

## **FRIENDS OF ST LAURENCE CHORLEY**

*Binding Church and Community Together*

### **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2023**

#### **Organ Project**

Following the completion of repairs to the roof over the organ chamber in October 2022 we were able to embark on repairs to the organ itself in 2023. David Wells Organ Builders completed three major jobs, starting in July and finishing September, covering repairs and refurbishment of the bellows, the great under action and the swell organ. The total cost, excluding VAT, was £46,593 of which £36,000 was contributed by FOSL and the balance from the Parish. In round numbers £60,000 has been spent on the organ in 2022/23, £40,000 from FOSL. More details are to be found in the Treasurers Report. The repairs to the bellows which were in imminent danger of collapse were particularly urgent and we can take considerable satisfaction from this result.

We received grants totaling £1,500 from two specialist charities, The Pilling Trust and The On Organ Fund used a balance of £7,834 from a £20,000 grant from Chorley Council for all of which we are most grateful. Unfortunately, our application for a £10,000 grant from the Church Buildings Foundation was unsuccessful, on the grounds previous refurbishments meant that the organ was no longer in its original state.

#### **Video project**

We now have 12 short videos posted on the FOSL website. Subjects and performers are as follows:

The Future for the Church – Fr Neil Kelley

The St Laurence Ministry – Tony Checker, Cornelius Ashgar

The Organ project – Alan Winstanley

The Belfry – David Thistlethwaite

Taste Café – Rachel Gilkes, Chris Hedges

Food Parcel Service – Karen Pemberton, Cheryl Winstanley

Open Table – Rob and Betty Kelly

Debt Counselling – Rachel Gilkes, James Laidler

The Standish Stitchers – Jane Morwood, Sandra Dickinson, Anne Wray

Development Strategy – James Laidler

Fundraising for the Friends – Brian Clarke, Michael Welsh

Oliver Cooper, Chorley's Church Champion – Bill Walker, Michael Welsh

This video library provides a comprehensive picture of the different services, sacred and secular that St Laurence's offers and introduces some of the remarkable people, volunteers and staff, who provide them. There is scope for more to be added covering the Wellness Hub and the Parish Nurse and perhaps interviews with some of the users, the format is flexible. These videos are a resource for

promoting the Church and its activities to a much wider audience. They make a powerful case for supporting our dynamic parish church, the more they can be shared with people outside the regular congregation the better;

We are extremely fortunate that Jack Pemberton agreed to make these videos for us. The library is an eloquent testimony to the quality of his creative work and technical virtuosity. The committee is most grateful to Jack for the time and effort he has given to this project.

### **Recruitment**

In April we mounted an initiative to introduce FOSL to the wider Church family with leaflets, a presence at all three weekend services and a special sermon by Fr Neil, we also had a stand on Heritage Sunday. The results of these efforts were disappointing; it is evident that FOSL lacks salience beyond its core membership and we need to work harder to persuade the wider community that involvement with the Friends as members and activists is an obvious way to express their support for the Church and sustain and expand its activities. We need help from younger people who understand modern communications, in particular social media, to help us reach out to the wider community and families who are moving into the Chorley area.

### **Future Projects**

The PCC has requested FOSL to undertake two new projects – access to the first floor rooms over the refectory and repairs to the belfry window. The committee has adopted a revised case for support and an outline plan which will be submitted to the Annual General Meeting. Provided that we maintain our subscription income we should have a reserve of around £5,000 to launch these projects.

### **Future Funding**

Following the completion of the first phases of the Organ Project we shall have to rebuild our finances before committing further expenditure. Experience has shown that, given increasing pressures on the cost of living, crowd funding appeals, individual donations and ad hoc events cannot produce the kind of sums we will need so we will have to identify new sources of corporate and charitable support. Fortunately, we have a good track record on which to build.

### **Acknowledgments**

I would like to thank my fellow officers Jane Morwood and Brian Clarke for their unfailing support and hard work throughout the year, they have been excellent team players always ready to go the extra mile. Thanks also to the committee for their counsel and keeping us on the straight and narrow and to all FOSL members without whom none of the above would have been possible. The incoming Chairman will face some formidable challenges but will have a first class team to help overcome them. I wish you all the very best for the future of FOSL and St Laurence's Church.

Michael Welsh

January 2024

**The Friends of St Laurence, Chorley - Charitable Trust.**

**Registered Charity Number 1186760**

**Treasurer's Report – Year Ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023**



Dear Friends

I have prepared the accounts for discussion at this year's Annual General Meeting. These have been independently reviewed by James Laidler, Treasurer of St Laurence's Parochial Church Council.

After the Covid pandemic, I am pleased to report that the membership has been maintained and indeed increased by one to 62 members. This year, our income has come from:

- Membership Subscriptions
- Donations (Direct and via the Just Giving website)
- VAT Recovery
- Grants

The income shown has been inflated by the late payment of the first instalment of the Chorley Council CIL grant (£12,166), which was allocated to the organ roof works contract in 2022. The remainder of the £20,000 grant was allocated to the first organ refurbishment contract.

I am expecting that approximately £400 can be received in Gift Aid funds, but this will now happen in 2024 due to the difficulty of dealing with HMRC and getting them to accept me as Treasurer. Also, this year, we have not sought or received any corporate funding.

From the accounts, you can see that we have paid for several refurbishment contracts on our organ. The first of these, for the replacement of the reservoirs cost £35,919.60 less £5,986.60 VAT we reclaimed. This was totally funded by FoSL. Two more contracts were let, each in the amount of £10,008.00 including VAT. These were funded by the PCC, using FoSL as agents. There was also a small payment made for the balance of the organ protection works, left over from the previous year.

The remaining small items of expenditure are for our web consultant, and to Tom Wray for a banner used on the Heritage Day, and for Jack Pemberton for some software to enable him to edit the many excellent videos that have been prepared this year.

So, in summary we started out this year with £7,466.26 and have ended up with £3,017.08.

We need your subscriptions and donations as they provide the float for us to spend money on the website, pay insurances and other day to day costs. We have two projects in mind for 2024 and beyond, which will be discussed by your committee to establish costs and possible timescales. Each of these will require substantial fund raising and successful grant applications.

This has been my second year as your Treasurer, and it has been a privilege to act in this capacity. It has been an exciting year as we have managed to carry out a number of projects.

Brian Clarke

Hon Treasurer, The Friends of St Laurence, Chorley

# Friends of St Laurence Chorley

## Statement of Accounts for Financial Year 1st January to 31st December 2023

	Income £	Expenditure £
<b>Income</b>		
Family Subscription (34 members)	£1,275.00	
Individual Subscription (26 members)	£1,300.00	
Donations (Corporate)	£0.00	
Donation (Just Giving)	£48.85	
Donations (Other)	£336.46	
Sales (Standish Stickers and Books)	£360.45	
Subscription by Installment (2 members)	£72.00	
VAT Refund	£9,322.60	
Grant Aid - HMRC	£0.00	
OnOrgan Grant	£500.00	
Pilling Trust Grant	£1,000.00	
Chorley Council CIL Grant	£20,000.00	
PCC Funding for Organ Works	£27,670.60	
<b>Total</b>	<b>£61,885.96</b>	
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Steffany Collette (Web Consultant)		£100.00
David Wells Organ Builders (Job No 1504)		£587.16
David Wells Organ Builders (Job No 1523)		£35,919.60
David Wells Organ Builders (Job No 1529)		£10,008.00
David Wells Organ Builders (Job No 1545)		£10,008.00
Insurances		£136.50
Roller Banner (Anne Wray)		£53.29
Repay PCC VAT Refund (Jobs 1523 and 1529)		£7,654.60
Jack Pemberton - Editing Software		£199.99
Repay PCC VAT Refund (Job No 1545)		£1,668.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>£66,335.14</b>
<b>Opening Balance Brought Forward</b>		£7,466.26
Total Income		£61,885.96
<b>Sub total</b>		£69,352.22
Expenditure		£66,335.14
<b>Current Balance</b>		<b>£3,017.08</b>

Accounts examined and agreed to be an accurate record

James Laidler, Treasurer  
St Laurence's Parochial Church Council  
January 2024