

THE PARISH OF TORRISHOLME, THE ASCENSION INCLUDING WESTGATE, ST MARTIN

ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2022



VICAR:

Fr Damian Porter

CHURCHWARDENS:

Alan Forshaw

Janet Diamond

The Aims and purposes of the Parochial Church Council

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of cooperating with the incumbent, the Reverend Damian Porter, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. The PCC is also specifically responsible for the maintenance of the Church of the Ascension and St Martin's Westgate Community Centre complex.

Objectives and Activities

The PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible of all ages 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 our parish. Our services and worship put faith into practice through Word and Sacrament. Being rooted in the Catholic Tradition of the Church of England, our worship is centred on the Eucharist.

We try to enable ordinary people to live out their faith as part of our parish community through:

- Worship and prayer; learning about the Gospel; and developing their knowledge and trust in Jesus.
- Provision of pastoral care for people living in the parish.
- Missionary and outreach work.

To facilitate this work it is important that we maintain the fabric of the Church buildings and Community Centres.

The Church of St Martin at Westgate is used for worship by the Greek Orthodox Community at the weekends, and we hold some midweek worship and activities there.

Since the previous Annual Parish Meeting, the Parochial Church Council has met on 4 occasions. The average attendance being 12.

The following reports were given at each meeting:

- Chairman/Warden's report
- Electoral Roll report
- Christian Stewardship report
- Treasurer's report
- Church Hall report
- St Martin's report
- Deanery Synod report
- Children and Youth Ministry report
- Safeguarding Officer's report. A safeguarding audit was carried out in the autumn.
- Churches Together in Bare & Torrisholme report

The following people have served on the Parochial Church Council during the year:

In addition to the Vicar and Churchwardens

- Ms Y Barrett (Secretary)
- Mrs K Thompson (Treasurer)
- Mr G Arkwright (Stewardship recorder)
- Mr D Wilde (Deanery Synod)
- Mrs H Higgins (Safeguarding Officer)
- Mrs J Hall ,
- Mrs C Hammond (Deanery Synod)
- Mrs M Parkin
- Mrs K Anderton
- Mrs V Pearson
- Ms J Phillip
- Mr C Barnes
- The Revd Matteo Zambon

Mrs Janet Daimond (Churchwarden) is also a Deanery Synod Rep)

Achievements and Performance

Worship and Prayer

This year has again seen good numbers of people attending our services and activities. We have now settled into the services schedule which we agreed after the Covid Pandemic, and we believe it is meeting the needs of the people of the parish family.

The PCC is keen to offer a range of services during the week and over the course of the year that our community find both beneficial and spiritually fulfilling.

We welcome into our Church people of all ages and from a wide variety of backgrounds.

All are welcome to attend our regular services. At present there are 185 parishioners on the Church Electoral Roll, 52 of whom are not resident within the parish. 6 names were added

during the year and 1 was removed either through death or because they moved away from the parish. The average weekly attendance, counted during October, was 106 adults and 45 children, but this number increased at festivals and especially at Christmas.

As well as our regular services, we enabled our community to celebrate and thank God at the milestones of the journey through life. Through baptism we thank God for the gift of life, in marriage public vows are exchanged with God's blessing and through funeral services friends and family express their grief and give thanks for the life which is now complete in this world and to commend the person into God's keeping. Over the past year we have celebrated 29 baptisms and 3 weddings and held 10 funerals in our church this year, and conducted a further 30 at the local Cemeteries and Crematoriums.

The Church Building and Church Hall Complex

Our buildings are generally in a good condition, and we try to invest resources each year into improvements and maintenance. In the year ahead we shall be spending a significant sum of money replacing the roof over the vestry area, ambulatory and some of the back of the church.

During the week the halls are regularly used by a wide variety of hirers, all of which add to the provision for our local community, and the rental income is very useful for our parish finances. This year, the pandemic has led to a reduction in the number of hirers, so the use of the buildings and subsequent income has been significantly reduced.

Pastoral Care

Some members of our parish have been unable to attend church due to sickness or age. The clergy and pastoral visitors have visited church members who have requested it, and together with our informal pastoral care team has ensured that those who request it receive Holy Communion at home on a regular basis.

Our fortnightly "Breaking Bread" Mass and Lunch Club are instrumental in our mission to the elderly and housebound.

Mission and Evangelism

WE produce regular weekly sheets with news and information, and we make good use of the website and facebook page.

The church is a member of Churches Together in Bare and Torrisholme. The Churches together group has met, and the clergy have met together regularly.

The Financial Report

Financial Review

Total receipts of unrestricted funds were £224,629 and restricted funds of missions received were £618.73. Income this year was up on 2021 by over £20,000, but was increased further by a generous bequest of just over £93,000. Rental income also increased by over £18,000, partly as bookings continue to improve post Covid.

£114,663 was spent from unrestricted funds to provide the Christian ministry and fundraising from The Parish of Torrisholme. Once again the Parish Share request has been paid in full and as we pay by monthly standing order, we have already made payment towards 2023's request. Expenditure increased by over £20,000, mostly due to repairs works on the Church and buildings.

The net result was an excess of receipts over payments of £109,965 on unrestricted funds. Adding bank and deposit balances brought forward at the beginning of the year, the balances carried forward at 31st December 2022 on unrestricted funds totalled £308,514.

Reserves Policy

We have in recent years always been able to meet all our expenditure and our parish share request. In the light of the Covid pandemic we recognise the need to try to keep the equivalent of one year turnover as a reasonable reserve



financial activities
2022.doc



balance sheet
2022.doc



notes to the
accounts 2022.doc

This report was approved by the PCC and signed on their behalf by the Reverend Damian Porter

**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL
PARISH OF TORRISHOLME
BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2022**

Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2022	Total Funds 2021
<u>ASSETS</u>				
Cash in Hand 4(a)	564.68		564.68	365.90
Bank Accounts 4(b)	213428.83		213428.83	104538.76
<u>CURRENT INVESTMENTS</u>				
Church Dep Fund				
- Legacy A/c	55789.98	1000.00	56789.98	56789.98
<u>PERMANENT INVESTMENTS</u>				
Sugden Legacy-Security Fund		400.82	400.82	400.82
<u>Other Investments/accounts</u>				
Church Deposit Fund	15287.65		15287.65	15089.33
Church Hall Investment Account	<u>23442.86</u>		<u>23442.86</u>	<u>23440.52</u>
	<u>308514.00</u>	<u>1400.82</u>	<u>309914.82</u>	<u>200625.31</u>

Kathryn Thompson

Hon Treasurer
Independent Examiner

March 2023

Approved by the Parochial Church Council on

and signed on its behalf by:

Rev. D Porter (Chairman)

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL
PARISH OF TORRISHOLME
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
1ST JANUARY – 31 DECEMBER 2022

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2022 £	Total Funds 2021 £
<u>INCOMING RESOURCES</u>					
Voluntary Income	2(a)	150809.05		150809.05	55215.36
Activities for Generating Funds	2(b)	4337.43		4337.43	1136.53
Income from Investments	2(c)	589.67		589.67	235.64
Church Activities	2(d)	62531.00		62531.00	47249.00
Missions Received	2(e)		618.73	618.73	1468.50
Other Income	2(f)	6362.13		6362.13	5761.00
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES		224629.28	618.73	225248.01	111066.03
<u>RESOURCES EXPENDED</u>					
Parish Share		42000.00		42000.00	42000.00
Missions	3(a)		1294.85	1294.85	745.00
Fund Raising Costs	3(b)	265.42		265.42	28.16
Church Activities	3(c)	38063.14		38063.14	35834.13
Church & Church Hall Running Costs	3(d)	26111.49		26111.49	16817.13
Church & Church Hall Repairs	3(e)	8223.60		8223.60	252.00
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED		114663.65	1294.85	115958.50	95676.69
NET INCOMING/ (OUTGOING)		109965.63	(676.12)	109289.51	15389.34
RESOURCES					
Balances brought forward at 1/1/21				200625.31	
Balances carried forward at 31/12/22				309914.82	

**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL
PARISH OF TORRISHOLME
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2022**

1. Accounting Policies

The financial statements have been prepared on an accrual basis in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 together with applicable accounting standards and The Charities SORP 2005.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

The accounts include all transaction, assets and liabilities for which the PCC is responsible in law. They do not include the accounts of church groups that owe their main affiliation to another body, nor those that are informal gatherings of church members.

Funds

Unrestricted Funds are general funds which can be used for PCC ordinary purposes.

Restricted Funds represent income from trusts or endowments which may be expended only on those restricted objects provided in the terms of the trust or bequest and donations or grants received for a specific object or invited by the PCC for a specific object. The funds may only be expended on the specific object for which they were given.

Incoming Resources

Planned giving, collections, donations and Tax refunds are recognised when received. Grants and legacies are accounted for when the PCC receives the amounts due. All other income is recognised when it is received. Funds raised from social events, magazines and Fund raising is shown gross and expenses shown separately as resources used. Rental income and interest is accounted for when received.

Resources Expended

Grants and donations are accounted for when paid over. The Diocesan Parish Share is accounted for when due, any parish share unpaid at 31st December is provided for in the financial statements as an operational liability and is shown as a creditor in the balance sheet. Amounts received specifically for mission are dealt with as restricted funds. All other expenditure is recognized when it is incurred and is accounted for gross.

Assets

Investments are valued at market value at 31st December. Consecrated and benefice property is not included in the account in accordance with s.96 (2)(a) of the Charities Act 1993. Expenditure on maintenance or improvement of the church, halls and vicarage is written off in the year it is incurred.

The full accounts are available for inspection through consultation with the Treasurer.

The Churchwarden's Report including a report on Fabric, Goods and Ornaments

Once again, thankfully it has not been necessary to undertake any major works on our church building in 2022. Fabric remains for the most part in good order, with the exception of the bell tower which will require work in the coming year. As has been noted previously, we are fortunate as a parish to have such an economical and easily maintained building.

Following our recent redecoration and lighting upgrade, it has been good to add a new set of Stations of the Cross to our church interior. The set is unique as it was handcrafted for us in the Holy Land. We acknowledge the generosity of several donors in making this possible.

We would like as always to thank most sincerely all those who continue to keep our church looking its best by cleaning, polishing brass and silver, by arranging and watering flowers, and by preparing for services - each job is really important and much appreciated. Thank you.

Alan Forshaw & Janet Diamond- Parish Wardens

The Church Hall Report

A year ago I reported on the loss of groups from our Halls following the effects of covid, at the time a course of considerable concern. I am pleased to say that during 2022 nine new groups have taken up regular slots in both the Vestry and Lounge, a very encouraging turn around.

Energy costs and other expenses affected by inflation have impacted our Halls greatly. A considerable increase in hire charges was applied from the 1st September. This was readily accepted and understood by our hirers (with just one minor grumble). I believe that this reflects on the good working relationship we have with all who come through our doors.

Again I have tried to keep costs to a minimum. An essential job was a replacement of the Main Hall zone valve (sadly only 6 months out of warranty) a very expensive part. Also essential was the replacement of the Lounge main doors, a huge improvement and now matching the Hall entrance, good to look at and easy to operate.

As always, I remind everyone that the Halls complex is absolutely vital to the financial stability of our parish. It is important that all our groups feel welcome and I wish to thank all who help me in this. My thanks are also due to all who take pride in keeping all our buildings and grounds in good order.

Alan Forshaw- Parish Warden & Halls Manager

St Martin's Fabric Report

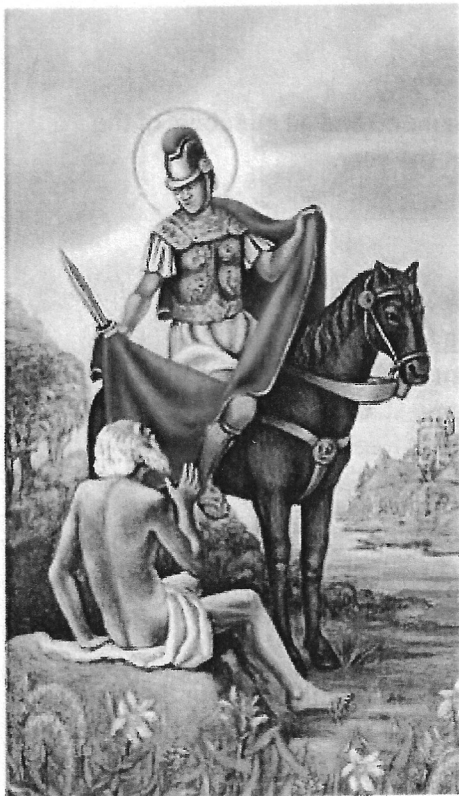
Energy costs and effects of inflation have impacted St Martin's considerably. For this reason hire charges were increased substantially from the 1st September. The increased rent was understood and accepted without complaint by our hirers, we believe that this reflects the good working relationship we have with all who come through the doors.

We have for the most part continued our recent policy of essential maintenance only, thus avoiding prohibitive costs. One exception to this has been the upgrading of lighting in the hall. The existing lights had become increasingly dim, these have been replaced by LED units. Not only is the difference in light amazing but our electricity cost will be lower, a win-win situation!

Overall the centre and its site are in reasonably good order and have a cared for appearance. This is much helped by the sterling work of Geoff and Janet Diamond in grass cutting, weeding and general tidying, a huge commitment for which we are very grateful.

Alan Forshaw and Janet Diamond – Parish Warden

St Martin's Church Plant Report
Annual report from St Martin of Tours Westgate



In January 2022 weekly Anglican worship restarted here in St Martin's Church Westgate. The last Anglican service held here was on the Feast of Pentecost (May 2015). However worship and prayer continued in the church building through our Orthodox brothers and sisters in Christ who rent our building every weekend. I would just like recorded our thanks to all the faithful people who founded, built and established this church in the Westgate area of our parish. Their work continues, 'Thanks be to God!'

The past is of course important, our aim now is to build upon the sure foundations laid back in the late eighties but what is now more important is the future, our plans to rebuild the Church, not talking about bricks and mortar but people. Numbers don't rank high in my mind but they are an indication of the success (or failure) of a task or project. But I am pleased to report that attendance at our Wednesday evening service has slowly risen from 10 to the mid-twenties, many of whom are new worshipers to the parish. We have also held special services like Christingle and Carol services attracting congregations of 50+. This will

only continue with YOUR support and prayers.

Our work and witness continues in the Westgate area in a number of ways - our outreach through Westgate School, both running assemblies in the school and school visits to St Martin's, our weekly 'Story Time' visits into the pre-school and nursery meeting in our building and we also have our 'Open Door' every Thursday afternoon where a number of people pop in for fellowship over tea and coffee and LOTS of cake. This too is growing slowly in numbers. Thanks to the bakers and all who help in any way.

Let's pray that our initial success continues and more people from the Westgate Community will make St Martin's their Spiritual Home.

Fr Keith

The Secretary's Report

Since the previous Annual Parish Meeting, the Parochial Church Council has met on 4 occasions. The average attendance being 12.

The following statutory reports were given at each meeting:

Chairman/Warden's report
Electoral Roll report
Christian Stewardship report
Treasurer's report
Church Hall report
St Martin's report
Deanery Synod report
Children and young people report
Safeguarding Officer's report.
Churches Together in Bare & Torrisholme report

I would like to thank Fr Damian Porter, Mr A Forshaw, Mrs J Diamond and all members of the Parochial Church Council for their help and support throughout the year.

Yvonne Barrett - Secretary

The Christian Stewardship Report

I find myself compiling this Stewardship Report for 2022 as a sort of "cashier" rather than just the Stewardship Recorder. I can therefore offer a selection of income streams for your consideration. If these figures are not identical to those in the Treasurer's accounts (read on), I hope we can explain the differences (but remember that my report comes earlier in the PCC Agenda).

With only 30 parishioners now using the numbered Stewardship Scheme envelopes and a further 54 paying by standing order from their bank accounts, we realised a total of £32087.70 during 2022. That is £9655.70 and £22432.00 respectively.

Since the covid pandemic (remember that?) not all regular givers are members of our Stewardship Scheme (maybe they are trying to avoid the Recorder's twice years letters? and who can blame them?) but all of those who use the orange envelopes for occasional use – (note the new size and format, by the way) – there are a dozen or so who use them on a regular week by week basis, and there are eight parishioners using standing orders for their occasional giving each month. The total for all the occasional giving in 2022 amounted to £6869.41.

Collections – loose change in the baskets provided amounted to £3019.70 and use of the Sumup machine at the back of the church added another £940 to this total.

You might think that, after so many years practice, compiling these figures week by week to arrive at a year end total that agrees with the Treasurer's accounts should be straight forward, however even as late as March 2023 (when I prepared this report) I found a discrepancy of £11.40 in June that I cannot now explain, and then with the Gift Aid claims and GASDS calculations to consider, I realise it is not just a policeman's lot that's not a happy one!! Here's to getting it right (again) in 2023.

Gordon Arkwright- Stewardship Scheme

The Mothers' Union Report

Mothers Union Annual Report 2022-2023

We began the year with hope and optimism, as we had been able to continue with our face-to-face meetings and produce a full programme of events.

We began on March 8 2022 with a member of the RNLI, Alan giving us an enlightening talk and video presentation on their activities nationally and locally.

The next meeting would have been in Holy Week so we did not meet again until May when members enjoyed tea and cakes and a video surprise by Bernard Hough and Gordon Arkwright.

In June we had a double bill with Julie Muckle demonstrating and allowing us to join in with chair based Pilates. This was followed by a talk by Diane Dewar on the Christian community on the Isle of Iona, where she had spent the summer as a volunteer, and members enjoyed both these activities.

On July 26th the Deanery mid summer party was held at our branch, where members were treated to an afternoon tea with the Garstang Ukulele band. It was a fun afternoon and really good to see people dancing and enjoying themselves.

On August 6th we travelled to St Peters, Burnley by coach for the diocese Mary Sumner day service, which was led by the Burnley Mothers Union and was lovely.

On August 18th we held a summer fair at Westgate with our friends at St Martins Westgate. It proved a very popular event and made £300 to help towards Mothers Union expenses.

During September our Deanery festival was held at Dolphinhholme where we were able to support members attending by providing transport. At the Deanery festival Rev Susan Seed and Rev Cindy Rigby gave joint sermons and the theme was the environment.

Kath Bill and Pam Gardner received long service certificates at the festival. Kath has 40 yr and Pam 50 year's service and I know members will want to congratulate them on this achievement and recognise their significant contributions to Mothers union over the years.

We began our autumn programme in September with Father Keith giving us an interesting and varied talk on his life and times.

Our prayers on this day were for our late Queen Elizabeth who was our patron and for King Charles.

During October Lois Kirtley and Jean Simpson gave us a lovely presentation of 7 decades of embroidery in a parish church, with samples and slides of the beautiful work.

In November Kath Bill gave an informative presentation outlining to members the central role of Mary Sumner in the history and development of Mothers Union.

We had some general information on transformation, which is this years theme, particularly how we might grow and develop and how to encourage new members and there followed a lively range of questions from the audience.

On December 13th we had an advent service led by Father Matteo, we had an opening prayer and blessing for the food bank donations. We sang carols and Father Matteo explained the significance of advent and there were readings and reflections. We concluded with final prayers for our sick and poorly members.

On January 10th we had our carol service led by Father Tom Bill, we had carols and readings and during the three kings Father Tom explained the significance of the 3 kings and of their gifts Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh.

Thanks to Eileen Winn who continues to play the piano at our meetings.

Our branch has continued to support the Morecambe Food bank throughout the year, and we have had two very well supported collections of children's underwear to supplement school uniforms. Angela and Bryony, volunteers at the food bank were on hand to help with these collections.

We have continued with corporate communion on the 4th Wednesday every month. We celebrate mothering Sunday as a service in church with our members doing the readings and the prayers.

At our corporate communion in October we conducted a wave of prayer with members taking an active part in the service.

I continue to be well supported by the committee and would like to thank them all for their generosity, kind contributions and hard work.

We are also well supported by our Clergy, Father Damian, Father Matteo, Father Keith and Father Tom, thanks you all for your help and guidance.

Junior Church Report

Structure:

Junior Church structure benefits from the breadth of skills brought by its volunteers; utilising a co-operative approach we aim to draw on personal strengths to enhance sessions. Carolyn Wallace and Michala Parkin continued as Junior Church figureheads until July 2022, supported by Louise Potter, Joanna Dent and a team of parents. Carolyn and Michala resigned from their posts in July 2022 after 15 and 12 years respectively of running Junior Church due to personal commitments. From September 2023 the structure has been made up of three teams of three parent helpers (nine in total) who although not all from teaching background, take turns to run the Junior Church Sessions in line with the Church of England Lectionary or as directed by the Parish Priest, Father Damian Porter.

Pre-School, Foundation, Keystage 1 & Keystage 2:

Weekly numbers can vary from 25 to 35 children.

Year 6, Keystage 3 & Keystage 4 – 2 or 3 children often attend with their siblings and help out. This age group now attend the Ignite group once a month.

New pre-school children have been welcomed into our sessions this year. These younger children attend regularly and their numbers continue to grow. It was noted that there is a marked departure of children at year 6. In September, we altered the format of the sessions to encourage parental attendance at church and also to shorten the session to be delivered in the hall. This was at the request of the new team, who feel less confident in delivering 'circle time'. The children start the session in church, where the priest introduces the theme of the week, the children withdraw to the hall then return for the Eucharist / blessing.

It should be mentioned that although many new families have been welcomed across the age groups this isn't reflected in the numbers on roll. For a variety of reasons, often due to sporting commitments.

Pre-School, Foundation, Keystage 1 & Keystage 2:

Sessions start with time in church before returning to the hall where we recap on what has been mentioned in church. The children then split into key stage groups to explore a related creative activity. The themes this year have included gospel themes from that week's Eucharist, elements of the church service, Old Testament stories and events in the church calendar i.e Mothers Day. At Easter 2022, a workshop was run to explore the Easter story and the children created Easter gardens. This event was attended by around 40 people. The children enjoyed the annual sports day event in July. The children were presented with a book commemorating Queen Elizabeth II's life, at the Gift Day in July. The children did not perform a nativity this year, however they practiced and performed Christmas theme songs and prepared and read prayers.

Junior Church Leadership Team

Ignite Youth Group Report 2022-2023

Ignite began meeting in the later quarter of 2022 and has been well attended ever since, in no small part due to the outstanding efforts of our volunteer leadership team who work alongside the clergy: Lesley Gee, Becki Richardson, and Diane Cocks, whose outstanding work has allowed the group to shine.

Each meeting takes the form of exploring a theme from scripture, an activity, food, some games in our hall, and a closing prayer session.

Our activities have included: candle making, Bible journaling (now a staple of our session as we explore themes), film nights, and festive meals.

We have a list of activities planned, and outside speakers have volunteered their time and expertise to come in and run afternoons, or evenings.

A highlight for our young adults has been the use of their journaling Bibles which were purchased through the generous donations collected through out congregations.

A recent visit from the diocesan youth team left our visitor "... blown away..." by the great work that the team has been conducting in the service of our church's young adults.

Fr Matteo looks forward to taking our youths to the Waddow Hall Youth Pilgrimage in the May half-term, which promises to be an exciting outing.

The Breaking Bread Lunch Group Report

Breaking Bread was set up by Fr Chris Holden in September 2015, as part of the outreach from the Friends of St Francis Group. It met the first and third Thursdays, initially, then on alternate Thursdays, with a shortened Eucharist in church at 12 noon, followed by soup, sandwiches and cakes in the Vestry Meeting Room. This pattern continued until Covid closed us down in March 2020. Since we re-opened in September 2021, we now meet on the first and third Thursdays of each month. We had a temporary break from March to April 2022, due to increased Covid in the area.

During 2022, our numbers have increased as people gained confidence in meeting up. We now have forty people on register and regularly set up four long tables, with an average attendance of thirty-plus.

We had several celebration parties in 2022. A big Platinum Jubilee Party was held in the Church Hall on 2nd June, with flags and bunting, all in patriotic colours, and community singing. Thanks are due to the Church of the Ascension PCC for sponsoring the refreshments for the occasion. A Summer Party was held on 11th August, with one member celebrating her 90th Birthday, and a Christmas Party on 15th December, with carol-singing by children from Torrisholme Low Lane School.

Many thanks are due to Father Damian for his help, support and guidance, and for his very meaningful services, along with Father Keith, Father Matteo and Father Tom, who also take some services, and who join us for food and chat. Thanks also to Father Tom and David Hammond, who co-ordinate and provide transport on a regular basis, and to Jeremy Suter, who joined the transport team before Christmas.

We have two teams of helpers who make the sandwiches and bake cakes, and help with the preparation and serving of soup, clear everything away and do all the washing up. A very big thank you to everyone for all their willing and generous help and support. Thank you also to Yvonne, who prepares all the Easter, Christmas and Birthday cards, which are well appreciated.

Finally, any extra help on the catering teams or transport would be gratefully appreciated.

Kath Bill

The Deanery Synod Report

The Synod meets 3 times a year in February, June and October. It is an opportunity to meet with other Churches in the Deanery to discuss various topics and share experiences of things happening in our own Parishes.

The meeting in June was at St Thomas's Lancaster and discussed what Parishes are doing to help housebound people and those with dementia. We were able to tell the other Churches about our Breaking Bread Group for the elderly and housebound. St Chad's and St Johns Sandylands have Lyrics and Lunch Groups for people with dementia and their families. This meeting was followed by a Jacob's Join.

In October we met at our Church. This began with an Eucharist then our Speaker was Richard Carter whose presentation was on discipleship called "Everyday Faith" This included Growing Faith, Faith at Home and Faith at Work

Last February the meeting was at St John's Ellel and the theme was "Growing Leaders." Our new Area Dean Revd Craig Abbot hosted the meeting. The Speaker was Steve Haskett, Parish Renewal lead for the Diocese. This was a joint meeting with Tunstall Deanery. Steve led an interactive session in which people spoke about parish renewal and lay leadership particularly in PCC's.

These meetings are able to give us an insight in what is happening in the Church of England today

Janet Diamond, Carole Hammond and David Wilde - Deanery Synod Representatives

The Pilgrim Group Report

"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path."

Psalm 119, v 105

Since our group's study of the Beatitudes in the spring of 2022, the Pilgrim Group has continued to meet both afternoons (1.30pm) and evenings (7pm) on many Mondays over the past twelve months. Our aim is to study the word of the Lord and to see how we can best put into practice in our daily lives.

Last Autumn, at the suggestion of two church members, we looked at the Epistles of James and Titus, and some lively discussions accompanied our Bible studies.

As I write (March 2023) the group is now engaged on a course entitled the "Bread of Life" which is described as the "Christian faith through the lens of Eucharist."

Able led by Fr Matteo and assisted by myself, the Pilgrim Group has welcomed between 20 and 30 members on any given Monday when we have met (please see the weekly pew sheet for details of when the group is meeting).

It has been wonderful to welcome several new church members, and our studies and discussions have been both profound and light hearted. A sense of humour is often "a must."

If you are interested in joining a future group, please have a word with Fr Matteo or myself. You will be very welcome.

David Wilde- Pilgrim Group

Pastoral Care Group Report

The Pastoral Care Group meets monthly to feed back and plan for visits to those who are in any kind of pastoral need, and especially those who are ill, and those unable to come to church and who wish to receive Holy Communion at home. We also visit some care homes with both regular and occasional services and to offer Holy Communion to residents. We ensure that everyone has at least a monthly visit, and for some the need is more.

The Craft Group Report

"Craft and Chatter, Knit and Natter" meets on the second and fourth Monday evenings in the Vestry Room.

Approximately 20 ladies share their knitting, sewing, crocheting, skills, etc. on individual and joint projects, some personal and some for church.

Evidence of our time and talents is seen on various stalls throughout our churches and buildings on different occasions. Any profits made go to church and charity.

We also all enjoy lovely fellowship together with a brew and a biscuit.

This group reaches ladies from beyond our congregation. All are welcome!

Mens Group Report

Our informal Men's Group has met roughly bi-monthly. We have been out for meals together, been ten pin bowling twice, and enjoyed a late Christmas Meal and Quiz prepared by Joe Wilkinson. The group is made up of up to about 25 men, all of whom have some connection with our parish. Keep an eye on the notice boards and weekly sheets for details of future meetings/events. All men are very welcome!

Churches Together in Bare and Torrisholme Report

This is an Ecumenical group consisting of representatives from our Church, Torrisholme and Bare Methodists and St Christopher's. We meet twice a year to discuss joint ventures between our Parishes. We welcomed Roy Burley the Methodist Minister to his first meeting in February.

A notice board has been erected in Torrisholme to publicise events at our Church and Torrisholme Methodists.

There was a united service on Palm Sunday at 3pm at Torrisholme Methodist Church then a small Cross was carried on to the Barrow and left there for Holy Week. A Sunrise Service was then held on the Barrow at 6am on Easter Sunday.

The service for the Week of Christian Unity in January was held at our Church to which members of Torrisholme attended.

For Christian Aid week each Church delivered envelopes to all the houses in the Parish and were asked to return them to various collection points in the Parish.

An Ecumenical Harvest evening service at Torrisholme Methodist Church was held on the 2nd October and a Harvest lunch at St Martin's Church for the first time on the 27th October.

On the 11th December we held a Community Carol Service at our Church and invited the local schools. Carols in Torrisholme Square was held again on Christmas Eve.

All these events give us a chance to share services and fellowship with our local Churches and the community.

Carole Hammond – Churches Together

THE SAFEGUARDING AND VULNERABLE ADULTS OFFICERS REPORT

There have been no incidents reported to the Safeguarding Officers this year.

During the past year all clergy, Janet and Hazel have completed and passed "Leadership Safeguarding Training" a course organised and run by Blackburn Diocese.

All PCC members have completed an on-line/in house safeguarding course.

DBS checks are currently being updated.

Hazel Higgins and Janet Diamond

THE LAST WORD! THE CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Our life together in the Parish of Torrisholme and Westgate always seems to be busy, lively, and I believe wholesome!

The past year has been no exception.

Reflecting on the past year, we have seen several areas of new life.

We have welcomed new leadership in our Junior Church, and a new way of working. Our two long standing and faithful leaders Michala and Carolyn laid down the mantle of leadership and a new team is developing. We have tried to ensure that our children's ministry is seen as integral to the worshipping community on a Sunday, and not seen as something separate.

We have also seen, alongside this, the reintroduction of a monthly All Age Mass, and the return of representation from our uniformed groups which is indeed very welcome.

We have also seen, this year, the formation of our new Youth Group, Ignite. A fabulous group of young people now meet monthly for varied activities around faith, fun and nurture with lay and clergy leadership. Some of the youngsters are also now involved with the annual Diocesan Youth Camp which is good.

Our serving team has continued to grow, again engaging young people in the life of our parish.

All of this is very healthy, and our work with children and young people must continue to be seen as a priority.

We've also seen, during the past year, the establishment of a regular Men's Group which attracts men both from within and beyond our usual Sunday congregation. The Craft Group, Breaking Bread Lunch Club, Mothers Union, and the Pilgrim Groups have all flourished in the past year too, and all of them have also been a means by which new people have entered into the life and worship of our Church family and others have been led to deeper involvement and commitment.

Last year I said how much we were missing Peter Blackwell and his work in the Sacristy We still miss Peter... but we now rejoice in a team of 5 people who are sharing much of that work.

We've seen sustained growth in our congregations too, with new people joining us, which is always a wonderful thing. The reestablishment of regular worship and fellowship at St Martin's Westgate has continued to be a real blessing, and it's so good to see that work and ministry developing.

There has been over the past year, and there continues to be a focus on building works, maintenance and improvement. We are richly blessed in this parish in that compared to many parishes we have buildings which don't generally present us with too many challenges in terms of maintenance, but the past year has seen rather more than is usual, and the work is ongoing. We are spending considerable capital ensuring that our church and community buildings are fit for purpose and well maintained.

Well kept and well used premises are actually essential to a healthy church which makes a difference to the community around it. And I believe we do that here. Generally there seems to have been so much erosion of community life in our nation in recent years, but here in Torrisholme and Westgate we are helping community life to flourish in many and varied ways. That is a wonderful and indeed it is a Godly work.

Our Diocesan Vision is for Healthy Churches which transform communities.

I believe we are making a positive difference, and long may it last.

None of this can happen, of course, without committed people who work, individually and together, and often tirelessly, to ensure the work and ministry lives and flourishes.

I am grateful beyond words for the work and ministry of my clergy colleagues, our fabulous Churchwardens and PCC, and all those who work and minister with such faithfulness and commitment to enable all that you see in this report and so much more besides to happen here. Our musicians, sacristans, servers, our welcomers, readers, leaders and facilitators of groups and activities, those who visit and stay in touch with folk, those who brew up and bake, and share in the important work of hospitality. the those who help with flowers and decorations, adding so much beauty to our worship and all who help to keep our church buildings and grounds clean, tidy and welcoming for all the seasons of the year, and all the worship and activities they hold.

There is always a danger of missing somebody out..... there are so many people involved in the life and worship of this parish...prayerfully and financially too. And it all continues when the Vicar isn't here for a while.... Which again is very healthy! So to each and every one, my heartfelt thanks.

Finally, I must record my gratitude to my wife Yvonne, without whose constant love and support I know my ministry would be very much the poorer.

Much has happened, much has changed, and there have many new areas of growth and development in the past year. The year ahead must, I believe, be a year of consolidation as we continue to strive to be a living church at the heart of community to the praise and glory of Almighty God.