
 Peter Stewart

Pastoral Group Contacts

Afternoon Club
 Badminton - Pat Brown
 Choir- Christine Liddle
 Community Lunch - Margaret Stephenson
 FaB (Friends and Believers) - Lesley Thompson
 Faith and Friendship, morning - Pauline Hurse
 Faith and Friendship evening - Colin Raistrick
 Faith and Life - Tony Farrar
 Flower Ministry - Val Farrar
 Friday Cuppa/Warm Spaces - Barbara Grundy
 Knit and Natter - Susan Sabourn
 Messy Church - Chris Shand
 Monday Bible Study - Pat Turnbull
 Property Team of three - Andrew Lowe
 SJBelles (hand bells) - Christine Hickox
 SJY (youth)- Revd Eva
 Stewards - Carol Baggaley
 Toddlers and Wiggles - Karen Morley
 WHITCH - Revd Eva

New Members

Margaret Drew
John Thorpe

Uniformed Organisations - Suzanne Wood
Willow Club - Ian Miller

Thanks to our minister Rev Eva Walker who leads our pastoral team practically and spiritually.

The Pastoral Care Team consists of three groups, the Pastoral Visitors of whom there are 13 Visitors, 21 Group Contacts, the Pastoral Leaders with 5 members, our minister, Rev Tony Farrar, Rev Gary Ridley, John Morley, and Una Miller.

The Pastoral Visitors and Group Contacts meet together twice a year in February and October.

This gives us all chance to share our happy and sad news in a confidential setting. We also have the opportunity to get up to date with any issues which may affect us in our work.

In October we considered the Methodist Guidelines on Safeguarding and Pastoral Care. We were able to discuss the implications for us all as we carry out our visits.

Safeguarding and Pastoral Care

The document reminds us of the duties of a pastoral visitor

- Confidentiality
- Support to, the pastoral visitors, is very important:
- Social contact
- Social contact and additional support
- There is a job description of those who support pastoral visitors,
- GDPR

In February Eva produced a Conversation Document

**Our Calling states, "The Church exists to be a good neighbour to people in need
Challenge how power is used within our church?"**

Highlight the need to review timings for services, meetings and fellowship opportunities in light of the needs of our congregations e.g. work patterns, time of year... (Do we need to do this more often?)

Providing safe places for people to meet-

Reflections on what takes place- feedback, etc.

How to reflect people's lives in worship (all ages)

Sharing instances of good practise

Seeking to demystify pastoral care (Pastoral care is not the province of the professional. We are all naturally involved in caring)

"Remember we are all growing older! Our need for affection, for personal dignity and for acceptance by others increases rather than diminishes with the passing of the years. Try always to be sensitive to this in your visiting.

Pastoral care is the responsibility of the whole community of our church. If someone needs our help, please let us know and we will pass it to the relevant person.

Someone needing immediate ongoing support.
Someone needing an occasional contact.
Those who need no contact.

Once again, we wish to express our gratitude for the work carried out by the many members of the Pastoral Care Team. This is a valuable link in communication within St John's.

Una Miller, Pastoral Secretary

Worship Leader Report

Unfortunately I am still the sole worship leader at St. John's, it would be good to have someone else share in this role. It was in 2000 that I first was commissioned by the circuit as worship leader, and 25 years later I still count it a great privilege to lead people in worship and help to bring them closer to God.

It took a while for me to answer that little voice in my head that told me this was something God was calling me to do and I am forever grateful to Roger and other friends who have encouraged and supported me over the years, I could not have continued without them.

I have considered recently whether the time has come for me to give up this role, but still feel that perhaps it is something with God's help I can offer to the church family at St. John's for a little while longer but can only do it with your prayerful support, care and love.

Margaret Stephenson

TREASURER'S REPORT – 2025 CHURCH AGM

Opening Balance 1 September 2024

TMCP (our savings)	£74,913.52
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Closing balance as at 31 March 2025

TMCP (our savings)	£74, 918.59
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General funds opening balance 1 September 2024

Barclays Current Account	£25, 325.78
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Central Finance Board	<u>£13, 665.33</u>
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Total £38, 991.11

General funds closing balance as at 31 March 2025

Barclays Current Account £ 7,244.54 *

Central Finance Board £16,082.11

Total £23,326.65 Reduction in Funds £
15,664

NB

* £10,000 Grant from Circuit is not included in the above as this is in the process of being transferred to our Warm Welcome Church Project Fund. Please see the report from Andrew Lowe, Chairman of Property & Finance Committee, regarding new boiler proposal.

Introduction

We are now a little over half way through my first year as Treasurer where the constant task in hand is to closely monitor funds and prioritise payments to ensure we meet our commitments. I must say a huge thank you to everybody here at St John's for the help, support and encouragement I have received to enable me to undertake this role.

As usual, at this time of year this is an interim report. Our Gift Aid allocation, Fundraising Gift Week and other donations and expenditure will not be known until later in the year and will then form part of my year-end report. What can be said however is that we are facing another challenging year where expenditure is running higher than income. There are however some glimmers for me to report

BREAK DOWN OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE TO 31 MARCH 2025

TOTAL INCOME AT 31 MARCH 2025

Direct Giving/Offertory	27280.49	
Lettings	10492.39	
Church Group Donations	3343.97	
Individual Donations	1819.28	
Other	7657.82	
Gift Aid (small)	1990.00	
CFB Interest	302.78	
TOTAL	52886.73	52886.73

TOTAL EXPENDITURE AT 31 MARCH 2025

Assessment (7 x £5268)	36876.00
Property Maintenance	4546.55

EXPENDITURE

We are currently on track with our assessment payments and meeting this obligation continues to be our priority. There is positive news for the next financial year in that Circuit has recently confirmed that our assessment will be reduced by 4%. This will result in a saving next year of £2529.

We are continuing to keep property maintenance costs down by the sterling efforts of our dedicated Property Team who work tirelessly to undertake a high proportion of maintenance work in-house. This can range from fixing leaking taps to pruning conifers from the lofty heights of a portable scaffold tower and everything in between.

In March we were agreement, with the first six months at half price. This will give us a saving of £270 over the next year – every little helps.

We will however be hit hard by substantial expenditure outside of our control namely increased salary costs and the end of our five year fixed price contract with Crown Gas.

Government changes to employer's National Insurance contributions which came into effect on 1 April 2025 will increase the current salary bill for our Cleaner and Admin roles by a further £83 per month. This comes on top of an uplift in December

2024 required to bring our employer National Insurance contributions up to correct levels.

With regard to gas we will be facing an estimated increase of around £3000 in 2025/26 compared with this financial year. Thankfully, the recently installed double glazing and insulation works in the Wesley Hall together with the anticipated boiler replacement and zoning works will help reduce our gas consumption but the impact on our budget will still be substantial.

required to change our telephone system to digital. This was an opportunity to enter into a new contract with Virgin Media on a fixed price 2 year

INCOME

To start with a positive, income from room lettings ie licences, one-offs, regular bookings and parties is going from strength to strength. This income stream is expected to at least double to £16,500 this financial year compared to last year. This growth can be attributed to the attractive, clean, well maintained space our Church provides coupled with the support our visitors receive when using it and well managed occupancy arrangements.

However, as previously stated, income is not keeping pace with expenditure. In view of rising costs across the board, we will be relying heavily on this year's Gift Aid contribution expected later in the financial year (hopefully in the vicinity of £12,000) together with funds raised from our annual Fundraising Gift Week in order to meet our commitments and lessen the impact of a likely deficit.

Last year, due to your kind support and generosity, £7235 was raised to boost much needed funds and was most gratefully received. This year, we are proposing to hold our Fundraising Gift Week in the second week of June following on from our centenary celebration weekend taking place on Saturday 7th and Sunday 8th June. I will be providing more details about this at our forthcoming Annual General Meeting on Sunday 11 May 2025.

Debbie Mathieson

Treasurer

The year end accounts 2023-2024 can be found in the back pages of this document.

Flower Ministry

Firstly I must offer a sincere "Thank You" to Judith, Val, and Mary who, along with myself arrange the church flowers on a four weekly rota. This task is much more than just arranging flowers – the flowers have to be bought, conditioned, arranged, watered, then after Sunday worship distributed to members of the church family celebrating a special event, as a "thank you" or to those who are ill, unable to attend worship or have been bereaved. The recipients of the flowers are always very appreciative of the thoughts and love they represent.

As I have said before, I believe this to be an important aspect of St. John's caring ministry and something we find a privilege to be part of.

All the above could not happen without the many people who give generously to the flower fund, "thank you all."

Most weeks the ladies are given £15 for flowers, £10 per week in Lent and Advent when only one arrangement is necessary. Sometimes there is a need for extra flowers for a special occasion. The donations are also used to purchase floral foam, tape, containers as needed.

At the request of the Finance and Property Committee, I have appended a financial statement at the end of this report.

We would welcome anyone interested in becoming a member of the team either to arrange, distribute or become a donor. Please contact me if you would like to help with any of the above.

With Thanks,

Margaret Stephenson.

Financial Statement 1st April 2024. – 31st March 2025.

	Income:	Expenditure:	
Balance Forward	317.17	Flowers	675.50
Donations	834.00	Accessories	44.76
			720.26
		Balance in hand	
		To St. John's	300.00
		Cash in hand	130.91
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Stewards

Stewards 2024/25 left to right

John Liddle, Sally Clark, Revd Eva,
Carol Baggaley(Senior Steward)
Margaret Rushton, Susan Sabourn,
Noreen Rees

The year has been busy. Creation Tide saw some beautiful banners being produced, which have also been on a short tour. Those involved in all aspects of Worship



I wish to thank:-

The flowers have been exceptionally beautiful throughout the year, thank you to the flower group and to all those who make a donation towards the flower fund. A huge Thank you.

We are very lucky at St John's to have our service shown on our large screen and on zoom, when we haven't been able to get to the Church building, allowing us to be part of Worship. Thank you to the Technical team.

The music here at St John's is very much appreciated. The format, whether it be the piano, organ, guitar, flute, drums, violin are beautiful additions to our worship. The Remembrance Service is a poignant example. Thank you to you all.

Our notices have been very concise and informing us of ALL our up and coming events here at St John's and those in the Circuit. Thanks to the Office Administrator.

The Choir have been in fine voice and have tackled those difficult hymns, we are not familiar with and have once again lead us into Christmas in a very cheerful way. The Carols and Coffee morning in Advent is always in our diaries. It gives us that boost we need ready for the preparations leading up to Christmas. Thank you Choir.

The FAB club who meet each month. They are giving guidance by a team who are very encouraging and come to each worship with many imaginative ideas. Thank you for all the effort you put into the planning,

Messy Church Team. Those who come once a month welcoming parents bringing their children to share in a story from the bible, which is delivered using various activities. Bringing

them together with song, prayers and sharing food. The Nativity Play you shared with us was brilliant. Thank you, your work is very much appreciated.

The property team and gardening team, who ensure the property and grounds are kept in good condition and attractive. Thank you for your dedication.

You will all agree, our buildings have been kept up to a high standard of cleanliness. The lost property box has been promptly filled with items left in our pews or in the halls etc. Thank you Patricia.

The StJ handbells group (which I am part of) are involved, usually around our Christmas celebrations. I would like to thank you all for your patients and caring for one another. You can often hear our laughter above (at practice) our ding dong of the bells. Thank you all for your enthusiasm and fun.

Our Door Stewards are there to meet and greet us come rain or shine every Sunday morning with a smile and warm welcome (sometimes having to hang on to the car park door as the wind catches it). Thank you all.

Our Refreshment volunteers are always happy to have that hot mug of tea or coffee ready after the service. Sometimes they can have double the numbers on a parade service and our Toy Service was exceptionally busy. Thank you for all you do.

My personal thank you to our Stewards Team who have been so enthusiastic with their duties, which are many. We have also been very much involved in starting the Centenary Celebrations of the building. Celebrating the raising of the funds to allow those in 1925 to start the foundations and laying the cornerstones in May 1925. We have held events to mark each month up to and including May, hope you have managed to join us there. Thank you Stewards and Lesley (who has continued to be part of the planning events group).

We are very grateful to our Worship Leader here at St John's and those visiting us from the circuit, for the preparations and care they take over planning Worship. The Lay Preachers within our circuit for being prepared to travel throughout the circuit and lead us in worship. The Supernumeraries who also offer their services here at St John's and throughout the Circuit are also appreciated for the variety and often thought provoking services. Thank you.

Thank you Rev Eva for putting up with many of the zany ideas the Stewards bring (although some are your ideas also). Your support to the team is very much appreciated. Our Lent courses giving us much to discuss and think about, along with our Sunday Worship. For encouraging our younger members to feel at home within our family Worship, involving them in your prayers, encouraging them to take part. For being a donkey at our Naivety Play, that is something that will remain with us for a long time. Thank you.

I think you will realise that it takes a lot of people to bring together the Worship here at St John's and it is so difficult to "say thank you" to everyone; however, I hope this has covered most of those who are directly involved with Worship on a Sunday morning.

These are only those involved on the Sunday (Thursday's for Messy Church). We have many more who help "run the Church". So can I say thank you to everyone who has some role to play within the Church and most of all to you as a member of the congregation for sharing in Worship.

Carol Baggaley, Senior Steward

Communion Stewards

Margaret Barker
Monica Hayden
Judith Lynn
Una Miller
Judith Tait
Jenny Fothergill

Safeguarding

During the year St John's Church Council approved St John's Safeguarding Policy, the text mirrors that of the national safeguarding policy. The Policy is on the Minor Hall noticeboard. Throughout the building on many other notice boards we have details of the safeguarding contacts and a poster on the Methodist Safeguarding Policy.

Throughout the year Carol and Colin have attended Safeguarding updates with the Circuit Safeguarding Officer. During this coming year many of us will need to refresh our safeguarding training. The national training is updated to reflect best practice and guidance based on real examples of occurrences across the Methodist Church.

St John's will be hosting a face to face foundation training course on Saturday 14th June.

During the year we have had conversations with several groups who wanted to try out new activities and wanted a chat to see if they had covered all bases. They generally had and often we were able to give them reassurance that they were very safety conscious.

Safer recruitment is something that the Methodist Church is emphasising needs to be done better. We introduced new paperwork for the role of Treasurer and are pleased to report that Debbie taking on the role of Treasurer was done following the new safer recruitment guidelines.

Thank you to all who help ensure St John's is a safe place for all.

Carol Baggaley, Colin Raistrick, St John's Safeguarding Officers

Data Protection

Each May on behalf of St John's I run the Methodist Church GDPR Annual Compliance checklist and sign off as 100% compliant, because we are fully compliant. The national Privacy Policy was last updated in March 2023 and this is displayed on the Wesley Hall corridor noticeboard for all to read.

Personal Data that we use at St John's is given to us for use so that we can function as a Methodist Church. This enables for example the Pastoral Handbook to have contact details in and for the weekly notices to be distributed. The Church Directory continues to be amended to reflect changes in address, telephone numbers and email numbers. Feel free to ask the office for an up to date directory - we can also shred your earlier version should it be a printed version.

Thank you to all at St John's for helping us remain compliant.

In March I took on the additional responsibility of becoming Newcastle Methodist District Data Champion - whilst working across the District with other Circuits, I am now also linked to all the District Data Champions and the legal team at Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes. These meetings are informative as well as the opportunity to simplify an often bureaucratic response from TMCP.

Colin Raistrick

Family Worker

Instead of writing a report, I thought I would ask some of our Mums to share their experiences with you. I feel a huge joy and privilege to be a small part of this.

Karen Morley Family Worker

We love Messy Church & how that it caters for all ages. I love that my boys get to experience the church & learn about Jesus in such a friendly & relaxed atmosphere. The refreshments & meals provided are a very kind & welcome bonus, taking a bit of family prep & stress away from parents too

Messy Church and film nights at St John's are like nowhere else. Everyone is so kind and caring and we have been welcomed into the community with open arms. It feels like a big family and all the familiar faces each time make you feel part of the St John's community. Everyone is understanding and patient with children with neurodiversity and it's a weight off my shoulders going where we aren't judged. Life wouldn't be the same without it x

We love coming to St. John's for Messy Church and film nights! The warm welcome and incredible sense of community make every visit special. Messy Church is always a highlight, with engaging activities, a meaningful story, and delicious food to enjoy afterward. It's also wonderful that grown-ups can relax, chat, and savor a warm drink while the children have fun.

Messy church has been a reliable, staple for me for years. I know that when I take my children there, we will be welcomed and cared for. Having Messy Church and Film Night are respite I rely on. Having somewhere my children and I find comfortable, friendly and engaging to go after school, helps me manage my stress and patience levels when my mum cup is overflowing! I'd have been lost without their help over the last 8 years.



Finance and Property Committee

Over the past year the Finance and Property Committee have continued to look after the property and finances of the church. The Committee met on four occasions during the year.

Major Property Repairs and Improvements

The following property repairs and improvements to the buildings have been made over the past year:

- Windowsill and frame of Nativity stained glass window repaired and painted
- New carpet laid in 1st floor kitchenette (following replacement of the rotten flooring and skirting board)
- Corridor ceiling painted
- Potholes repaired in car park
- Pressure valve for the gents urinals replaced.
- Re-staining of main church porch doors.
- Re-pointing of brickwork on two areas of the church.
- A new dishwasher was delivered and installed in the kitchen. There were some modifications required to the worktop.
- New push-bar fitted to car park door
- New sensor light fitted in vestry corridor
- Upstairs toilet lights replaced with new fittings
- Both tubes replaced in Crush Hall light
- Kitchen electrics upgraded
- Fire doors between Crush Hall & Wesley Hall re-stained
- New kick plates to exit door and internal doors
- Overhanging tree branches from the neighbour's gardens facing the Wesley Hall trimmed back.

The left-hand stage curtain was taken down, as part of the curtain backing was frayed and had come detached in places. The Thursday Sewing Group agreed to undertake the necessary repairs. Thanks to the sewing group for this work, as the skills required were beyond those of the Property Team! The curtain was re-hung after the repairs were completed.

The local painter and decorator was due to start the external painting of the buildings on 17th July, but this was delayed until August because of the wet summer weather. The work progressed slowly due to poor weather, and was not completed. A small amount of painting remains outstanding, and will be completed this summer.

The number of bookings by various organisations of the church building has continued to increase, as St. John's is seen as an attractive venue serving the community. Booking fees were slightly increased in-line with inflation from 1st September.

We Give You a Warm Welcome Project

Over the February half-term new double glazing units were installed to replace the old single glazed windows in the four large windows of the Wesley Hall which face the Sanctuary. This work completed the double glazing of the windows in the Wesley Hall which commenced in 2023. The Wesley Hall should now be warmer, with fully double-glazed windows, and the roof insulation.

Future Planned Works

Having decided that it made sense to progress the zoning of the heating system with replacing the old gas boilers, tenders were invited from local heating engineering companies. The Church Council agreed to award a provisional contract. The Circuit Meeting in March gave their consent to the work, and also awarded a grant of £10,000 towards the cost.

The new zoning system will use automatic valves and an IT based control and monitoring system to allow for set zones of the building to be heated independently, and only when required. A set minimum temperature would be maintained in other parts of the building when not being used, to prevent damage to the fabric of the building, and to protect important contents such as the organ.

The total cost of this work will be £62,600. This will be funded by the "Warm Welcome" project, and not from church general funds. After paying for the recent double glazing in the Wesley Hall, we have approximately £7,600 in the Warm Welcome project fund, which is growing all the time. We have already been granted £10,000 by the Circuit, and we will be applying to the Newcastle District for a grant of £20,000. Work has started on identifying external grant providers, and we will be seeking a further £20,000 from these bodies. This leaves a balance of £5,000 to be fundraised by ourselves. It is hoped that the work can be undertaken during the summer, before the colder weather of autumn and winter take hold, funding permitting.

Additional Remarks

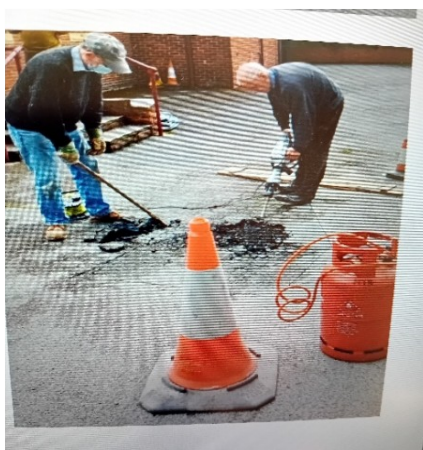
Thanks to Charles Hedley and John Cuggy for tending the church garden throughout the year, and keeping the external appearance of the church to a high standard.

Our church cleaner Patricia also deserves thanks for keeping the buildings spick and span, and for never complaining when the activities of the property team leave a mess!

I would like to thank all the members of the Finance and Property Committee for their work and dedication in keeping the church property and finances in good order. Their work is often unseen and unglamorous, but vital for the continuing work and mission of St. John's.

Andrew Lowe

Chairman – Finance and Property Committee



Building Project Finance Group - A Warm Welcome

Thank you to everyone who has raised money for the warm welcome project during the last year. Money from the sale of cards, borrowing a jigsaw or borrowing a book adds to the pot. This is further boosted by collection tubs and individual donations.

During the year we have spent money on adding the secondary glazing to the Sanctuary windows and finishing off the double glazing in the Wesley Hall.

Almost £8,000 is in hand to contribute to the heating control system upgrade and replacement boilers phase.

We were successful in receiving Government support to enable us to have a comprehensive survey of the St John's estate. This gave us an indication of what was best to invest in to reduce our carbon footprint. Removing draughts and insulation were the first priority, followed by double glazing. The report supported our suggestion of upgrading the heating system to have new controls enabling us to only heat what was needed and not every room. We were invited to apply for capital funding. Much effort was put into this submission, only for the funding to be cancelled by an incoming Labour Government.

With the heating boilers failing, we are working with the property and finance committee to find funding to help with the cost of new boilers and heating controls. Whilst £62,000 is needed for this part of the warm welcome project, £18,000 is in hand, a grant submission of £20,000 is almost complete for a June grant panel meeting and now we are working on a submission to the Energy Resilience Fund for the shortfall. I hope to report success in next year's report.

Colin Raistrick, Chair

Monday House Group

The Monday Group meets weekly usually at the home of Margaret Stephenson, 26, Ventnor Gardens at 10.a.m. we aim to finish our discussion by 11.15.a.m. then have a time of prayer before sharing a chat together over a cup of tea/coffee.

Until recently we have had 7 regular members but in the last two weeks we have welcomed 2 more people to the group.

We have studied various topics, our favourite Psalms, used the daily bible reading notes we all use, even attempted Revelation!! and are now using a book of stories called the Women of Holy Week by Paula Gooder. Through this group we are trying to understand more of the bible and deepen our faith, but another important aspect is the care and support we give each other in our daily lives in an atmosphere of total confidentiality.

Una Miller and I lead the group and I am sure I speak for us both when I say it is an important part of our faith journey.

Margaret Stephenson.

Choir

Yet another year goes by – I am sure that time goes faster than it used to!

The Choir has had a good year, continuing to contribute to the worship at St John's and building on the very good working relationship which we have established over the years with visiting ministers and local preachers. Wherever possible we try to accommodate any musical preferences which they may have. This can be interesting, at times, if we are asked to sing a particular hymn which we do not know. It is amazing how quickly we can learn a new piece when time is short, and I am so proud of the way the Choir members always rise to the challenge. Our repertoire can be increased because of this, which can only be a good thing!

In December last year we enjoyed singing at the "Coffee and Carols" event, in the Wesley Hall, as we have done for several years in the past. For many, this has become the unofficial start of their Christmas celebrations, and when we can all enjoy a lovely relaxed atmosphere. It is always well supported and I feel that grateful thanks should be made here to the "Catering Corps" who keep everyone supplied with mince pies and endless cups of tea and coffee!

£335 was raised and donated to "Crisis", the homeless charity, which is a most worth cause.

This year, the Choir has been invited to lead the Good Friday morning service on April 18th, when there will be a selection of anthems, hymns, readings and prayers, all delivered by Choir members, and all chosen to mark this significant day in the life of the Christian church. We feel very honoured to be asked to take such a prominent part in what I'm sure will be a very moving experience.

I am continually grateful for the selfless dedication of the Choir members, who give of their time and talents so freely. Without exception, they are all keen to ensure that the standard of the singing is as good as it possibly can be. It should be remembered that not everyone is an expert sight reader, but they all take their responsibility of enhancing the worship very seriously indeed. The results of their hard work are there for all to hear.

As always, we are extremely grateful for the continued support of the congregation, and feel very privileged to be able to contribute to the worship at St John's.

On the social side, we had our usual winter gathering in January when this time we got together in the lovely lounge at Bygate Court. We had a great time chatting away (absolutely nothing to do with singing!) and trying to make inroads into all the food which people had brought! We are very grateful to Una and Ian for arranging this most enjoyable occasion for us.

Last July we had the customary "Fish & Chips" party in our garden. This all started when during Covid we couldn't assemble inside, so we then opted for a garden party instead. This proved to be a great success, and we have now developed a very good relationship with Pantrini's!

Charles Hedley (Choir Leader)

Faith and Friendship

We continue to meet weekly on Zoom on Thursday mornings with one of the groups, and meet face to face with the other group during Lent and other times in the year. (on Tuesday afternoons)

I love both the groups. They are different and yet what they have in common is the safe space they provide where we learn from each other, think of the world, our place in it, God's call upon our lives, our faith and our choices in being whom God calls us to be.

This past year we have travelled through the Bible, through God's story from the very beginning and we took a break from that journey to consider the power of our choices in our Lenten journey towards Easter Sunday.

We have learnt a lot, were challenged and encouraged in equal measures. I cannot imagine my journey of faith without the weekly gatherings, where we delve into the Bible and share our lives with each other. We heard these words in one of the weeks, and maybe you need to hear these too. Words written by Marianne Williamson and quoted by Nelson Mandela:

'Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, 'Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous?' Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God. Your playing small does not serve the world. There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We are all meant to shine, as children do. We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It's not just in some of us; it's in everyone. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others.'

You are always more than welcome to join us both on Zoom on Thursday mornings (weekly) and in person on Tuesday afternoons (less regular). Please come and have a chat with me.

Revd Eva

Faith and Life Group

The Faith and Life Group has enjoyed a thoughtful and helpful year. It is a group, open to anyone who is interested, which meets monthly in the home of one of the members of the group, providing the opportunity to be supportive of each other as we talk through what it means to us to be a Christian in the context of today's society and church. Nothing is sacrosanct, and we realise that many of us find it a struggle to hold on to traditional Christian beliefs. And we value the insights we can each offer to help us towards realistic Christian living today.

One of the outcomes of the group, as we link faith and our life in community, has been the idea of a Church Community Weekend, which will be happening on June 7/8 as part of the centenary celebrations.

Tony Farrar

Green Issues

We are still committed to being an eco-friendly church and with the help of work done by Stewards, Office and Property and Finance Committee we obtained the Bronze Eco Church award. As a small working we have continued to encourage those involved in the life of St John's to celebrate the gift of the earth on which all our lives depend and to find ways to live more sustainably, thus protecting the inheritance that future generations might receive. To this end we have:

- encouraged the Church Council to consider the environmental implications of all their decisions and to find ways to ensure that all the committees and groups at St John's also have environmental concerns on their agendas.
- maintained a 'green notice board' outside the Minor Hall as a way of sharing ideas and encouraging individuals to reflect on the environmental impact of their everyday lives.
- joined with others to celebrate the international Creationtide programme in September 2024, which included the making of new banners for the church on the theme of 'Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Love the Earth'; hosting a coffee morning; organising a sale of pre-loved children's clothes, toys and equipment; and linking the theme with the Harvest Festival. Our thanks to those who worked so hard to ensure the success of all the activities.
- explored some of the actions the church needs to undertake to obtain the Silver Eco Church Award.

We are grateful to Colin and those who assist in enabling the church to recycle an increasing variety of items and also to the Property Team who have completed the installation of double glazing in the Wesley Hall and helped to reduce the heat loss, conserving energy. However, if we are to work towards the Silver Eco Church award we will need more input. If anyone is interested in helping the church to progress on this important aspect of our Christian discipleship please speak to Tony Farrar.

Sally Clark, Tony Farrar & Malcolm Hickox

Ladies Badminton

Ladies Badminton meet on Friday between 1.30 - 3.30 from September to May.

Over the years we have become great friends and offer support to each other during difficult times as well as celebrating good times. We always welcome new members to share the fun and fellowship. We are a group of mixed abilities on the badminton court but it is the taking part that counts! Yes!

Pat Brown
Pat Turnbull

Afternoon Club

This year we have had some interesting speakers attending our meetings. They have consisted of Charities, YMCA North Tyneside and Morpeth Lions we were impressed by all they do to help in their local areas. We had Kay who talked to our group about "Eating well to age well", it was fascinating to see the different grains and seeds that can help keep our body in good condition as we are aging.

The group were also challenged by Colin showing postcards of our coastal area through the decades (spot the changes). Paul entertained us playing tunes which we enjoyed immensely, the trying to name them and what musical they came from was a little more challenging. Rev Gary Ridley gave a very interesting talk "More Tea Vicar". This topic was intriguing, I was fascinated to know coffee was the main drink in UK long before tea arrived; however, it was a drink that was drunk by the rich, as was tea at the beginning. Debbie had prepared a lovely gift of tea and biscuits for us. Steve Bell the magician came along to entertain us. Rev Eva was disappointed she was not available to attend (she had hoped to pick up some magic tricks).

We joined with the Knit and natter group for a Christmas Snowman (a change from a beetle drive). We shared snacks and nibbles.

We had our summer meal at the Kings Arms and once again Gill kindly invited us to join her in a garden tea. The remaining weeks were ran "in house" with craft and other activities, The Afternoon Group are at present putting together a Coffee Morning with refreshments.

We hope to raise funds towards replacing the Church's boiler selling bric-a-brac, books and a raffle. All are invited.

Carol Baggaley
Secretary

FaB Club (Friends and Believers)

In 2024/2025 FaB has continued to meet on a Sunday morning once a month. Dates for each quarter are published in advance in the Church notices and on the FaB WhatsApp group. Life is busy for most families and monthly FaB together with monthly family services seems to suit everyone. We usually have between 15 and 20+ at FaB sessions (all ages including adults!).

As the ages of the children range from 5 years to 12 years, there is always a variety of activities at each session. Often they include craft, games, quizzes, outdoor activities, storytelling, prayer and of course juice and biscuits. However, we are very flexible and the

session may go in a different direction to that which was planned following questions and discussions! It's wonderful to see all ages interacting and learning from each other!

FaB members thoroughly enjoyed taking part in the Nativity at Christmas and will be taking part in the Community Weekend in June.

Lesley Thompson

WHITCH (What Happen In The Church)

This is a group of mums who attend Messy Church and Film Nights. We have been meeting together outside of those two events for a few years now and love the space to discuss life, faith and even talk about what new things we might be doing, to bring community even closer. The group has evolved to become the place where new ideas are shared and tasted, and then more events organised for a wider group, aiming to bring community together as often as we can. And so it was decided to create a Messy Church Facebook Private Group where we advertise events and togetherness as a Messy Church and Film Night community.

Since this decision we have organised:

A 'Mums' Mocktails' event in December where we spent 4 hours together sharing with honesty and love, giving and receiving support and making some interesting mocktails.

A Sleepover for the children and their grown up in March and that was beautiful. Some came for the evening/ night and then went home and others stayed. The atmosphere was life and joy giving. Words cannot express what that event was like.

And how can we forget the Christmas Nativity? Jenny and I had been talking about doing one for a few years, but this was the right year. We brought our idea to the WHITCH group, where we met with a lot of enthusiasm. (We brought the idea to a lot of other people, but this is the place to talk about WHITCH, that is why I am only mentioning them) And so, what came to be was a truly intergenerational play, something that I still remember with joy and fondness.

And in all these activities, the children have asked: 'When is the next one?' 'Can we have one more soon, please?'

I love this group of women, who think beyond themselves and want to be part of something that brings others together, a space where we can find out what God intends for us to be and do.

Revd Eva

Knit and natter

The knit and natter group continue to meet on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday afternoons of each month. We are small in number but very productive. Most of our efforts this year have been to support the Facebook group called Hero Bears for Every Child. The late Anna Palmer told

us of this North Shields lady who was sending teddy bears to the Ukraine. She now sends items to various NHS and Social Services outlets as well as sending teddy bears, clothing and wounded soldier socks to the Ukraine.

Our mermaids and fish have been seen in Whitley Bay at the Poetry Trail and the Fiesta and were even on display at the Christmas Tree Festival at St Cuthbert's Church, Blyth on the blue tit's tree!

We are very happy to receive donations of double knitting and aran yarn and are grateful for the stuffing and buttons which have been given to us.

Susan Sabourn

Wednesday Lunch

Lunch on the first Wednesday in the month has, once again, continued throughout the past year, one of the few groups which never has a break during holiday seasons, it being felt that our guests particularly appreciate the opportunity to continue to meet together when many other groups are having a break.

The number of guests attending varies somewhat but has averaged between 25 and 28. Not all are from our congregation; we continue to welcome several folk from the wider community, some having joined us via Friday Cuppa. Sadly, we lost one of our founder members in December – the very much loved Harold. He hardly ever missed a lunch, and when unable to come in December, made sure his son contacted me to apologise!! At the January lunch we toasted him - with water of course! He is very much missed.

The same format remains popular choice of 2 soups, 2 puddings (always with custard, and/or ice cream in the summer!) followed by tea/coffee and, more importantly, lots of chat! An exception to the usual menu was in December when, as usual, a full traditional Christmas lunch was on the menu, together with much festive cheer and spirit (not of the liquid kind of course!).

We continue to be blessed with the same team of very willing cooks/helpers/drivers who work very well and flexibly together – and have as much fun and chat as the guests, it must be said.

Any payment for food is by donation only, ingredients for the lunch being donated by the volunteers. As stated in the 2024 AGM report, a proposal was then under discussion that, as the church no longer has a regular external Charity Project, we may wish to donate the following year's donations to the Bay Food Bank. As we know, the Bank was, and is, sorely in need of funds and it somehow seemed appropriate that those less fortunate than we are should benefit from our good fortune in eating together every month. This was agreed amongst diners and helpers and the good news is that, since last July, (i.e. not a full year yet) £900 has been donated.

Gill Hedley

Action for Children

Action for Children is a Methodist Church Charity, with numerous projects countrywide and several local projects in the North East. The latter include parent and young carer help lines,

fostering services, counselling services for children and young people suffering from domestic abuse, nurseries and residential care for disabled children. All very much needed services.

AFC also have a Crisis Fund which pays for essentials like food, clothes and heating bills in times of crisis. They have distributed £2 million in emergency grants since 2020 to 15,000 families. They also campaign for an end to child poverty and speak directly to MPs and ministers and call on them to act.

I'm very grateful to those who donate using AFC boxes and they can be handed to me at any time. I do appreciate though that people have less loose change so boxes aren't appropriate. Grateful thanks to those who make online donations which can be made through the website at actionforchildren.org.uk. Action for Children Sunday in 2025 is in July and there will be envelopes available for donations then. Over £600 has been donated to AFC by St John's folk this past year. Thank you so much for your continued support.

Lesley Thompson

Supporting Charities

As we celebrate 100 years of the church building, we recognise that it has stood as an important witness to the local community and beyond, not just as a place of worship, but as a focal point for living the gospel. We do that in many ways, not least through our support of local and national charities who express the care and compassion that belongs to the heart of Christian living. And it has been my privilege over the last few years to have played a part in enabling our support for such groups.

Charities Market

For a good number of years now we have supported the work of many local charities through the **Charities' Christmas Market**, normally held at the beginning of November. This last year over 20 charities had stalls, and almost £2,000 was raised during the two hour session. It is an event noted not only for fund-raising, but also for the warmth of care and mutual support. This year, subject to approval by the Church Council, the Market will be held on Saturday, November 1st from 10a.m. – 12noon. What better way to celebrate All Saints Day than by supporting the modern-day saints committed to the support of others!

Methodist Homes

We have a commitment to support two charities with close links to the Methodist church nationally. **Methodist Homes** is at the forefront of care for older people, and is involved in providing residential care, and also care in local areas through community groups and activities. In our area, North Tyneside Communities are involved in social and support groups, and run a variety of activities, including giving their support to pARTners, art classes for people living with dementia and their carers.

We are marking Methodist Homes Sunday on June 29th., with a café-style service in the Wesley Hall, and welcoming both the area Community Fundraiser, Shelley Barnes, and the local organiser Karen Walker. We will also include an exhibition of pARTners paintings from the exhibition the previous week at St. Mary's , Claremont Gardens. Offering envelopes will also be available.

More information is available at www.mha.org.uk

All We Can

We also support the development charity **All We Can**, which is involved with working with local communities in developing countries to improve the quality of life for those who are often in great need. It also offers a means whereby we can give when an emergency occurs, whether that is a natural disaster, or, for example, support for refugees from Ukraine. St. John's agreed some time ago to be a pARTner Church of All We Can, which commits us not only to raising a certain amount of money each year, but also to understanding more about the needs of developing communities. We have normally supported **All We Can** around harvest time, and last year sent donations totalling £1,140. Thank you for your generosity, and

for being a community that looks outward and is committed to embracing an inclusive gospel of love. Again, more information is available at www.allwecan.org.uk

Tony Farrar

Friday Cuppa

'Friday Cuppa' takes place in the Minor Hall at St John's each week between 9am and 1pm. 'Friday Cuppa' is a Coffee Morning (not a Club), a Safe Place, and every week there is an open invitation to everyone, whoever you are, whether you worship regularly at St John's on a Sunday, whether you visit on another days(s) as part of the wider church community or whether this is the first time you have been to St John's.

'Friday Cuppa' continues to flourish with frequently, numbers attending in the high twenties. Recently there were 30 of us there even though there were a number of "regulars" who were missing that week. Every week those of us who are there are amazed at the number of friends who do come, to see how everyone is made welcome whether it is someone visiting for the first time or someone who comes almost every week, to hear the sound of people happily chatting and laughing with one another, to see friendships develop and to see how caring and concerned everyone is towards one another especially if someone who regularly comes week-by-week doesn't turn up or is known to be unwell.

During the last year (i.e. 52 weeks) 'Friday Cuppa' has taken place 50 times and since November 2024 it has been possible to set up a monthly rota of volunteers willing to help host. This has been a tremendous help especially between about 10.30am and 12 noon which tends to be the busiest time.

If you haven't ever been to Friday Cuppa before, why not pop in, and enjoy a warm welcome with an opportunity to chat over a cuppa with old and new friends, and/or to get involved in a game or two of either dominoes or Chinese chequers. There is also scrabble, chess, playing cards, jigsaws and puzzle books available.

'Friday Cuppa' will also be represented at the Community Celebration weekend on Saturday 7th June between 10am and 3pm, along with many of the other groups and activities that take place regularly at St John's.

Barbara Grundy

SJBelles

June 2024 we were looking forward to a Handbell afternoon, calling it Strawberry Fayre. We had an afternoon of music, fun and laughter. Not forgetting Strawberries!!

The latter half of 2024 turned out to be a challenge for most of our group with family or personal health issues, followed by several bereavements. We kept meeting and playing and supporting each other but held back from organising or being involved in anything extra.

The Belles have continued to meet as much as we can. We have arranged to be involved in the community weekend in June both on the Saturday and also in the Sunday service. We are looking ahead to Christmas and hoping we can be more involved this year.

After playing various Easter songs and Hot Cross buns especially, last Friday we enjoyed eating the real thing, some with cheese alongside and some with jam. Each to their own I say. The little chocolate bunnies were also part of the theme!

Christine Hickox

FOCUS MAGAZINE

The small team of Noreen Rees (Editor), Howard Scott (Administrator), Peter Firth (Distribution) and Colin Raistrick (email Distribution) continues to produce news and views of St John's members and friends four times a year (Autumn/Harvest, Christmas, Easter, Summer). We were pleased to welcome back our regular proof-reader, Ann Naylor in time for the Summer 2024 edition. Most of the copies of Focus are sent out via email but we have paper copies available for those who are not online or prefer a print copy. It is also available for our visitors, should they wish to take it away. Because of this, Focus has quite a wide 'reach' and we plan to include it in an appendix when applying for grants, as it gives an insight into the wide range of events happening at St John's.

Carol Baggaley commented in the **Summer 2024** issue about the changing personnel in the stewards team. There were some photos of 'men at work' in the car park—the in-house Property Team getting their hands dirty, mending the potholes. There was information about the Whitley Bay Poetry Trail, for which the Knit and Natter group had provided knitted mermaids. The environmental group reported how St John's had been awarded the Eco Church Bronze Award. They also gave advance notice of the pre-loved baby and children's clothes event, which was held in September.

The **Harvest 2024** issue contained information on JMA, dates of Family Film nights (growing ever more popular with families) and a photograph of Colin Raistrick celebrating his 60th birthday.

The **Christmas 2024** edition of Focus contained details on the front page of the many services and events being held at St John's in the lead up to Christmas. There was a thank you from Patricia our cleaner for the help she had been given when moving house to Whitley Bay. Pat Brown had contributed an article about her memories of St John's over an amazing eighty years! Debbie Mathieson wrote an article introducing herself as the new Church Treasurer, and Karen Morley our Families Worker gave us a detailed itinerary of what she does in a week. There was news also of the help the Brownies had given sorting out baby and children's clothes for the pre-loved sale.

The **Easter 2025** issue was a bumper edition of 24 pages, celebrating St John's centenary. Many people associated with the church sent in memories of being part of the church

community, and details of how they celebrated special events such as weddings and baptisms. Colin Raistrick made archive material available for us to include, and several people sent us photographs. Colin also put together an article about the Birtwistle Memorial Chair which is situated in the Sanctuary near the altar. John Wadsworth contributed a piece about a recent visit to Uganda, and Howard Scott recalled his walks on Hadrian's Wall, and his encounters with the Sycamore Gap tree before it was vandalised. Howard also wrote a piece for Focus on the history of St John's choir. We are grateful both to all of our regular contributors and our occasional guest writers.

We have reported on several significant birthdays and anniversaries on the 'Remembrances and Celebrations' page and that seems to be going well. People have been particularly pleased to have their significant birthdays celebrated

I'd like to record my thanks to the team-Howard, Peter, Colin and Ann who all work together to help Focus on its journey from blank page to publication.

Noreen Rees, Editor, Focus Magazine

SJY (St John's Youth)

We continue to meet with the young people on Sunday evenings term time. We have changed the time from 6.30 pm to 5.30 pm. The group is smaller as some of the extra boys who joined us for a season have stopped coming and one of the young people moved to Canada. We have continued to gather with the original group every week. If it ever happens that we cancel one Sunday, there is great disappointment, showing how important this time is for the young people who come. I don't know if you have watched a programme called 'Adolescence' recently. It is a programme about what happens to the young people online, when they have no spaces to discuss what they hear on social media and act upon the voices that influence them online. Today, more than ever, we need to be present and allow for trust to build, so that the young people can feel free to share, or ask questions.

Our young people for most of the past year have been around 15,16 and 17 year old and we felt we would not advertise, as they needed this space without other age groups joining them, until they moved to university or the next stage of their lives. And then, one Sunday, two young girls joined us. And they love being there and have come every week ever since.

It is an honour and privilege to know these young people and be allowed into their lives and I believe now more than ever we need to invest to be there for them, and create safe spaces where they can ask question and hear that they are loved by the God of the universe.

Revd Eva

Brownies

Brownies meet at St John's between 6.30 and 7.30pm on Friday evenings.

3rd Monkseaton Guides.

This year our number has stayed at 9 Guides. The guides have been organising the programme themselves with support from us. They continue to work on the Guide programme to gain their badges. We have a few close to getting their Guide Gold award.

Thanks to Jeni for all the support at Guides. We got through the year.

Suzanne Wood

8th Whitley Bay Scout Group (St John's Methodist)

It's been another good year for the group. Numbers are holding steady in the 3 sections but we could always do with more adult help. The Beavers, Cubs and Scouts have all had a full and fun program though out the year covering everything so they can gain their Chief Scout Awards for their section.

Last April some of the older scouts took part in their Expedition Challenge where they left the church on Saturday morning caught a metro, then train to Morpeth and then walked to the Whitley Bay and District Scout campsite at Pigdon then did the return journey on the Sunday. All 3 sections took part in the District Camp in September .

This year the leaders have had their roles renamed by Headquarters so the Beaver, Cub and Scout leader is now Team Leader the rest of the leaders are team members and I am now Group Lead Volunteer.

Steven Wood 8th Whitley Bay Scouts GLV

Use of St. John's Premises by Hiring or Visiting Groups May 2024 to June 2025

Since the last General Meeting our premises have been used by the following community groups:

- 19 children's parties.
- 6 adult parties.
- Priory Singers held two rehearsal sessions.
- 6 Kids Kitchen events.
- 2 Tynemouth Melodies music school parents events.
- One Tropic Skincare evening.
- Local estate agent's residents' meeting.
- Two local Labour Party committee meetings.
- Reception Class at Marine Park School made another pre Christmas visit to the sanctuary.
- In February Marine Park school brought 3 classes as part of their religious education.
- Priory Singers held two practice sessions when their usual venue was unavailable.
- Tynemouth Choral Society held a Choral Workshop.
- An attempt to launch a children's dance group was unsuccessful.
- An attempt to launch a children's drama group will have been made by the time this report is published

Ongoing activity

- Willow Club met weekly with a break in the Summer.
- Whitley Bay Flower Club meet monthly with the exception of January, February (their AGM off site) and August.
- Coastal History meet as booked, essentially monthly save in July and August..
- The North East Wado Ryu Karate Group hold weekly practices and their usual twice a year Grading Days.
- In October Sound Bath commenced monthly sessions in the choir area.
- In June Age UK began a weekly strength and balance group.
- In August Age UK commenced weekly seated exercise groups.
- Glow Fitness run a weekly early evening Ladies fitness group.
- In August Whitley Bay Tea Dance began weekly afternoon sessions.
- A Sewing Group meets weekly.
- In August a monthly Councillor Surgery began.
-

Peter Firth. Bookings.



Whitley Bay and District Churches Together

At the WBDCT meetings regular updates continue to be shared about The Bay Food Bank, CAP (Christians Against Poverty), Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP), North Tyneside Parish Nursing and Whitley Bay Street Pastors, as well as news of interest from individual churches. News and details of church-wide events are always included in St John's weekly notice sheet and for those on Facebook, the St John's Methodist Group,

In Monkseaton a Service of Remembering was held on Saturday 9th November last year, outside the Ship Inn and The Black Horse, and the Carols around the Tree was held on Saturday 21st December.

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity service was held at St Andrew's in Monkseaton on Sunday 19th January at 6.30pm.

On Saturday 15th February, 'Light Waves' (part of Whitley Bay's Fiesta programme) was held in the grounds of St Paul's Parish Church, with an opportunity for those attending this free community event to explore illuminated sculptures made by local artists after dark, and to visit the community lantern tent to see a display of the 'Home Thoughts' project and house lanterns made by visitors of all ages at the Winter Fiesta in December.

On 22nd February, the documentary film The Tinderbox: A Story of Israel and Palestine, was shown at St Peter's Parish Church in Monkseaton. This film is also still available to watch on YouTube.

This year's World Day of Prayer was held at Whitley Bay Baptist Church on Friday 7th March. Women from The Cook Islands planned this moving service and the theme 'I Made You Wonderful' was a beautiful reminder of God's creative work in each of us and His love.

As I write, this report, a service will be taking place in Monkseaton on Good Friday, 18th April, as well as a Walk of Witness to St Paul's followed by a short service in the grounds of St Paul's. Easter Day Sunrise Services will also have taken place at Cullercoats Bay, on the seafront at The Rendezvous Café, and on the promenade at Spanish City.

The Summer Fiesta is due to take place in Whitley Bay town centre and in the grounds of St Paul's on Sunday 6th July with the Autumn Fiesta planned for Sunday 21st September and the Winter Fiesta on Sunday 7th December.

I am so grateful to have the opportunity to be a part of the WBDCT Planning and Admin group as St John's rep and it would be lovely to be able to share it with others at St John's. Over the years it has been good to get to know people from different denominational churches in Whitley Bay, seeking to discover how we might be 'church' together, worshipping and serving God in the wider community of Whitley Bay and the local area, and then working alongside one another to enable events to take place. If you would be interested in finding out more about 'Churches Together' and how you might become involved, please speak to me or via Colin Raistrick in the St John's church office, who is WBDCT secretary.

Please pray for all the churches in Whitley Bay, Earsdson and Shiremoor and their church leaders, including The Friends Meeting House in Monkseaton and The Salvation Army Church in Shiremoor. The next meeting is due to take place in June at St Andrew's URC.

Barbara Grundy

ACCOUNTS PAGE 1

ACCOUNTS PAGE 2

ACCOUNTS PAGE 3

ACCOUNTS PAGE 4

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THE METHODIST CHURCH
STANDARD FORM OF ACCOUNTS

St John's Methodist	Church
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FOR THE YEAR ENDED
31st Aug 2024

North Shields and Whitley Bay	Circuit	Circuit no	20--05
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Registered Charity - Charity Registration number	1184805
If not a registered charity Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs Gift Aid number	

(The HMRC number is equivalent to a registered charity number in terms of evidence of charitable status and may be used to give to donors or grant funders wishing to see evidence of the organisation's charitable status. Methodist charities in England and Wales that are not registered charities are excepted from registration under Statutory Instrument 2014 No.242)

Minister:
Rev Eva Walker

Church Stewards:
Mrs Carol Baggaley
Mrs Susan Sabourn
Mrs Sally Clark
Mrs Margaret Rushton
Mr Howard Scott
Mrs Lesley Thompson

Treasurer:
Owen Lumsdon

SECTION A			Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Totals this year	Totals last year
			£	£	£	£
a1	RECEIPTS	Note				
a2	Offerings and Tax recovered		57,834		57,834	61,446
a3	Bank and CFB interest and Investment income		4,825		4,825	3,170
a4	Lettings		8,884		8,884	6,238
a5	Other receipts		42,531		42,531	28,758
a6	TOTAL RECEIPTS		114,074	0	114,074 (a7)	99,612

SECTION B						
b1	PAYMENTS					
b2	Circuit Assessment or Share		63,216		63,216	64,500
b3	Donations		7,550		7,550	332
b4	Repairs and Maintenance		15,026		15,026	30,010
b5	Utilities (Insurances, water charges, heating & lighting)		16,029		16,029	13,001
b6					0	
b7	Other payments		17,436		17,436	29,427
b8	TOTAL PAYMENTS		119,257	0	119,257 (b9)	137,270

SECTION C						
c1	NET RECEIPTS/PAYMENTS FOR THE YEAR	(a6-b8)	(5,183)	0	(5,183)	(37,658)
c2	Total funds brought forward from last year		119,087		119,087 (c6)	156,745
c3	Sub total	(c1+c2)	113,904	0	113,904	119,087
c4	Transfers and adjustments				(c7)	

c5	TOTAL FUNDS AT END OF YEAR	(c3+c4)	113,904	0	113,904 (c8)	119,087 (c6)
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SECTION D						
FOR INFORMATION ONLY: MONEY RECEIVED AND PASSED ON TO EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS						
d	(these amounts are not to be included in total receipts/payments figures above)				£	£
d1	Balance brought forward from last year				0	0
d2	Offerings/Gifts - received for external organisations				550	4,200
d3	Offerings/Gifts - passed to external organisations				550	4,200
d4	BALANCE STILL TO BE PAID	(d1+d2-d3)			0	0

SUMMARY OF CHURCH ACCOUNTS AND INTERNAL ORGANISATIONS REPORTING TO THE CHURCH COUNCIL**SECTION E****Please follow the Guidance Notes to complete this page**

Summary of the Church accounts for the year ended 31 August 2024 and Internal Organisations reporting to the Church Council/Church Meeting. Note that the funds of an Internal Organisation would normally be Restricted funds unless it could be clearly shown that they could be used for any Methodist purpose. This section must be completed to arrive at the gross income and expenditure totals of the Church. If gross income exceeds the Accruals threshold, then the Accruals method of accounting AND A DIFFERENT FORM must be used to report the accounts (see Methodist website). Please refer to the guidance notes regarding transfers between the District and connected District Organisations.

	INTERNAL ORGANISATIONS	Receipts	Payments	Net Receipts/ Payments	Adjustments	Opening balances	Closing balances
e1	Flower Fund			0		471	471
e2	Choir			0		117	117
e3	STJ Bells			0		380	380
e4	Warm Welcome Project			0		15,708	15,708
e5				0			0
e6				0			0
e7				0			0
e8	Sub total of Internal Organisations funds	0	0	0	0	16,676 (e11)	16,676 (e12)
e9	Church accounts (totals brought forward from page 2 - totals column)	114,074 (a7)	119,257 (b9)	(5,183)	(c7)	119,087 (c6)	113,904 (c8)
e10	TOTAL CASH FUNDS HELD BY CHURCH	114,074	119,257	(5,183)		135,762.57 (x)	130,579.85 (y)
	Continue on a separate sheet if necessary and bring the totals forward	TOTAL RECEIPTS	TOTAL PAYMENTS				

SECTION F**STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES****CHURCH - CASH FUNDS HELD at 31 August 2024**

		OPENING BALANCES	CLOSING BALANCES
f1	Cash in hand	0	0
f2	Bank Current Account	9,887	25,326
f3	Bank Deposit Account		
f4	Central Finance Board	9,291	13,665
f5	Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes	99,908	74,913
f6	Other funds		
f7	SUB TOTAL - Church accounts	119,087 (c6)	113,904 (c8)
f8	Total funds held by Internal Organisations (the closing balance total from above) (e12)	16,676 (e11)	16,676 (e12)
f9	TOTAL CASH FUNDS HELD BY CHURCH	135,762.57 (x)	130,579.85 (y)

SECTION G**OTHER ASSETS and LIABILITIES**

		At 1 September 2023	At 31 August 2024
g1	Investments (include Endowments)		
g2	Land & Buildings (see notes re Insurance value)		
g3	Other Assets		
g4	Loan(s) - show amount outstanding at year end		
g5	Other Liabilities		

f4 Include only Funds held at the Central Finance Board

f5 Include only Funds held at Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes

g1 Include any other investments (not the cash element of TMCP trusts accounts this is included in line f5)

Declarations and Scrutiny

I confirm that these Receipt and Payment based accounts for the year to 31 August 2024 have been prepared from the records of the Church and that they include all funds under the control of the Church trustees.

Signature of Treasurer Date 1st May 2025

Name & address of treasurer Mrs Debbie Mathieson, 53 Holywell Avenue, Whitley Bay. NE26 3AQ

Presentation to the Church trustees

I confirm that the annual report and accounts for the year ended 31 August 2024 will be presented to the meeting of the Church trustees held on 1st May 2025

Signature of the Chair of the meeting

Name of the Chair of the meeting Rev Eva Walker Date

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of the

St John's Methodist Church Whitley Bay, Registered Charity 1184805

Responsibilities and basis of report

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the St John's Methodist Church for the year ended 31 August 2024 set out on pages 2 to 3. As the Church'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 Church's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 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

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which give me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

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.

I have not obtained independent verification of all investments with the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes or held in other trusts, bank balances and funds at the Central Finance Board of the Methodist Church which are individually in excess of £10,000 (ten thousand pounds) at the balance sheet date.

Signature of independent examiner

Name of independent examiner Mrs Susan Mason.....

Address 16 Gerrard Road, Whitley Bay NE26 4NL

Date 19th March 2025.....

Declarations and Scrutiny

I confirm that these Receipt and Payment based accounts for the year to 31 August 2024 have been prepared from the records of the Church and that they include all funds under the control of the Church trustees.

Signature of Treasurer Date 1st May 2025

Name & address of treasurer Mrs Debbie Mathieson, 53 Holywell Avenue, Whitley Bay. NE26 3AQ

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Signature of the Chair of the meeting

Name of the Chair of the meeting Rev Eva Walker Date

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of the

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Signature of independent examiner

Name of independent examiner Mrs Susan Mason.....

Address 16 Gerrard Road, Whitley Bay NE26 4NL

Date 19th March 2025.....