



**ST GEORGE
FATFIELD**



ANNUAL REPORT BOOK 2022

**Published for the
Annual Parochial Meeting
On 9th May 2023**

Parishioner Meeting & APCM Index

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**Parishioner Meeting & APCM
Tuesday 9th May 2023**

AGENDA

Annual Meeting of Parishioners (formerly known as Vestry Meeting)

1. Opening prayer and worship
2. Minutes of the last meeting
3. Matters arising
4. Election of Wardens

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

1. Opening prayer
2. Apologies
3. Minutes of the last annual meeting on 10th May 2022
4. Matters arising
5. Presentation of the Electoral Roll
6. Presentation of Reports (circulated previously)
 - Wardens' report (including comment on fabric of the church)
 - Safeguarding
 - Deanery Synod report
 - Treasurer's report, including acceptance of accounts.
7. Elections
 - PCC (4 persons for 3 years)
8. Appointment of External Examiner
9. Chairman's report.
10. Any other business

APCM Trustees Annual Report

2022 Report & Accounts for the PCC at St George's Church, Fatfield

Aim and purposes

St George's Church Fatfield, Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of, co-operating with the incumbent, the Reverend Nick Barr-Hamilton, promoting in the ecclesiastical parish (and beyond) the whole mission and gospel of Christ in his church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.

Objectives and Activities

The PCC is committed to the Charity Commission guidance to exist for the public benefit as it carries out its aims and purposes. Within this document is a broad selection of the many activities that take place within the church carried out by volunteers and open to all people inside the parish and beyond.

The PCC works to enable as many people as possible to worship at St George's and become part of our living community. The PCC takes responsibility for important policies, including safeguarding, data protection, health and safety as well as others required by either the law or the diocese. The PCC aims to support the incumbent with suggestions on how to reach people across the parish from many different backgrounds as well as help guide the vision for the future and ensure good financial management of the resources available through:

- worship and prayer; learning about the Gospel and deepening faith and knowledge of the Lord Jesus.
- provision of pastoral and practical care for people living in the parish. This includes supporting and serving as a food bank outpost, offering bereavement support, providing activities for young people, families and elderly people, including (but not limited to) community drop in coffee mornings, a lunch club, a toddler group, a youth club, a

warm space initiative and a number of other community groups.

- Missionary and outreach work.

To facilitate this, it is important that we maintain the fabric of the Church building and there is a vision to extend the church building to better enable us to achieve this given the limitations of the existing building and its facilities.

Achievements and Performance

Within this document are some of the many ministries and services that the PCC supports throughout normal times, along with the way it supported the local community through the COVID-19 pandemic. On top of these regular activities, there are numerous one-off events that take place to enrich our community, including a Jubilee celebration cream tea, an Autumn Faire and a Christmas craft cafe

In addition to our regular services and groups, we normally conduct numerous baptisms and occasional weddings, as well as various one-off services such as our annual memorial service and our healing service.

Our Easter and Christmas services were much more normal in 2022, but there remain some changes that will probably be permanent. The church continued to hold many funerals and burials in 2022 and the churchyard now only has a few new plots remaining.

The church looks beyond its immediate needs in its world giving, where 10% of our free income is tithed to charities suggested by church members that also fit with our mission and vision. Through the autumn and winter, the church functioned as a warm space several days a week supporting dozens of people with a warm place to meet and socialise. We are grateful for support from Sunderland Council and The Coalfields Trust to support this initiative.

Financial Review

The Financial review produced by our treasurer and independently examined is available later in this financially to support the ministry and mission in the parish.

Reserves Policy

It is the aim of the PCC to maintain free reserves that cover 3 months of fixed costs to ensure essential bills can be paid in the event of an unexpected drop in income or unexpected costs. This Policy was ratified by the PCC on November 6th 2018.

Plans for future period

Our separate vision document contains plans for where we feel God calling us, but 2023 will see us continue to take the church forward in a very changed world. With heating costs substantially increased, efforts will continue to be made to seek continued funding for our warm space initiative and keep fuel costs down. The reality is that it is difficult to heat our big old Victorian church building, but investigations will be made regarding insulation possibilities. The new community annexe and café designs, which were granted planning permission and faculty in 2021 has gone out for tender. At time of writing we have over 80% of the full cost in place and expect to enter a period of value engineering with the successful contractor to ensure we can deliver the bulk of the project within the current budget available.

This new annexe, if it is built, will better enable the Aims and Purpose of the church and its need has been made much more apparent through the COVID crisis. The annexe will also help us reduce our carbon footprint and provide a modern efficient space that is easy to heat. We will need to think more about our ecological credentials in 2023. Inflation remains the biggest risk to

the new annexe project, but a phasing of the project may ensure best value for money in a very difficult period for the construction industry.

With all this work potentially going on later in 2023, we must also keep focussed on the primary objectives of the church that this new annexe would enable.

Structure, governance and management

The Parochial Church Council is a corporate body established by the Church of England. The PCC operates under the Parochial Church Council Powers Measure. The PCC is registered with the Charity Commission (Charity no. 1190509).

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the standing orders of the church (available from the church office or the incumbent) and complies with the Church Representation rules. The PCC includes, the Incumbent, the wardens, the readers and APA's, any members of CofE Synods on the electoral role along with those members elected at the APCM and those co-opted by the PCC.

The Full PCC (trustees) meets 9 times a year and makes decisions on matters of importance to the parish, agrees and implements required policies, sets the budget and monitors how funds are spent. New members receive an induction into the role of trusteeship and the functioning of the PCC.

The Buildings group is an authorised committee empowered to implement decisions of the PCC regarding works to the fabric of the church.

The Standing Committee has authorisation to transact urgent decisions between PCC meetings and report back at the next meeting. the PCC.

The Church office holds copies of approved policies, including Safeguarding, Safer Recruitment, Health & Safety, Lone Working, Social Media, Recruitment of Ex-offenders, Whistle Blowing, Anti-fraud, Domestic Abuse, GDPR compliant Privacy Notices and Staff Handbook with grievance procedures.

Volunteers

None of what takes place would occur without the dozens of volunteers that give of their time and effort each week. Over 50 people are involved in volunteering at St George's. There are too many people who give sacrificially to mention them all by name, but you work in service of Christ and we thank you for making St George's a vibrant and Christ centred church that serves so many different people.

Administrative information

St George's Church is found at Vigo Lane, Harraton, Washington NE38 9AH. It is an Anglican Church of England church within the diocese of Durham. The PCC is a body corporate (PCC Powers Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2006).

PCC members who have served from the APCM of 2022 (10th May 2022) are:

Ex Officio members:

- Incumbent: The Reverend Nick Barr-Hamilton (Chair)
 - Wardens: Mrs Christine Hope
 - Readers: Mr Maurice Taylor & Mrs Pat Matthews
 - APA: Mrs Eve Winstanley
- Deanery Synod: None.

Elected Members

- Mr Len Adams
- Ms Jo-Anne Cohrs

- Ms Tara Etemadi
- Mr Doug Green (Treasurer)
- Mrs Lucille Hutchinson
- Mrs Andrea Pritchard
- Mrs Leslie Stevens
- Mrs Gail Watson
- Mr Peter Watson
- Mrs Lynn Wyatt

Mrs Ruth Forster serves as the PCC Secretary.

Mrs Kate Grimwood served as the elected Safeguarding officer through 2022 with Mr Doug Green as the deputy safeguarding officer. Sadly, Kate passed away after a short battle with cancer early in 2023. Mr Doug Green has agreed to take over as lead with Mrs Leslie Stevens serving as deputy.

The PCC of St George's have adopted and pay due regard to safeguarding guidance given by the Church of England, the House of Bishops and Durham Diocese. The Safeguarding policy is available on the church website, on the porch notice board and in the church office, along with contact details for relevant officers.

The Independent Examiner appointed at the APCM of 2022 is Mr Charlie Forster.

The day to day management of church activities is delegated to the Incumbent and the Church Wardens supported by the church administrator Mrs Lorraine Cook, who we thank for her diligent and effective work in keeping the organisation of everything running smoothly. Accounts approved by the PCC on 4th April 2023 and signed on their behalf by the Reverend Nick Barr-Hamilton (PCC Chair).

They have been independently examined and signed off by Mr Charlie Forster.

Vicar's report

2022 has been another turbulent year across the globe, but we have seen the Lord continue to work in and through us in our community. The year began with COVID fears starting to wane. But with one global challenge ending, another arose. Russian threats to Ukraine were realised by the largest invasion in Europe since world war II. Inflation, that had already picked up post COVID suddenly leapt as energy prices went through the roof and those without fixed price contracts found themselves paying 4 or 5 times more for energy than they were in 2021.

The church, however, continued to serve and support our community and many ministries returned to a more normal pattern after 2 years of disruption, although we still struggle to find volunteers to work with young people. Our community coffee mornings continued to work with WCFP and went from strength to strength, some days seeing nearly 60 visitors and I cannot thank our volunteers enough for the work they put in to make these so popular. We could always do we some extra help if you are free on Friday mornings in particular.

With the war raging against Ukraine causing the largest refugee crisis in Europe since WWII and with close links to a project in Moldova, the church geared up and expected to host a number of Ukrainian families. The plan was to use our middle floor room and facilities as a lounge and safe space for Ukrainians hosted by local people and church members, but over time it became apparent that most Ukrainians preferred to stay closer to home than come to the UK.

Our Easter celebrations were much more normal this year and our Good Friday activity morning was incredibly busy, with around 60 young people and their families enjoying an Easter hunt, games and activities.

Our summer food and activity week, however, was not as well attended this year, but we did make a new partnership with Active Families North-East who ran some of the sports while our volunteers cooked lunches and ran other activities for young people.

In the Autumn, having postponed my Sabbatical for two years running due to COVID, I was finally able to take it. I do want to thank Rob & Margaret Bianchi, Doug & Lynn Green and Maurice Taylor, who took on much of the responsibility of the church while I was away on my three month Sabbatical. They already do so much to support me and the church in normal times. In particular, I thank Chris Hope who always carries substantial responsibility for the church and serves above and beyond as our only (currently) church warden and chaired the PCC in my absence. It was a wonderful time of rest as well as time spent studying and visiting places that engage in sustainable farming and ecology. I came back thoroughly challenged about how we really need to help people live sustainably in an affordable way (which is not easy) and look after God's creation better. The one phrase that arose again and again is that we are a community of creation with all God's creatures.

St George's was also awarded several warm space grants enabling us to run the church as a warm safe space through the autumn and winter. We thank God for the Coalfields regeneration Trust and Sunderland City Council for their generosity in this. These have again widened our community links and partnerships with other local VCS organisations.

During the year, one of our long serving APA's, Mrs Pat Davis retired from her formal role. I thank her personally and on behalf of the church and community for her friendship and many years of faithful service as an APA and her continuing ministry with people in the church.

Schools work also returned to a more normal pattern as I began visiting Fatfield Primary each month, Rickleton Primary occasionally and we restarted the lunchtime club in Biddick Academy.

This year, Christmas returned to its usual pattern and felt quite busy, although the Christingle was renamed as a Family Christmas Celebration. The cost of living crisis did have one impact though in that Biddick Academy was unable to hire coaches to bring the young people to their carol services, so we recorded the service in church with their music group, choir and readers and streamed it back to the school.

At the end of the year we sadly said goodbye to our dear friend and sister Kate who moved to Devon to live with her family, knowing she would be unlikely to return.

Through the year, our Community Annexe project continued to progress. We were now in a fundraising mode, looking to raise just under £680,000. Following the humbling generosity of our church family in 2021, we were now going out to numerous grant awarding bodies seeking to raise the rest. I would like to thank Anna Snell for using the gifts God has given her in doing much of this work. By the time I got back from Sabbatical we were progressing at a good pace, although with inflation in the construction industry running a mock we had had to add 23% to the original price provided by the Quantity Surveyor.

We thank God for his generous provision as well as the many people who believe in this project, both inside and outside of St George's. God certainly likes to surprise us with his goodness. Quite suddenly, in the last 6 weeks of the year we were awarded 3 substantial grants that brought us close to the inflation affected target. All of a sudden our professional team had to move from working on the project steadily to getting a full tender pack together to go out before Christmas. It was a huge amount of work for everyone involved, but with much prayer it was achieved. By God's grace we will start construction work in 2023. But we remained concerned about the level of inflation impacting building materials and labour shortages.

I want to finish by thanking God for all the volunteers who have worked so hard to enable so much to take place this year gone. Our building has remained a hub of activity, at times so busy we have struggled to find times to hold funerals. Again and again we see the need for additional inclusive space and proper facilities/kitchen. In all you do for this community and each other, you show that you are faithful Christians who love and serve in a sacrificial Christlike way and follow Christ's call no matter what the world throws at us.

I also thank God for the generosity of so many people, who enable us to pay fixed costs for the ministry we have done to serve young people, families and elderly, vulnerable and isolated people.

I thank our Readers and Pastoral team who take on much of the personal work. There are too many others to thank by name, but I am humbled by all your sacrifice and give thanks to God for you and all you do, from cleaning, maintenance and administration, to music, worship and outreach. I am also grateful to Doug, our Treasurer, and Lynn Wyatt who ably supports him. Finally, I want to thank our administrator, Lorraine, who does an amazing job in the office and continually goes above and beyond.

Thank You All.

We press on into 2023 with hopes and fears, but we do so knowing that we have a sovereign God who can do immeasurably more than we can ask or imagine. We continue to serve people in need in many different ways, bringing the good news of Jesus in word and deed and look forward to what the Lord brings in the year to come.

Give thanks for:

The Lord Jesus Christ, who is at the centre of our ministries, mission and people.

Our volunteers and teams who do so much to serve others and sacrifice time, effort and money to support Christ's church and his ministry here.

The progress in the Community Annexe project.

Finances to enable us to do so much.

Many answered prayers through the year.

Growth in relationships and

Pray for:

- Our mission and evangelism through the year.
- That our community annexe project would come to fruition despite inflation.
- A second church warden to support Chris and the church. New trustees to step up as others retire.
- Church growth in number and in depth of faith.
- Volunteers to help out where we are needing more help, in particular roles with young people and on Sundays.
- Nick to be sustained in leading our busy church and for him to remain healthy.

That all of us would continue to have our focus on Jesus and trust his sovereignty and faithfulness, no matter how difficult it becomes.

Biddick Academy & Schools' Ministry

Give thanks for:

- Restarting the Biddick Academy lunch club with a Christian ecological focus.
- Ongoing Assemblies, Christmas Services and work as a governor.
- Answered prayers.
- Christian staff and pupils in our school.

Pray for:

- That the lunchtime club would develop and point young people to Christ even as we think about saving His planet.
 - That assemblies would continue to build relationships and other opportunities in the school would develop.
 - The Christian faith to be seen as a good thing for young people and opportunities to share the gospel more widely with staff and students.
 - Teachers, pupils and their families might come to salvation
- Ongoing good relationships and positive influence as an Academy Trustee.

Church Finance Statement for 2022 & World Giving

2022 has been a very challenging year mainly due to the aftermath of the Covid Pandemic and the Cost of Living Crises, with the Church having to respond to a range of financial issues. However, it is important that we praise God that he has guided us throughout the year and helped to maintain all aspects of Church life and indeed supported us in establishing some new opportunities.

At the end of the year, we finished with a deficit of £954, (this does not include restricted money such as grants from Warm Space) Earlier in the year I was sure that there would be a deficit, mainly due to the different patterns of giving that developed over the previous year. The deficit is much smaller than I first thought, but the stalwart members of this church and faith in God proved me wrong. This year, giving was slightly up on the plate and some of the envelope giving was also up. We are thankful for grants from Sunderland Council, Durham Board of Finance and The Coalfields which has allowed us to develop our Warm Spaces Programme since September 2022. This has allowed many members of our community to participate in a range of activities within the church building

The financial breakdown for 2022 can be found on pages 34-38.....

Thank God for the many pledges, gifts, grants and donations that have come into the church throughout 2022 for the new build project. This is my second year as treasurer, and I would like to thank Lynn Wyatt for her continued support throughout the year. Lynn is still assisting in collating and banking money and continuing to work on Gift Aid. I pray God will continue to bless her as she also explores other activities. God has graciously blessed us in having Lynn available to support me.

World Giving

We gave 10% of our freewill giving to our three -year partners and to the charities put forward for one -year gifts. We were able to support Nightingales, Team for U, Connect, Biserica Crestina, Fundatia Stanca, Books & Bread For Kenya, Mission To Seafarers, Samaritan's Purse, Open Doors , ODM, Great North Air Ambulance, Daft As A Brush and Lesotho Link.

We are so thankful that God has put us in a position where we could again support these organisations.

Answers to prayer:

- For the faithfulness of God's people at St Georges in supporting the work in very difficult financial times.
- For the growing influence St Georges has had within the community over 2022
- For the award of a number of grants that has helped to develop our church as a community warm space

Items for Prayer:

- That people continue their giving to the church despite the 'cost of living crisis' that we are experiencing
- More grants and gifts towards the new build will continue to come into the church

in Christ's Name,
Doug Green - Treasurer

Wardens report 2022 -23

It's hard to believe but March '23 marked the third anniversary of the first covid lockdown. We are still living in a changed world, but praise God, as a Church, we have continued to serve Him and our community.

Over the past twelve months, the services have continued much the same as they always did. The 8am service is held monthly, and consists of a small but devoted group. The 10am and 4pm services are well attended, and most of the congregation have gradually returned to take part in the services, and praise God we also have new people too.

The outreach ministry to our local community continues. On Monday and Friday mornings we have coffee/tea and cake groups, which are well attended. There is also Wednesday lunches, the Tuesday morning Toddler Group, afternoon Ukulele Group, and the Monday afternoon Bereavement Support Group, bringing in regular members. All of these are able to continue thanks to a dedicated number of volunteers. Also, there is, currently, a Strength and Balance Class, run by Sunderland council, meeting on Thursday mornings. The majority of the people who attend belong to the Church family, but it does also bring in a number of local people; so as well as keeping the congregation physically fit, it too is a source of outreach!

As warden I have much to thank God and the congregation at St. George's for. I found last Summer to be challenging due to health problems. I was so well supported, I find I cannot name everyone personally. We have a marvelous Christian fellowship – the congregation at St. George's are truly wonderful people, and I am grateful to all of you. Also, as warden, I praise God for the support of Terry Wyatt, John Thomas, and Eileen Fletcher.

These lovely people literally took over warden duties, and delivered stern, regular pep talks to me, apropos of my needing to be obedient to my surgeon and oncologists' instructions. I've discovered It's a fact that gentle people can be scary sometimes.

I guess we can say 2022 was defined by Nick taking a well deserved 3 month sabbatical. I emphasize a sabbatical is certainly not to be confused with a holiday! During this time, along with many other churches, we did have a crisis – owing to the rapid escalation of fuel bills. Rob Bianchi, Doug our treasurer, and the building group, did sterling work regarding finding a means of being economical with our heating, and also by obtaining a Warm Spaces grant. We managed to weather the 3 months without any major mishaps, principally by everyone pulling together. As a congregation, admittedly we're far from perfect, but we worked together recognizing that only one person is in charge, and that it God Himself.

There are a number of points for prayer and praise.

- Thanks be to God for Nick's faith and dedication. May he and Lucy be blessed in their work.
- For our local community – praise God that we have strong local support. Praise God that the ministry and outreach of this Church is continuing, including the groups mentioned above. We ask for His blessing upon those who faithfully give their time. May this work continue, and more volunteers come forward.
- Pray that we can continue to heat the building, to offer a cozy environment for those who worship, and those who attend our outreach projects.
- May our fellowship and outreach continue through the coming year. As Martin Luther so aptly said, 'So highly privileged are we who believe in Christ. Amen.'

Warm Space

Since September 2022 as a Church, we have received grants that has enabled us to continue and develop a range of activities in supporting the local community. We are thankful for the support from:

Sunderland City Council
Diocesan of Durham Financial Board
Coalfields Regeneration Grant

Through a challenging period, we have been able to and continue to offer:

Monday	Cuppa, cake and company Bereavement support group
Tuesday.	Parents and Toddlers Ukulele Group
Wednesday	Bite to eat.
Thursday.	Active Families
Friday.	Cuppa, cake and company

This has seen over 200 community members on a weekly basis, taking part in our community programme.

Give thanks for:

The volunteers who give up their time to support these activities.
Those who provide food and drink.
The funding agencies for their continued support
Gods' blessing in allowing us to develop a wide -ranging programme.

Pray for:

The well-being of all who volunteers who support our programme.
For more volunteers to come forward to enable us to sustain and develop the programme
All community members who take part in the programme, that they continue to feel safe and warm but also may come to know Jesus as their Saviour.

Safeguarding

At St George's we take safeguarding young people and vulnerable adults seriously and we have the relevant policies in place, which are reviewed and updated on a yearly basis.

We give thanks for:

- Our beloved deceased sister Kate Grimwood, who worked in various roles within the church over many years, including Designated Safeguarding Officer.
- No issues regarding Safeguarding
- St George's being a safe place for those that seek peace.
- PCC members who have undertaken safeguarding training and accreditation.

We pray for:

- The Diocesan Safeguarding team – who continue to support us.
- Continued vigilance by the St George's community in being aware of safeguarding issues.

Doug Green

Meet and Eat

Meat and Eat has continued to offer a meal twice a month in church. We are blessed to have a rota of volunteers to cook, to help share the load. We have about 15 - 20 guests each time. In October we had another visit from the food hygiene inspector and were very pleased to maintain our 5* hygiene rating. During the winter we opened every Wednesday as one of the warm spaces and offered a simpler lunch, continuing to have at least 15 - 20 guests, but have now returned to being twice a month. We pray that we reach more people in the local community and they will come to know Jesus.

Cuppa, cake and company (CCC)

Our twice weekly 'coffee' mornings have been running for 2 years now (starting in April 2021) and continue to flourish as we welcome both old and new guests. We have been attracting from about 30 to more than 50 people to each Monday and Friday event. Together with our close link to St. George's nursing home (providing easy access to visitors), we also have regular visits from the carers and residents at West Lodge Penshaw and some of the staff and pupils at Harry Watts Academy in Harraton.

The above visitors give rise to a varied age range with mixed abilities which as a church is a huge blessing to all involved especially as an outreach into the community. Most of the cakes and scones are either homemade or donated by church members with other donations coming from surplus stock from businesses (via Washington Community Food Project). This keeps some of the running costs down with any monetary donations being used to supplement other church costs (tea, coffee, etc).

We give thanks for:

- All the volunteers who give their time and use their gifts on a Monday and Friday
- The people from the community who come to support these mornings
- The warm safe space in which we meet

We pray

- Continued faith and strength for all our volunteers that they would know how much they are appreciated
- Expansion of committed volunteers to help spread the load of this work (especially on a Friday)
- By this time next year, we are running our community café CCC and more out of the new annexe building.
- Gail Watson and the CCC Teams

WCFP partnership with the St George's Church

Once again, our grateful thanks go to the people of St. George's Church for their continued help and support of Washington Community Food Project.

2022 was a demanding year for the charity. The Cost-of-living Crisis has resulted in the number of parcels we issue rising by over 55% compared to 2021. Our dedicated volunteers have had to work *extra* hard to ensure donations are collected, shelves are filled and food parcels are packed and handed to our clients. We have had to top up the stock donations we receive by purchasing a *considerable* amount of food, as well as toiletries and detergent. This would not be possible without the generous cash gifts we receive from supporters such as yourselves.

Your kind donations have also enabled us to expand the services we provide to include access to computer equipment as a free community Digital Hub, opening our doors three days a week as a Warm Space, supplying free packed lunches for children during the holidays and sponsoring Key Stage 2 fruit and After School Club snacks in local primary schools.

We continue our drive to combat food wastage by collecting surplus bread, cakes and fresh supplies and distributing it first to clients and then to local groups/institutions. We firmly believe in filling bellies not bins so it is wonderful to see perfectly good food that was destined to be thrown away being enjoyed by groups within our community.

The outlet at St. George's is a vital branch, providing that first point of contact to locals who may find accessing the service at our main

facility difficult or daunting. We cannot thank the volunteers at St. George's enough for their dedication in providing a warm first welcome to the WCFP and ensuring that no one leaves without the help they need.

With no sign of the current economic crisis abating, we anticipate that this next year will prove similarly challenging as the need for our service continues to increase and we see more and more local people experiencing 'in-work poverty'. We look forward to continuing our successful partnership with the people of St George's Church to ensure residents of Washington and Springwell Village receive the support they need during these difficult times.

Many thanks from all at the WCFP

Administrators Report

I am now in my fourth year as the administrator for St George's Church and I can truly say I absolutely love my role, it can be challenging at times, emotional, but it is also very rewarding. I am now part of the pastoral team which I feel is a huge part of my role here at St Georges.

I am so thankful to God who has put people in my path that lead me to St Georges.

I am thankful for all the support I receive in the office from Nick, Chris, Doug, Lynn and Joanne.

I am thankful for all the volunteers who help with activities at St George's.

I pray for Nick and Lucy and all our church family here at St Georges.

I pray that God will answer our prayers for the annexe to be built this year so we can continue His work throughout the community and people will come to know Him.

Mothers Union St Georges Fatfield

Our membership stands at 6 with 1 more lady expressing desire to join us.

We meet on the second Monday of the month at 1pm until 2.30 pm. We organise our meetings as a committee, not having a leader, sharing out tasks as a team.

We are missing 2 meetings April and May owing to bank holidays and meeting up again in June.

We will be presenting Long Service Awards to 5 members then.

We give thanks to our long serving members who have kept this branch going for so long.

We pray for the future of St George's Fatfield Mothers Union as times change and finding volunteers to take on positions becomes difficult

Cleaning Team

Cleaning team consists of 5 or 6 dedicated workers, Len & Betty Adams, Avril Winship, Brenda Ridley and Sharon Lamb and Donna our Romanian member of St George's who comes when she can.

We meet on Friday's at 1pm for a couple of hours and are always Grateful for any extra help. We give a special thankyou to Roger Thornhill for cleaning the chairs, and always be willing to lend a hand.

We give thanks for everyone who gives us their time and energy to do this important job.

We pray that we will all be blessed with good health and strength in the coming year.

Youth Group Report

At the time of writing the youth group has nine members aged between 11 and 15. Numbers aren't everything by any means, but we are so thankful that after the years of covid and so many parts of life taking a while to go back to normal, that we have such a wonderful regular group of people meeting for bible study and eating together around a table.

Some of us went for the first time to a Diocesan youth event in April which was a new experience for us, and was very encouraging to be among so many young Christians from the local area.

Please give thanks to God for bringing young people together around his Word and the shared experience of eating together.

Give thanks for those young people who gave their time and energy to serve on Maundy Thursday in the kitchen, and on Good Friday at the craft cafe.

Please pray that each of them would continue to be blessed by coming along, and would grow in the knowledge and love of the Lord.

Please pray that the Lord would fan into flame the faith that is in them, preserve them in a hostile, post-Christian world, and give them hearts to love Him and love their neighbour as themselves.

Building Group

2022 was another year where we worked hard just to stay still. We were coming out of the restrictions imposed by the Coronavirus and we used the time to catch up on necessary repairs and improvements.

New ceiling lights were purchased and fitted in the Server area. Likewise new lights at high level were installed in the side Chapel. The boilers in the main building and the upstairs rooms were serviced and found to be in good working order. A new thermostat was fitted in the church to allow more economical use of the heating system.

The lightning protection system was tested and found to be in good working order as were the fire extinguishers dotted around the building.

A thorough clean-up of the building internally was carried out in the Spring and Autumn working days. On the same days in March and November a working party restored the graveyard and other outside areas to their proper standard after the Winter and Summer periods.

The Building Group members who maintain the graveyard throughout the year, Peter Watson, Nigel Heppell and Keith Robson, once again did an admiral job. Our external areas are always in tip top condition. The Group was ably assisted by Norman Fatherley, John Adams, Roger Thornhill and Brian Pritchard and we thank them for their huge contributions.

Prayers of thanks for the appreciation shown by the congregation for our work, and prayers also for the time and effort put in by the Group members who made it possible.

Prayers of hope that there may be an interest shown by other members of the congregation in joining the Group to help us in our tasks. Please talk to Len Adams or Peter Watson if you can help.

Annual Church Report for Toddlers March 2023

The Church Toddler Group continues to meet downstairs in the church. Storing the toys and furniture downstairs has proven to be very beneficial for the quick setting up of the toys each Tuesday morning, ably assisted by Len and Doug.

The toddler group runs from September to July. We also are closed during any school holidays e.g., Easter.

We are now a team of six, Lucy has recently joined as a volunteer and each of us have a key role in ensuring the session runs effectively and provides the children who attend with opportunities to play safely and engage with other children, and the adults who come have chance to chat to each other and us. We try to make certain that we are available to provide help or a listening ear for anyone who needs it.

We currently have 24 children on our list to attend and have a waiting list because we are at capacity. The parents/grandparents and children who come all seem to enjoy their time with us and many people who contact us to put their name on the waiting list tell us they have heard positive comments and recommendations about this session. The cost of the session has increased to £2 to help support the increased cost of utilities. We have also had monetary donations from parents/grandparents at Christmas and when children have moved into nursery/school.

The children continue to enjoy the opportunity to play with the toys alongside their adult and the volunteers for the first part of the session, we stop around 10.15 for a story followed by juice and biscuits. The children can then play again or join in the craft activity we plan each week to link to the story we have shared. We finish the session with songs and finally our 'goodbye bubbles'.

We also celebrate special events during the year such as Christmas, Mother's Day and we always finish the year with a party – last July we enjoyed our 'Pirate's Party'. Children's birthdays are recognised and when the children finally leave us, we present them with a children's Bible – filled with all the stories we have shared with them. We hope this 'link' will bring them back to St George's Church – we do invite them to come along to any outreach events such as the Good Friday Crafts and we have been so happy to welcome them when they have come along with their grownups.

We thank God and feel blessed that we are able to introduce these 'tiny people' to Jesus and we hope and pray they will come to want to know more about him and St George's church. We pray that each of the volunteers will be blessed as they carry out God's work and that further people might join our group.

Finally, can I thank all who come along every Tuesday to serve our community in this way. We are a happy, friendly team who enjoy the company of each other and the children who attend.

Lynn Green

Children's Group Sunday 10 AM service

The weekly Sunday Children's Group continues to be led by Lucy and I each Sunday. The numbers of children remain consistent 6 younger children and 6 older children.

The groups are split into two small groups with Lucy leading the older group (Key Stage 2 +) and me leading the younger group. I continue to use the Click material with the younger children, this allows the children to explore a theme with linked Bible passages and we always include a creative activity before concluding our session with a prayer. The children take home the craft to support discussion with parents.

The older children explore Bible passages/themes with Lucy, seeking answers and asking challenging questions as they explore their own growing faith.

We always make time to discuss children's lives outside of church celebrating their successes and supporting them in coping with any challenges.

Lucy and I would love to see more people volunteering to share their faith and understanding of the Bible with our children, Lucy and I enjoy our time with the children but it is sometimes difficult to maintain and grow the children's church on our own.

When Lucy and Nick were on Sabbatical the only way to manage the Children's, church was to set up a table at the back of church which gave the children access to materials linked to themes/ Bible passages currently being covered in the main service.

We were approached to include younger children/toddlers but this has been difficult because of lack of volunteers. We have however set up a box at the back of church containing toys, figures, animals, jigsaws, and books that can be accessed by children under parents' supervision.

We have much to be thankful for:

The children who attend our church seem to enjoy coming and it is truly wonderful to see their faith and love of Jesus growing. Their questions and curiosity certainly support Lucy and I and keep us on our toes.

Please continue to pray for:

More volunteers who would help with our children's groups – it is a great act of service but also helps grow your own faith.

Finally, I would ask that everyone prays for every child who comes in through our church door, they are our future congregation and followers of Jesus.

Lynn Green

Children's Christmas Gift Bags

Covid can be blamed for many things - most of them not good - but in 2020, Covid was responsible for something rather special - the idea of giving away Christmas gift bags to 100 children - many of them from local families with no established connection with the church. Still living with intermittent lockdowns and restrictions, a similar event took place Christmas 2021—but by Christmas 2022 - we thought we would 'shake it up a bit' and try something new.

Almost by accident, however, I ended up putting together approximately 40 gift bags for ages 5-7 and ages 8-11, with extra gifts for toddlers and older children. As in previous years, the gift bags were filled with books, stickers, play putty, soft toys, packets of sweets,

slap bracelets, craft packs, wooden snowflake decorations, stationery items, activity booklets, bunches of bangles and pocket games. Costs were minimal as The Children's Society provided the 'Christingle' bags and most of the items were donated.

As children made their way home after attending the Christmas Eve Craft event, one by one, they came to collect their gift bag. In no time at all a long queue had formed, extending across the room and beyond - many asked for extra bags for their siblings!

There were lots of familiar faces but also quite a number of new ones, all eagerly wanting to know what they might discover. I was delighted with the response but could not have been more surprised - or concerned that some might go home disappointed and empty-handed. God was truly with me that day - there were just enough gift bags and extras to go round!

Many thanks to The Children's Society, WCFP, Books & Bread for Kenya and anyone who kindly donated items.

Points for Prayer and Praise

- Praise God for our children and young people - pray that St George's helps draw them closer to Him
- Praise God for all our volunteers who serve the church and the wider community in so many ways
- each and every day - pray He strengthens & encourages them and pray for new volunteers
- Praise God for sustaining St George's church throughout the Covid pandemic - pray He continues to provide as we face other challenges

Andrea Pritchard

Service Of Prayer For The Sick

Our dedicated group of prayers continue to meet monthly for our service of prayer and pray daily for those who have requested our prayers.

We have two members added to our group during the past year and we support one another in prayer as we pray for those who are sick or in need.

We have been blessed with answers to our prayers and thank God for his continued blessing. We know how much people appreciate the knowledge that they are supported by our prayers.

May God bless us and those for whom we pray.

Pastoral Team Report 2023

At the time of writing the 2022 report I mentioned our pastoral team had started a 6-session training programme, "Exploring Pastoral Care" with an extra session to cover Prayer Ministry.

It was a great privilege for the current pastoral team, Pat Matthews, Pat Davis, Chris Hope and myself to deliver these sessions. The programme helped us share God's word and learn how our Great Shepherd "Jesus" cares for us all. We are greatly blessed to now have a pastoral team of 13 people.

Following on from the training we have had number meetings on how best to take the team forward and now have a plan that is starting to be implemented where we can help our church family and the wider community.

Also, during this time, the new members completed DBS checks and Safeguarding training.

Our Bereavement Support Group continues to meet every Monday 3pm to 4.30pm, except bank holiday Mondays. This is a lovely group where we share friendship and fellowship, and have a caring understanding of how difficult grief can be.

In the past our BSG had a day trip to Wallington Hall. This year we have organised a trip to Holy Island and have invited the church and wider community to join us, we currently have almost 30 people going.

Our Memorial Service of Thanksgiving on the 5th May 2022 was the first one we have been able to hold since the covid pandemic and was attended by almost 100 people, a number of whom had been unable to have a proper funeral and say goodbye to their loved ones as they would have wished.

The service was greatly appreciated and all who attended spoke of how meaningful it was and how much it had helped them.

The St Luke's Day healing service in October was also much appreciated by those who attended.

During the past year we have also been able to take Home Communion to anyone who is unable to get to church. Pat is now able to visit St George's Care Home again and chat to the residents, some of whom get to the 10am Sunday Service and Cuppa, Cake and Company mornings from time to time, and the monthly service has been re-instated after the pandemic restrictions.

We thank God for his calling and the love that He has for us all, we ask that he will continue to bless our team in their ministry.

Electoral Roll

The Electoral Roll has been updated and there are 120 names on the new roll (revised on the 11th April 2023).

Two names were added during the year and following the posting of the public notices, no further names were added.

No-one has been removed. Sadly 2 names have been removed by reason of death. A copy of the new roll is available in the church office.

Eve Winstanley Electoral Roll Officer

Income	Actual 2022	budget 2022	Actual 2021
<u>Giving</u>			
Gift Aided	34813	35500	35383
HMRC tax refund	9612	10000	10890
Other Planned Giving	9557	12000	10161
Loose Plate	2717	2000	1362
Donations to Church	3169	2000	1119
PCC Fees	5486	6500	6100
Hire of Rooms	0	250	
<u>Other Income</u>	-		
Photocopying	14	40	6
Refreshments	0	750	700
Memorial Service	0		250
Wednesday Lunches	0		416
Book of Remembrance	400		
Commonwealth war graves	12		12
Quinquennial	0		7
<u>Restricted Income</u>	-		
DDBF Assigned Fees	3594	4000	3289
Fees Organist/Verger	940		594
Income to be paid on	0		88
Meet & Eat/Boxing day	0		184
Toddlers	53		
Monday club	0	120	
Craft Days	70	100	
Book sales (Lent & Christmas)	89	150	132
Specific donations			
Faculty Fees	630		552
Packed Lunches			794
Specific grants *	10711	12	475
Smith Roddam (Solicitor)	90		816
Refund	71		40
Coffee & Cake	4346	3000	3570

Income	Actual 2022	budget 2022	Actual 2021
-	-		
Salary	-		773
Comp Screen	-		30
Streaming	30		
Interest/Credit	155		
Lent/Advent			
TOTAL INCOME (Church)	86559	76422	77743
New Annexe restricted income	49,734		127,511
TOTAL INCOME	136,293		205,254

Specific Grants details

Warm space grants	Spent	Received
Sunderland Council	1215	5150
Durham Diocese		3561
Coalfields Trust		2000
		10711

Note: a heating bill of over £3500 was paid out in early 2023 that these funded

Details of Annexe fund Income

capital appeal	16,206
regular giving	11,595
Gift aid reclaim	16,342
interest	593
grant awards received	4,999
	49,734

Expenditure

Church Costs

	Actual 2022	budget 2022	Actual 2021
-	-		
Parish Share	41000	41000	37500
Upkeep of Services	1048	1000	714
Licence renewal	828	800	
Technology			474
Reimbursed Meet & Eat		400	
Headstone		200	

Church Building Costs

	Actual 2022	budget 2022	Actual 2021
-	-		
Insurance	2650	2700	2547
Heating & Lighting	4258	4400	3935
Water	107	100	753
Boiler Service Contracts	625	900	935
Church Maintenance	1075	2000	872
Fire Safety Maintenance		250	
Cleaning	180	150	306
Churchyard Maintenance	250	300	314
Water Rates	898	550	

Administration Costs

	Actual 2022	budget 2022	Actual 2021
-	-		
Administrator salary	9799	9727	10826
Telephone & Broadband	330	370	371
Photocopying	71	600	1042
Stationery & Postage	370	500	838
Web Page	50	80	179
DDBF Assigned Costs	3744	4000	4936
Donations paid on	744	0	163
Fees Organist, Verger	900	580	610
Sundry Office costs	191		
Book of remembrance	89		
DBS checks	5		
Warm Space	1215		
Streaming	30		
Xfer to CAF	50		

Mission Costs

Study Group	-	100	
Monday Club		100	
Tracts & Printing	88	250	110
Study Books		250	523
DBS checks	22	50	15
Refreshments	875	500	766
Lunches	120	240	681
Childrens's work & craft	130	400	63
course fees		200	94
WORLD GIVING	5516	5000	5020
Garden Party		200	
Travel exp.	312		
Vicar's expenses	0		437
sundry expenses	190		64
Books	257		
Fac for graves		200	1409
Headstone app			165
Christmas on Van		200	361
<u>TOTAL EXPENDITURE (church)</u>	78017	78297	77,023

Expenditure Annexe Project (restricted)

Jasper Kerr (Civil & Structural)	870
Howarth Litchfield (Architect)	8,960
360 deg (surveys)	1260
S R solicitor	1481
Archaeology report	552
bank/sumup fees	6
TGA (M&E Engineering)	6,155
	19,285

TOTAL EXPENDITURE**97,302****Balance Sheet**

	Dec 31st 2022	Dec 31st 2021
Unrestricted Cash at Bank	17,987	18941
Unrestricted		
Designated Funds	15,000	15000
Restricted Funds (Warm Spc)	9,496	
Restricted Funds (Annexe)	175,675	145,226
Total Funds	218167	174,167

Expenditure for ongoing operations of the church excluding the warm space grants was in deficit by £954, however the surplus from all funds for day to day running of the church was £8542.

The annexe Fund rose by £30,449, but in 2022 we were also awarded £457,500 of grants that will be paid when we reach the total required to start work and contract has been signed. The total available for the annexe project, including the Fatfield fund, funds held by the diocese and other future regular giving pledged by local people at year end was £777,481.

We are grateful to the Lord for the generosity of every one of our church family, our community and external funders. We are also grateful to God for the wisdom and prudence of those spending to enable us to cover our costs during a year when many churches and charities have struggled significantly.

Inflationary pressures and increased fuel costs mean we do pray that people will continue to generously help us meet the challenges of the coming year.

These accounts were independently examined by Mr Charlie Forster and approved by the trustees (PCC) at their meeting on April 4th 2023.

Signed by Chair and Vicar, Rev Nick Barr-Hamilton



6 April 2023

The Trustees
St George's Church Fatfield PCC
Vigo Lane
Harraton
Washington
NE38 9AH

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of St George's Church, Fatfield PCC

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the St George's Church, Fatfield PCC (the Trust) for the year ended 31 December 2022.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 201 ('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

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

1. Accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. The accounts do not accord with those records.

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.



Signed:
Name: Charles Dixon Forster
Address: 10 Swinhope, Rickleton, Washington, Tyne & Wear, NE38 9HR
Date: 6 April 2023

Minutes of the A.P.C. Meeting held on Tuesday 10th May 2022 **ANNUAL MEETING OF PARISHIONERS** **(formerly known as the Vestry Meeting)**

1. Opening Prayer & Worship

NBH opened by welcoming all attending to the meeting & read a passage from Ephesians 4, the reading set for Evening Prayer tonight. He commented that we would be thinking about some of the words from that passage later through both meetings. He finished by leading all in prayer, with other prayers offered by those in attendance, ending by commending both meetings into His hands.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Commenting that he hoped all there had received their Report Booklet which contained the minutes from last year's meeting. to parishioners. GW queried the position of Deputy Church Warden & wondered if Michael Hepworth could be approached for this post. NBH commented that this would be something to be discussed in a PCC meeting. The minutes of the previous meeting having been published were accepted as correct, this being proposed by GW & seconded by EF, with 16 votes for & 3 Abstentions.

GW queried the position of Deputy Church Warden & wondered if Michael Hepworth could be approached for this post. NBH commented that this would be something to be discussed in a PCC meeting. The minutes of the previous meeting having been published were accepted as correct, this being proposed by GW & seconded by EF, with 16 votes for & 3 Abstentions.

3. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

4. Election of Wardens

NBH thanked CH for her work over the last year, she was doing an amazing job, with the assistance of various people who, whilst not appointed as Deputy Wardens, are doing a sterling job. He commented that it was wonderful to have others willing to help & if anyone felt called by God from the floor in the meeting, they could be put forward for election as Deputy Warden.

He thanked her again for taking on the role which is acting in a position of legal responsibility to the Bishop. It was proposed by KB & seconded by HE that we re-elect CH which was carried unanimously. The meeting closed with prayer, in particular for CH, & members of the PCC, at 19.55 p.m.

A.P.C.M.

1. Opening Prayer

NBH opened the new meeting with further prayer.

2. Attendees & Apologies

The meeting was attended by:- Len Adams (LA), Elspeth Baird (EB), Rev. Nick Barr-Hamilton (NBH), Clive Bowman (CB), Maureen Bowman (MB), Harry Ellis (HE), Eileen Fletcher (EF), Ruth Forster (RF), Doug Green (DG), Christine Hope (CH), Pat Matthews (PM), Leslie Stevens (LS), Brian Tait (BT), Catherine Tait (CT), Maurice Taylor (MT), Marjorie Thomas (MTh), Gail Watson (GW), Avril Winship (AW), Eve Winstanley (EW), Barry Winstanley (BW), & Lynn Wyatt (LW).

Apologies were received from:- Betty Adams (BA), Lucy Barr-Hamilton (LBH), Margaret Bianchi (MB), Rob Bianchi (RB), Jo-Anne Cohrs (JC), Pat Davis (PD), Tara Etemadi (TE), Mary Gorog (MG), Lucille Hutchinson (LH), Audrey Rayner (ARa), Arthur Ridley (AR), Brenda Ridley (BR), Dorothy Sherrick (DS), Peter Watson (PW), & Terry Wyatt (TW)

3. Minutes of the Last Annual Meeting 11th May 2021

The minutes of the previous meeting had been published and were accepted as correct being proposed by LS & seconded by GW with 17 votes for & 4 abstentions.

4. Matters Arising

NBH said he had no issues to bring up & there were no matters brought by the meeting.

5. Presentation of the Electoral Roll

EW, our Electoral Roll Officer, advised of the details provided to her by Lorraine Cook, our Administrator. We now have 118 names on the Electoral Roll & have lost 2 members because of deaths. There were no questions from the floor.

6. Presentation of Reports (as circulated previously)

NBH told us that as these had been circulated previously, he did not intend to talk to each one. CH had nothing further to add to her written report, & NBH was able to confirm that there were no reportable safeguarding issues. He asked that members gave thanks to God for this as this remained one of the greatest dangers, & we all need to be aware & diligent of the importance of safeguarding. He suggested we always be welcoming of anyone new but to be aware as well.

As we currently have no Deanery Synod representatives & he was not aware that anyone had attended any meetings, NBH encouraged members to consider this role, & reported that the vicar at Birtley had retired & gone to a church in Wales, so they were in interregnum.

NBH commented that he hoped everyone had had the opportunity to read the Treasurer's Report from DG. Asked if he had anything further to add to the report DG remarked that we should thank God that in a challenging year we were in such a position, although he had noted that loose plate giving was down from services, but the flip side was the income from our Coffee & Cake coffee mornings. He thanked LW for her continuing support to him. NBH also highlighted that the deficit of £3,000 was actually a noncash deficit & the ongoing operations for the year were in surplus. There were no questions from the floor regarding the report. NBH commented that he was grateful to DG, LW & Lorraine in the office for all the work they do, & thanked people for their generosity both to church & the annex project.

He highlighted the grants we have been so fortunate in receiving & that the Lord is providing through the generosity of all. He asked for prayer with members remarking on people's faithfulness to church & the project especially through Covid, & thanks were given for the PCC & their faithfulness too. NBH thanked our independent examiner, Charlie Forster, for the work he had done. NBH asked for a proposal that we accept the accounts as seen, & CH proposed that the meeting accept them, seconded by EF, & the motion was carried unanimously.

7. Elections

PCC – (4 persons for 3 years)

NBH advised that at the moment we had only received one nomination for a position on PCC, which was Len Adams, proposed by DG & seconded by GW. NBH commented that he did not intend to pressurise anyone, there should be no pressure to come onto PCC as a trustee, he believes it is important that we have the right people as trustees, to help lead the church, & keep everything in order for the Charity Commission. LW agreed to stand from the floor, commenting she was happy to stand as long as she was not on Deanery Synod, which was proposed by HE & seconded by PM, with both nominations being elected unopposed. NBH thanked them both for their willingness to stand. He asked if 2 or 3 people would pray for them highlighting that PCC members have a spiritual responsibility as well as their legal responsibilities as trustees.

8. Appointment of External Examiner

NBH thanked Charlie Forster for his work this year advising the meeting that he has sent him an official letter of thanks & a gift. CF has confirmed he is happy to remain in the role & DG proposed, seconded by CT that we again formally ask CF to be our external examiner.

NBH thanked CF for agreeing to stand explaining that if we go over the £250,000 income mark CF would be unable to examine the accounts, & we would have to have an examination by a chartered accountant or other suitably registered person, but at the moment this is not likely.

9. Chairman's Report

NBH commented that he had written many of his thoughts in the report booklet, which he hoped people had read. He would start his comments tonight with a big thank you, although he knew many from the whole church were not at tonight's meeting. He told us that he had been completing a report to the Charity Commission & one question was that apart from the trustees, how many volunteers do we have; many of our trustees' volunteer in other ways anyway, so he had sat down with the electoral roll & gone through it to try to count up the number of different people who are involved with various things & had got to 52. He believes that it is an underestimation, but that is almost half the church family that are serving in different ways which is an incredible testament to what God calls us to & moves people's hearts & he thanked everyone. He continued commenting on the work being done through the further lockdowns in 2021 & also on people stepping forward when he had had his own struggles with ill health, thanking in particular RB & MB, & also mentioned that in the coming autumn when he & the family were to take a 3-month sabbatical, so many people were stepping forward to help & serve. He believes it is a joy to be here & a joy to serve everyone, & he is encouraged by how the church has flourished in this time, especially through Covid.

Some people have not returned but they are very few compared to many churches who have lost so many more than we have. He referred back to the passage he had read at the beginning of the Vestry Meeting, commenting that Christ took the way of the cross. NBH believes that what we think about affects what we do & we can all get bound up in our own thoughts, saying that the passage he had read is a reminder of this & the dangers of it.

He went on to talk about the impact that inflation is having, telling the meeting of the grants we have received for the new annex, & what the PCC were discussing about this as the belief is it will not be as much to maintain but still somewhere for people to come & meet. He mentioned that we are still short of leaders for the young people but have been blessed with people coming to faith. He knows there is a limit to what people can do, but he is very encouraged at the plans in place for when he is away. Asking for any questions from the floor NBH reminded everyone that he always here, ready to be challenged & encouraged. He asked that people used the Annual Report booklet in their prayers.

10. Any Other Business

NBH had no further business for this evening. He commented that at next year's meeting there would likely be a review of the Standing Orders as some are out of date & things have changed so they are not in line with the way church now functions. Before the meeting closed CT commented that she had received great comfort from MT, PM & EW & wanted to thank that we very blessed to have such a loving church family, & she thanked NBH & the family for keeping everyone going through the 'Covid' years. NBH agreed that we are blessed but as has already been mentioned it has taken its toll on him & the family & he has needed people's help as he had already spoken about. He asked for prayer for all things discussed this evening & also to remember those we have lost over the last year.

The meeting closed with the Grace at 20.24pm.