

Trustees 2023 Report & Accounts
for the Parochial Church Council of
St James the Great
Colwall



Annual Parochial Church Meeting
14th April 2024

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Aims and Purposes

St James Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of cooperating with the Rector, the Reverend Melanie Horton, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission of the church, pastoral, social, evangelistic and ecumenical. The PCC is also responsible for of the church and the adjacent Ale House of St James the Great, Colwall.

Objectives and Activities

The PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship at our church and to become part of our parish community. The PCC maintains an overview of worship throughout the parish and makes suggestions on how our services can involve the many groups that live within the parish. Our services and worship put faith into practice through prayer and scripture, music and sacrament.

When planning our activities, we have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, and in particular the supplementary guidance on charities for the enhancement of religion.

In particular, we try to enable ordinary people to live out their faith as part of our parish community. **The vision for our church is:**

- To be a Christian family which reaches out to our village community:
 - Providing pastoral care for people living in the parish
 - Welcoming and supporting families and young people, and those in special need - the lonely, elderly, bereaved, those with mental health issues.
 - Nurturing our communities spiritually through worship and prayer, learning about the gospel, and also enabling learning and new skills to enhance communities and care for the natural world.
- To be a Christian family which is growing and developing its faith and spirituality both individually and corporately.

To facilitate this work, it is important we maintain the fabric of the church, Ale House and churchyard.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Worship and Prayer – Rector's report

This year has been another exciting and eventful one with much to celebrate and give thanks for. In May, we celebrated the coronation of King Charles III with a community-based service. We invited members of the local community to participate in the service using Charles' own words as we gave thanks for his life of service to that point, and for the new phase in his life, and the life of our nation.

Of all the many events this year perhaps the most exciting was the arrival of Andrew Falconer at the end of June to serve his title with us for the next three years. Some of us attended Andrew's ordination at Hereford Cathedral on Saturday, the 1st of July. This was followed by his first service with us on Sunday 2nd July followed by a wonderful lunch together at the village hall. Andrew's arrival has enriched our life together both in our church services and beyond and we very much look forward to all that he will offer over the next two years. It has been a great privilege and pleasure to welcome both Andrew and Pandy as part of the family of Saint James.

The weekend of Andrews ordination was a very busy one with lunch on Sunday, being followed by the staging of the Colwall Requiem for peace. It was a wonderful performance enriched by contributions from various groups of young people seeking refuge in the UK after their homelands had become unsafe for them. Thanks, must go to Liz and to all involved with fundraising for the performance and managing its staging. It was a fitting end to a busy and exciting weekend.

July continued to be busy with a visit from our brothers and sisters at Saint James, Aston, as we jointly celebrated the patronal festival of Saint James the Great with a service in Church, followed by lunch at the Village Hall. As always, it was a delight to share the occasion with our friends from Aston. It was equally wonderful to be able to reciprocate with a visit to Aston for Harvest Festival on the 8th of October where we shared in worship and the most wonderful lunch provided from the abundant generosity of the Aston congregation.

In August, in conjunction with our now annual Arts and Crafts Festival, we sampled our first experience of café Church. We met for a songs of praise in the Ale house and sang enthusiastically as we sat around tables, with coffee and cake and an opportunity to talk to one another, as well as to sing the chosen favourite hymns.

In October we were joined by Bishop Richard, his visit having been postponed from the previous year. Bishop Richard celebrated and preached at our 10 am communion service. It was wonderful to hear from our Diocesan Bishop, and a great pleasure to welcome him to share with us in worship. He commented afterwards on the welcome that he had received... not to mention the skill of the congregation in signalling how they wished to receive their communion!

After a busy Christmas season with services of all different kinds, we were soon launched breathlessly into lent without seeming to have had time to pause and catch breath. This year, during Lent, we hosted a performance by Stefan Smart of his acclaimed production "I am Mark" Stefan's performance, to over 130 people, was spellbinding and the Q&A session afterwards made it clear that it had had a deep impact on many of those watching. Having heard the whole of the gospel performed, we look forward after Easter to the opportunity of studying the words of Mark in some more depth. Many people were involved in the staging of the event and thanks go to them all, but particular thanks must go to Ian Baker who was the driving force behind the idea.

I have touched on a few of the highlights of the year, but beyond this the overarching joy is the regular rhythm of prayer and worship as we meet together week by week. It has been good to see our congregation numbers returning to pre-Covid levels and higher and there have been many moments through the year, where our shared time together has been characterised by a deep sense of the presence of God in our midst, binding us together, and touching us, collectively and individually. Like every church at the moment we do face challenges, but it is important that we hold on to these signs of hope and the signs of God at work amongst us.

Thank You's and Goodbye's

Nothing happens in church without the support and help of an army of volunteers whether it is our regular worship, special services or fundraising events. It takes so many people to make sure that the worship we offer is the best that it can be, and to ensure that our building is maintained in the best and most welcoming condition possible, to keep our finances in order and to organise our fundraising. So, thank you to, Steve and our fundraising team, our bellringers, our organists, choir members and other musicians, our cleaning team, our coffee team, our flower arrangers, our sacristans, all those who lead intercessions and read lessons, our assistant wardens, our lay deacons, our vergers, and not to forget the army of volunteers who are working tirelessly to keep our churchyard in good order and to balance the needs of visitors and the needs of its natural inhabitants! I would

especially like to offer my thanks to all those who operate our audiovisual system, which makes a huge contribution to making our worship accessible. This year, as we have experienced some issues with the system, special thanks must go to Tony Philpott for all that he does to ensure that the system runs as smoothly and faultlessly as possible. He spends a lot of time checking out and running the system between Sundays to make sure that on the day everything runs as it should.

By now, you will be aware that the essential repair work to the roof identified in the last quinquennial report has begun. Richard King and Martyn Steer, working together, have managed to secure significant contributions towards the work from a variety of grant making bodies. Together with the enormously generous response all of you made to the roof appeal, these grants mean that we can complete the work, confident that we can meet the cost without putting our reserves under excessive pressure. Thank you!

As ever I would like to offer my specific thanks to Martyn, our church warden for his hard work and commitment, his attention to detail and ability to drive things forward are a great blessing, and to Joy as our administrator and so so much more she is always willing to do whatever is need!

It is an enormous pleasure and privilege to work with you all.

I also want to express on everyone's behalf, but also personally, enormous thanks to my retired clergy colleagues, Anne Spargo, Bernard Ingram, Carl Attwood, and Tim Wright and our reader Any Richardson. We are truly blessed by their ministry which is a real gift. We are also delighted to welcome Lynne Sparks to the team. Lynne and David have been worshipping with us for some time now, and Lynne has recently been granted permission to officiate. Watch this space for her first service very soon.

This year we have had to say goodbye to some significant members of our church community. At the beginning of November we joined together to say goodbye to John Aimes and to give thanks for his long and extraordinary life. John had planned much of the service himself, and it was a fine and fitting tribute to man who lived his life with energy, honour and great faithfulness. At the end of November, we joined together for a super Thanksgiving Service for the life of Jerry Pearce. Despite the best efforts of a power cut to the Ale House to disrupt events, the occasion was a wonderful and fitting tribute to Jerry.

May light perpetual shine upon all of our brothers and sisters, to whom we have said goodbye.

Final reflection

And so, as we look forward to the coming year as well as beginning the roof repairs we have also submitted an application to the DAC, for a faculty for the re-ordering for the servery and toilet. Progress is being made and this is tremendously exciting.

Last year I completed my rectors report with the words, “I pray that together we will face it with open hearts and minds, that we will continue to offer a radical welcome and that as God’s family in this place we will live and grow together to more and more embody the life and teaching of Christ”. I have always felt that it is an enormous privilege to be the rector of this parish, and this was profoundly reinforced when at the last meeting of the PCC before today’s APCM we were able to record our desire to work together in continuing to offer that radical and inclusive welcome to all. The PCC passed resolutions re-committing ourselves to the eco-Church process, immediately adopting the Living in Love and Faith Prayers and resources for the blessing of same sex unions and resolving to join the inclusive church network, which will offer us the tools and support we need to become more and more conformed to that vision of the kingdom of God that Christ offered one in which all are welcome and all are unconditionally loved. I thank God for you all, and feel truly blessed to be living out my vocation with and amongst you all. God bless you.

Churchwardens report

This has been a further year of consolidation: some smallish, yet important, maintenance jobs and ‘quality of life’ upgrades have been concluded, while a major repair has been started.

The defibrillator at the car park gate has been installed and the necessary training undertaken. The sound system, which has suffered from numerous reliability issues, has benefitted from the installation of a new amplifier which should last for a good few years; thank you Tony Philpott for overseeing that job. Our creature comforts have been addressed with some very smart pew cushions in the nave. All these jobs have been funded, to a great extent, through the generosity of parishioners, particularly from our congregation. I hope you agree that your benevolence has reaped its reward; thank you.

Importantly, we were subject to our statutory periodic electrical inspection which gave us a clean bill of health. The churchyard/car park has seen a coat of paint for the tin shed and a new cabinet and tap by the Ale House for use by visitors and flower arrangers. Looking ahead elsewhere in the churchyard, we intend to submit a planning application to Herefordshire Council to improve the lighting

along the path from the car park to the Ale House. This would involve the installation of bollard lights along the entire route of the path.

The urgent remedial works to address the instability of roof-level masonry and stonework caused by weathering and erosion will start this April and take about two months. These crucial works, which arise from the 2020 Quinquennial Inspection by our architect, are largely funded by donations from parishioners and, thanks to Richard King's efforts, a wide range of grant-making Trusts. The next Quinquennial Inspection will be in late 2025 and will doubtless identify further key maintenance jobs; my money's on the rainwater goods (gutters and downpipes)!

Finally, we are able to report encouraging progress to re-order the west end of the church. This project, which began about eight years ago, involves, amongst other things, the installation of a kitchenette, servery and toilet. This core element of the re-ordering project has been reviewed and 'massaged' to a point at which it is financially within reach at about £90,000. The PCC has endorsed the revised plans which have now been submitted to the Diocese for their approval, known as a Faculty. So the project is alive and well and moving in the right direction.

I must thank the Assistant Churchwardens: Bill Clucas, Stuart and Carolyn Hands, Steve Hockett, Jane Hill and Richard King for their good humour, the banter and their faultless Sunday support. Joy, thank you for being ever present, notwithstanding the odd broken arm, and to Melanie: thank you for your time, your patience and your humanity.

Verger - The job of a Verger at St James includes the facilitation of specific services, namely weddings and funerals.

In this APCM year of 2023/24 we have been able to hold 3 weddings. We have also conducted 11 burial of ashes and 4 interments.

The Church and Ale House

There were approximately 45 bookings in the Ale House last year, a mixture of concerts, meetings wakes and other assorted uses.

The painting of the outside new daub panels will be completed this summer.

Following comments/complaints from people attending events in the Ale House that they didn't know where to go once they had parked, a sign directing visitors through the churchyard was commissioned. It has been placed on the railings beside the gate by the carpark.

We held a very successful fundraising event for the Ale House called the A to B last July which raised £750 for the Ale House.

Church Bells

Our first event of the year was hosting the Ledbury district ringers annual meeting in the Ale House during February. Next month we rang before the Thanksgiving service for Ken Willington, which was much appreciated by a lot of people. The following Tuesday we paid our own tribute to Ken with a successful quarter peal.

During May was the event of the year, the coronation, we had general ringing on the Saturday before the ceremony in London. Then on the Monday instead of at normal practise we rang a 1/4 peal of grandsire doubles.

There were three weddings at Saint James that requested bells. There was also a good number of visiting bands including the annual Hereford ringing course after the Easter weekend.

Our Monday evenings practises continue with one or two from other towers also some of us go to Coddington on Thursday afternoons to join in with their practise.

Ministry and Pastoral Care

Admirals Café (for those who have dementia or other health issues)

Admiral's Café continues to meet once a month in the Village Hall. It now serves around 20 customers from Colwall, Ledbury, Malvern and neighbouring villages and is most grateful to the 19 volunteers who give their time and expertise. Being self governing, it is they who plan the sessions, provide the ideas, consumables and raffle prizes. We are also indebted to Richard King who looks after the deposits we make and pays the Village Hall charges. We are solvent and have a good reserve. What we do is recorded in The Clock month by month. The café is open to anyone living with dementia or is in need of company or conversation.

Mothers' Union:

We have continued without further Covid interruptions, and with members free from that disease, as far as I know. A number of people who have visited with their talks have dwelt on their pasts – The Rev Penny Littlewood's 'Upstairs, downstairs' was about her upbringing as a child of staff in service at Eridge Castle. The Rev Derek Chedzey, Archdeacon of Hereford regaled us with a fully illustrated account of his Welsh Coastal Pilgrimage in Pembrokeshire, taken in aid of Alzheimer's and in memory of his sister-in-law's mother. Joy told us all about her achievements over her jaw-dropping 60 years as a Girl Guide Leader, Dorothy all about her upbringing in Coddington, schooling and early days of marriage to Arthur Lockyear who ran the garage by The Colwall Park Hotel. In November the Rev Andrew Falconer our new curate, told us of his journey thus far. We discovered he had lived, studied, and worked all over the UK and is eminently suitable for his new position in the community of Colwall.

We were very grateful to Melanie and Penny for taking the Diocesan Mary Sumner Day service in August. Visitors came from other branches. Tea was enjoyed in the Alehouse.

We had a most informative illustrated talk about 'Save the Children' and about Vennture Family Pastors, who work in Hereford. Their latest project has been to successfully open a refuge, where people taken off the streets overnight can recover and be supported. Our members were able to donate to these charities for which they were very grateful. We were pleased The Rev Carl Attwood could come in December. He put us in the Christmas mood through focussing on Mary, the mother of Jesus. We also held a fundraising Lent Lunch and a Coffee morning.

More recently we were most interested in Martyn Steer's talk 'Who's be a magistrate', which was filled with eye-opening facts about work in this field, which he started in retirement from the RAF, and was at one time, doing three days a week. In addition to work in court, he enjoyed helping in primary schools, telling children about court procedure through role play.

One member, Alison Medley, moved during the year to East Anglia, near her brother. We were very sorry to hear of the death of Jean Jefferson-Brown, long-term member and much-loved friend to many here.

Choir

Sunday July 1st was a very busy day for the choir. In the morning it was the inaugural service for our new curate Andrew and during the afternoon six years after its premier, Colwall Requiem for Peace by Liz Johnson was again performed. Peter Johnson was the conductor, Sue Humphrey, piano and Roger Allen played the organ. The choir was joined by various friends from the Kurdish community who played and sang with native instruments. Our annual Village Carol Service was organised by Marian, conducted by Sue Doswell, Sue Humphrey accompanied on the piano and Trish played the organ for the congregational carols. Thanks must go to our regular and loyal Sunday choir and also the augmented singers who boost our numbers for weddings and other special occasions.

Orchestra

Since my last report the orchestra has played for the Mothering Sunday service, for the Coronation Weekend service, and the Patronal Festival with St. James Aston visiting. Eight of us, so nearly everyone, as the orchestra is so small at the moment, played for Welcome Christmas (the Ale House Carols) and it was a very happy occasion with excellent readings. Children are so busy elsewhere on Sundays now, it is difficult to entice them to join the church orchestra. I am ever hopeful as I think our contribution is important and I am so grateful to the faithful adults – thank you.

St James Flower Team

2023 was a fairly busy year for the flower team. We had three weddings and received a lot for thanks from the brides who were all very pleased with the wedding flowers, the church looked lovely on all the occasions as we do put a lot of arrangements in place.

In May we also enjoyed putting in a wonderful floral display for the coronation of the King and Queen, a colour theme is often nice so lots of purple flowers were used.

As there was no Harvest Festival this year the Bishop of Hereford's visit came at a very opportune time as it gave us a great reason to decorate the church using wonderful autumnal colours.

I am very pleased to say that we have another new member of the team so we are growing all the time and this means that for special occasions we can all enjoy being together and getting pleasure out of doing the flower arrangements that hopefully in turn please the congregation and the all visitors who come into the church.

Caring for the Environment

Churchyard report April 2023

We have continued our link with the Unpaid Work Team (previously known as the Community Payback Team) who bring a group armed with strimmers, mowers, and, when appropriate, hedge cutters every 2 to 3 weeks with the brief to keep the churchyard growth under control. They, along with input from our own informal voluntary churchyard team mean that we have continued to be able to keep on top of the church grass, flower areas, yew tree area, and hedges over the year (weather permitting – there have been numerous occasions when the ground has just been too sodden to work on). We are very grateful to both those who attend our work parties regularly, intermittently, and in their own way and time. We have tried to keep the grass mown short on the lawns at the west end, round the yew tree memorial area, by the Ale House, and in the ‘new grave’ region. We hold regular advertised Saturday morning sessions, usually starting at 10am and finishing @1pm including a coffee and cake break. Although we usually congregate on the 2nd Sunday of the month, we occasionally have to move the date to avoid wedding or funeral services. Extra work parties might be needed at the height of the growing season.

The Unpaid Work Team are briefed on our grass mowing plans, especially about leaving the wildflower area alone at all times unless specifically instructed otherwise. This means that much of the harder mowing tasks are completed by their team which leaves our own volunteers the opportunity to primp and perfect the churchyard in other ways. This can include weeding, ivy control, conservation work, and other interests such as the wildflower areas and maintenance of our Monuments and Memorials. Specific areas of Churchyard interest/activity are:

- Wildflower Areas which are mown (except yellow rattle areas) till mid-April, then left till end July.
- We are continuing to monitor flower species presence, and aim to undertake other species recording (mammals, birds, reptiles & amphibians, butterflies) as volunteer and expertise support allows.
- The new Green Waste Bunker is still occasionally used as a lazy rubbish dump despite clear notices asking visitors to stop dumping oasis, wreath rings, cellophane, and other plastic. One of the black bins has been placed adjacent to the green waste bunker for such materials, but a lot of offenders fail to take any notice.

- The Memorial Ashes Graves area under Yew Tree is overseen by Sue Bienkowska with a small team of helpers to weed and provide general care of this area. Both expansion of the space available and clearer delineation from the grass cutting area is needed; Melanie and the Archdeacon are meeting to decide on the boundary and access to the inner graves.
- A Defibrillator has been mounted on the metal railings by the churchyard/car park gate; an initial training session was arranged through HeartStart.
- Hedge trimming and maintenance can only be performed during the winter period to prevent disturbing nesting birds. The hedge round the Memorial Garden is cut for us, and the Flapgate Lane hedge has also been trimmed. The re-laid hedge between the car park and the churchyard is doing nicely but will take a few years to achieve maturity; while this grows COG is starting to renovate the overgrown hedge between the car park and the road. A section has been cut right back to allow regeneration.
- The massively overgrown Berberis in the section of older graves between the Memorial Garden and the new grave area has been cut right back by the Unpaid Work Team and then further trimmed by our own volunteers; it had gone well beyond and the only solution was deemed to massacre it to allow for fresh new growth from the centre. All the brash and cuttings have once more been put into John Bishop's trailer for disposal – many thanks to him.
- Further discussions about increasing the information and interpretation available to visitors has taken place with the prospect of creating lists of churchyard species to be available in church. This information will need to be accessible to visitors and clearly available, whether by use of a website, QR code, or other technology, or by display boards, information sheets/boards/leaflets. This remains work in progress.
- Volunteering: We are in constant need of new volunteers. The various societies in Colwall with conservation and wildlife interests will be contacted to promote the churchyard's multiple roles as a haven for wildlife, centre for its diverse plant collection and peaceful place of rest and contemplation. We remain indebted to the members of COG who help so much with expertise and practical help on our hedge work and wildflower areas. We are very aware that a churchyard is not just a graveyard; many visitors have no connection with the church itself and we hope that they approve of our activities.

Mission and Evangelism

The Clock continues to be an important means of communication for the community. The variety of information, advertising and ‘what’s on’ is appreciated by all our readers, keeping everyone informed of local clubs, societies and interest groups.

We always welcome new copy—so if you have an interesting/ topical/subjects please do send them to thecolwallclock@gmail.com.

Editing and producing the monthly editions of the magazine is a role now shared between Anna Byers & Joy, we welcomed Anna to the team during 2023. It is hoped we can recruit one more editor this year.

Please contact Joy in the office if this is something you would like to be involved with.

We are grateful for the work of the distributors who deliver the magazine each month, and a special thank you to Chris and Christine Honeywill, who collect and sort into the various ‘rounds’ for distribution.

Welcomers:

The welcome pack is now under review, and we hope to put together a new pack in the coming months. At present we deliver the current edition of the Colwall Clock to new residents.

The Website

Online Presence

Facebook: The facebook page (facebook.com/colwallchurch) was started in August 2023 and has, to date, 73 followers. The purpose is to engage the local community, raise awareness of church activity and events and provide resources to spiritually nourish page followers. Content is generally created in advance and scheduled to publish, therefore providing consistency and ensuring relevant information. Through this page the church has become one of the top contributors to “Colwall Notice Board” on facebook. The pages has also run paid adverts for Christmas services, I am Mark and the November Craft Festival. Typical content includes links to resources relevant to recent sermons, information about events and suggested reading, videos or podcasts.

Website: The colwallchurch.org website has been managed by Mark Illingworth who has devoted much time, energy and skill into developing and maintaining it. However, technology has changed and the PCC approved the creation of a new website. Lynn Lee has volunteered to build the site, with a combination of new and updated content and utilising some of the rich resources already available on the older site. The new website covers the whole benefice and seeks to be fresh

and engaging for a variety of audiences: those exploring faith locally; people seeking life events ministry (weddings etc); those interested in heritage and history; those looking to use the space. Thank you to Mark for his years of support, ensuring the church has an online presence; and to Lynn for volunteering to build a site utilising updated technology.

Ecumenical Relationships

St James Aston Link Activities

It was a delight to welcome our friends from Aston to join us for Patronal Festival in July and share lunch in the village school afterwards.

This is always a joyous occasion- catching up with friends old and new.

We have supported them through our charity giving

On 8th October a group of us went by coach to Aston to celebrate Harvest with our friends and enjoyed a wonderful lunch with everyone.

We look forward to catch up again this July for Patronal Festival service and lunch in the village hall.

FINANCIAL REVIEW FOR 2023

With the large energy and cost of living increases in 2023, our budget expectation on normal income and expenditure was a £8,168 deficit by year end. But for yet another year, thanks to control on costs, and the continued generosity of church members, we limited the deficit on normal income and expenditure to £3,048 (only a little more than last year's £2,582). In the budget, the PCC approved two items of capital expenditure to improve day to day comfort and ease of access, and also committed to the costs of significant repair work on the roof and stonework highlighted in the most recent (2020) architect's Quinquennial Report. Fund raising for grants and a local appeal have generated most of the funds needed, so the funds balance at present is inflated by those grants and the Appeal. Overall, this has increased funds by £19,181.

Income - total for the year in all funds: £125,407

The Parish Giving Scheme: 45 households are in the scheme at the end of 2023.

There were four new joiners in the year, but four have left. Collections were up on last year due to the number of weddings and funerals where St James was the beneficiary.

Fund Raising: there were 8 events in 2023: the Art and Crafts Festival in the summer, the Christmas Craft Fair, the Pax Singers concert, the Pancake and

Christmas coffee morning, Ale House Carols, and a walk from the Ale House to the Brewer Arms in Malvern, together raised £4,882 net of costs (including some income from printing). Donations to the Admiral's Café were £230. Donations to the Bishop's Gift Day Appeal this year were dedicated to the Roof Appeal.

During the current APCM year of 2023/24 our fundraising events did well. As you will see from the Treasurer's report we came in above budget. Some of the things we did included our third Art & Crafts weekend which once again although not primarily being a fund raiser managed to be a financial success. We will be holding another this coming August. This was followed with a Craft Fair in November which also was a financial success. December saw our ever-popular Christmas Coffee Morning – thank you to Richard King for organising that. A follow up Pancake Coffee Morning (courtesy of Mr King again!) was another money spinner. Thanks also to Marian Paulson for the concert that she and helpers organised. During the summer the Pax Singers gave a Concert with Afternoon Tea which was enjoyed by a very appreciative audience and added substantially to funds! They are returning for another concert this April. I don't want this report however to just be a list of all the year's fund-raising events. I would like to extend a very warm thank you to all of you who contributed to all the fund-raising events! Let's continue this year!

Church Fees (Weddings, Funerals): We had 3 weddings this year, and 24 funerals/cremations- fees £9,686.

The Ale House: Lettings and donations were £3,368, but costs (much higher electricity, insurance, and maintenance costs) were £3,328 leaving a small surplus of £40.

Grants and Legacies: Grants for the Roof Appeal were £38,250 (of which £2,250 has already been received; the rest will be paid when the invoices have been paid) in grants from the National Churches Trust (including their associated Trusts: the Wolfson Trust and Headley Trust), Herefordshire Historic Churches Trust, the Benefact Group, and Lasletts Charities.

Three legacies were received this year totalling £12,700.

Expenditure - total for the year in all funds: £106,226

Major costs were Parish Share Offer £51,804, Parish Administrator salary, Insurance, and Heating and Light. The latter three rose significantly because the rises in prices resulting from the energy and cost of living crises. Careful management of the use of heating was maintained to minimize expenditure on electricity and water. Other routine items of expenditure costs were little changed. However, there were several one-off expenditures (£9,671) including

Pew Cushions (£4,270), car park re-surfacing (£1,500), Bat Surveys prior to the Roof work (£2,760), and some architect's fees prior to the roof repair work.

Expenditure from the Development fund was for the Colwall Requiem for Peace. Grants and fund raising covered these. Income in this fund is primarily for the Roof Appeal £14,768, and donations for the Requiem for Peace.

We have contributed £2,450 to mission and charity (2022 £3,000 - including war and natural disaster areas) from PCC funds, £2,926 from special collections and charity fund raising, and £6,493 from weddings and funerals.

Our CBF investments increased in value by £5,115 in 2023, so together with our income surplus of £19,181 this year, our total funds now stand at £156,787 (2022 - £132,493), an increase of £24,294. These funds are currently inflated by the donations to the Church Roof Appeal and grant.

If anyone who would like to see a copy of the full detailed accounts or have any questions to ask on these accounts, please do not hesitate to contact me on 01684 541215.

Reserves Policy

Following a PCC review of the Reserves Policy, it has been revised to retain reserves to cover four month's normal income (currently around £90,000) so the Reserve Funds are £30,000.

The PCC has also agreed to re-organise the capital funds in 2024. In future there will be an Unrestricted Fund: the General Reserves Fund; three Designated Funds: Long Term Capital Fund, Friends of St James, and Flower Fund; and a Restricted Fund: the Church Development Fund. The Organ and Bells Funds are merged into the Long-Term Capital Fund.

Approximately 50% of the reserves are held in investments with the CBF, and 50% in cash on deposit and current accounts at bank.

My thanks to the Finance Committee for their expertise and support. I particularly wish to thank David Longman who stepped down after over 15 years' service on the committee. His contribution in handling the banking of cash week by week, and his wise counsel on financial matters have been of great value to us in our quarterly meetings to review progress and assess any significant impacts of investment and income changes. Actions on any items of an exceptional nature are recommended for approval at the PCC meetings.

ACCOUNTS SUMMARY: YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2023
BALANCES IN THE CHURCH FUNDS

INCOME		2023	2022
Collections		4,598	2,551
Planned Giving (PGS, envelopes, Std orders)		41,493	40,387
Tax recovery		12,330	11,257
Other voluntary receipts – includes:		38,012	9,775
Grant: Benefact Group for Roof Appeal	2,250		
Admiral's Café	230		
Donations (incl Pew Cushions, Defibrillator)	6,680		
Friends of St James, Bells and Flowers Funds	741		
Roof Repair Gift Day Appeal (Development Fund)	14,768		
Legacies (3)	12,750		
Fund raising receipts – includes:		16,743	15,245
Ale House rents and A/H 100 Club	3,368		
Magazine sales and adverts (Clock)	8,173		
Fund Raising Events	5,202		
Investment income		2,546	2,051
Church fees		9,686	6,960
TOTAL INCOME		125,407	88,227
EXPENDITURE			
Diocesan Offer and Deanery Quota		51,804	50,300
Other payments – includes:		54,422	47,984
Contributions to Mission and Charities	2,450		
Ale House expenses	3,328		
Magazine printing	4,281		
Churchyard (incl new equipment)	1,523		
Office, general support and administrator	12,746		
Fabric: car park re-surfacing, Bat surveys for Roof,	9,671		
Fees re repairs, pew cushions, defibrillator			
Insurance (church)	3,490		
Maintenance, power, organ/music, other	13,659		
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		106,226	98,274
(DEFICIT) SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR		19,181	(10,057)
Add Unrealised Gains/(Losses) on Investments		5,115	(9,296)
ADJUSTED (DEFICIT) SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR		24,296	(19,353)

BALANCES IN THE CHURCH FUNDS

FUND	2023	2022
Friends of St James (Designated)	8,851	8,641
Fabric Fund	123,891	114,543
Organ Fund (Designated)	5,331	5,331
Flower Fund (Designated)	1,346	1,612
Bells Fund (Designated)	1,912	1,560
Church Development Fund (Restricted)	15,457	806
TOTAL ALL FUNDS	156,787	132,493
INVESTED IN:-		
CBF shares and deposits	77,726	72,612
Lloyds Bank Plc	1,429	1,471
Santander	13,851	13,851
CAF Bank Deposits	68,747	50,654
Debtors less Creditors	(8,161)	(6,095)
TOTAL	156,787	132,493

ADMINISTRATION AND GOVERNANCE

Church Electoral Roll

The Electoral Roll has been updated as of 10th April and stands at 122. This is an increase of 4 from 2023

GDPR

All confidential records and personnel information is kept in a locked metal filing cabinet in the parish office or password protected computer.

Baptism, Marriage & Funeral registers remain locked the Vestry Safe or when in use in the locked filing cabinet in the parish office.

Safeguarding

The PCC have adopted the updated the Church of England Safeguarding Policy and are compliant with its regulations of displaying relevant notices. There is a file at the back of church in which all the relevant information is available to be seen. We keep a register of all regulated activities organised and run by St James Church.

All Adults who work with young people and vulnerable adults have DBS certificates, and we regularly check this list and update/ renew as necessary.

The website is now compliant with CofE Safeguarding requirements. The Parish of St James is registered with the CofE Safeguarding Portal. This enables all Safeguarding data for the parish to be recorded and updated on a regular basis.

Our safeguarding action plan is regularly reviewed and updated as appropriate.

Health and Safety

Fire Safety: all fire signs and extinguishers are in place and serviced in early 2021, with replacement's purchased as advised by contractors. Evacuation procedures are explained at any non-regular event.

First Aid: first aid boxes and accident books in the Church, Ale House, Belfry and Parish Office are checked regularly. No accidents have been reported in the last year.

Electrical Appliances: are checked annually – report details in the Parish Office.

Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection: Joy Conlon is the relevant Officer and no incidents have been reported.

Pest Control: Red Kite is contracted to carry out regular annual checks in the Church and Ale House.

Slips, Trips and Falls: a careful eye is kept on potential hazards. The new path at the West door enables easy, safe access into the churchyard.

Risk Assessments: these are overseen by Martyn Steer (warden and H&S Officer).

PCC MEMBERS IN 2023

Elected Members:

Chairman:	Rev Melanie Horton (Rector)	
Churchwarden:	Martyn Steer	Treasurer: Richard King
Secretary	John Doswell	Electoral Roll Officer: Joy Conlon
Deanery Synod Reps:	Sue Humphrey	Marcus Allen
Others:	Jonathan Pearce	Christine Bagust
	Michael Hakes	Steve Hockett (Fundraising Coordinator)

Ex Officio Invitees

Assistant Wardens: Stuart and Carolyn Hands, Jane Hill, Bill Clucas
Readers: Andy Richardson

Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees.

Signature(s)

14th April 2024

St James the Great Colwall

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT 2023

	Unrestricted funds £	Designated funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Income					
Parish Giving Scheme	30,768			30,768	29,646
Other planned and gift aid donations	10,725			10,725	10,741
Non-gift aid collections	4,598			4,598	2,551
Tax recovered	12,330			12,330	11,257
Other voluntary receipts (note 4a)	19,790	741	17,481	38,012	9,775
Fundraising receipts (note 4b)	16,743	-	-	16,743	15,245
Investment income (note 4c1)	2,546			2,546	2,051
Insurance Claim - Ale House	-			-	0
Church fees	9,686			9,686	6,960
Awards for All: projector grant	-			-	0
	107,185	741	17,481	125,407	88,227
Expenditure					
Diocesan offer and deanery quota	51,804			51,804	50,300
Other payments (note 4d)	51,146	445	2,831	54,422	47,984
	102,950	445	2,831	106,226	98,284
Deficit/Surplus for the year	4,235	296	14,650	19,181	(10,057)
Transfers between funds					
Adjusted Surplus	4,235	296	14,650	19,181	(10,057)
Unrealised Gains/(Losses) (note 4c2)	5,115	-	-	5,115	(9,296)
Overall Deficit/Surplus	9,350	296	£14,650	24,296	- 19,353
BALANCE SHEET					
Balance at 1 January	114,541	17,144	806	132,491	151,845
Add Overall Surplus	9,350	296	14,650	24,296	(19,353)
Balance at 31 December	123,891	17,440	15,456	156,787	132,492
Represented by					
CBF deposits and shares	77,726			77,726	72,611
Lloyds Bank	1,429			1,429	1,471
Santander	17,046			17,046	13,851
CAF	35,849	17,440	15,458	68,747	50,654
Debtors (note 5a)	1,531	0	0	1,531	950
	133,582	17,440	15,458	166,480	139,536
Creditors (note 5b)	(9,692)	0	0	(9,692)	(7,045)
	123,891	17,440	15,458	156,787	132,492

Independent Examiner of Accounts
Mr Luke Keegan

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Rev. Melanie Horton
Rector

Melanie Horton

Richard King
Treasurer

R King

14/4/24

14/4/24

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF COLWALL PCC

I report on the accounts of the PCC for the year ended 31st December 2023 which are attached.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

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

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under Section 145 of the 2011 Act
- to follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission (under Section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act); and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of the independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statements below.

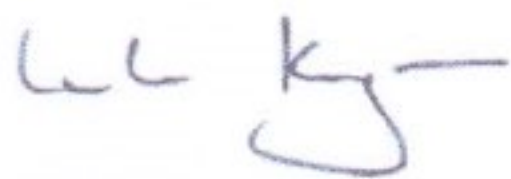
Independent examiner's statement

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

- (1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the requirements
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records, comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act

have not been met; or

- (2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Luke Keegan
Chartered Management Accountant
1A The Homend
Ledbury
Herefordshire
HR8 1BN

Dated 8th April 2024