

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

ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2023

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 14.

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

- Mrs M Parkin (Secretary)
- Mrs K Thompson (Treasurer)
- Mr G Arkwright (Stewardship recorder)
- Mr D Wilde (Deanery Synod)
- Mrs H Higgs (Safeguarding Officer)
- Mrs J Hall

- Mrs C Hammond (Deanery Synod)
- Mr R Gill
- Mrs K Anderton
- Mrs V Pearson
- Ms J Phillip
- Mr C Barnes
- The Revd Matteo Zambon
- Father Keith Fenton

Mrs Janet Damond (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 a services schedule, which we believe 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 176 parishioners on the Church Electoral Roll, 54 of whom are not resident within the parish. 8 names were added during the year and 21 were removed either through death or because they moved away from the parish. The average weekly attendance, counted during October, was 140 adults and 42 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 34

baptisms and 0 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. Over the past year, we have spent 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.

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 £142,544 and restricted funds of missions received were £2305.43. Income this year was down on 2022 by over £80,000, but 2022 was an exceptional year due to a generous bequest of just over £93,000. Rental income increased by over £9,500, partly as bookings continue to improve post Covid.

£163,540 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 2024's request. Expenditure increased by almost £50,000, mostly due to repairs works on the Church and buildings.

The net result was an excess of payments over receipts of £20781 on unrestricted funds. Adding bank and deposit balances brought forward at the beginning of the year, the balances carried forward at 31st December 2023 on unrestricted funds totalled £287,732.

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.

**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL
PARISH OF TORRISHOLME
BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2023**

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023	Total Funds 2022
<u>ASSETS</u>					
Cash in Hand	4(a)	277.08		277.08	564.68
Bank Accounts	4(b)	192423.27		192423.27	213428.83
<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		15777.61		15777.61	15287.65
Church Hall Investment Account		<u>23464.68</u>		<u>23464.68</u>	<u>23442.86</u>
		<u>287732.62</u>	<u>1400.82</u>	<u>289133.44</u>	<u>309914.82</u>

**Kathryn Thompson
Gavin Glennon
Examiner February 2024**

**Hon Treasurer
Independent**

**Approved by the Parochial Church Council on 6th February 2024
and signed on its behalf by:**

Rev. D Porter (Chairman)

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

PARISH OF TORRISHOLME
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
1ST JANUARY – 31 DECEMBER 2023

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £	Total Funds 2022 £
<u>INCOMING RESOURCES</u>					
Voluntary Income	2(a)	57060.00		57060.00	150809.05
Activities for Generating Funds	2(b)	5459.52		5459.52	4337.43
Income from Investments	2(c)	2692.34		2692.34	589.67
Church Activities	2(d)	71467.50		71467.50	62531.00
Missions Received	2(e)		2305.43	2305.43	618.73
Other Income	2(f)	5864.47		5864.47	6362.13
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES		142543.83	2305.43	144849.26	225248.01
<u>RESOURCES EXPENDED</u>					
Parish Share		42000.00		42000.00	42000.00
Missions	3(a)		2089.93	2089.93	1294.85
Fund Raising Costs	3(b)	457.49		457.49	265.42
Church Activities	3(c)	34218.98		34218.98	38063.14
Church & Church Hall Running Costs	3(d)	33391.64		33391.64	26111.49
Church & Church Hall Repairs	3(e)	53472.60		53472.60	8223.60
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED		163540.71	2089.93	165630.64	115958.50
NET INCOMING/ (OUTGOING) RESOURCES		(20996.88)	215.50	(20781.38)	109289.51
Balances brought forward at 1/1/23				309914.82	
Balances carried forward at 31/12/23				289133.44	

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL
PARISH OF TORRISHOLME

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2023

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

In contrast to recent years, 2023 has been a time of major works on our church and associated buildings, notably the vestry room and ambulatory. These linked buildings form part of the Diocesan Quinquennial Inspection and so are included in our Fabric Report. The vast flat roof area has been replaced by a fully insulated and slightly pitched structure designed to eliminate puddling and give extended life-span. The belfry has been rebuilt and the illuminated cross refurbished by Northern Neon of Blackpool. Needless to say, these major works involved expenditure to match. The substantial legacy the parish received from Betty Whitehead helped enormously in facilitating the whole project. Such was Betty's prayerful devotion to the Lord that we believe she would be thrilled that her bequest has helped to maintain a house of prayer in the parish for years to come.

Exterior redecoration during the summer highlighted the poor state of windowed frames to the east end and fronting Lancaster Road, another very expensive project for which the parish needs to budget very soon.

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 so important and much appreciated. Thank you everyone!

Alan Forshaw & Janet Diamond- Parish Wardens

The Church Halls Report

I am pleased to report that in contrast to recent years, 2023 has been a very steady period in our church halls. For most of the year, groups hiring our buildings continued as in the previous year and income has been good.

To help increase reserves after the impact of the pandemic, I have again tried to keep costs to a minimum. Some redecoration has taken place in the hall, lounge and ambulatory and new more modern microphones have been provided for the lounge. It remains important that our buildings are attractive and fit for purpose.

The year ended with a huge shock when Sparrows Playgroup announced closure at Christmas after nearly 50 years. This, linked with the recent departure of Happi-Care and Baby Sensory, will reduce income from the halls by 40% in 2024 – I am working hard to minimise our costs wherever possible. We hope of course for new hirers, but it is not easy to suddenly fill both mornings and afternoons five days per week.

Despite these setbacks, the halls remain vital to the pastoral outreach of our parish. It is so important that all who enter our complex 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

St Martin's has enjoyed a very steady year keeping all its regular hirers and not incurring too much in the way of extraordinary expenses. Indeed, we have continued our recent policy of essential maintenance only, this avoiding prohibitive costs.

However, we are yet to see the full impact of our new energy contract (2 years) with Valda Energy, this at the end of a previous 5-year contract. The new contract only took effect in October /November.

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 Diamond (and Janet) 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 of Tours, Westgate Annual Report

I am pleased to report to the Annual Meeting that the work of our parish based at St Martin's continues to grow, albeit slowly.

The attendance at our Wednesday evening service has slowly risen again this past year with a couple of young families joining us. We continue to offer the Westgate area of our parish all the various services in the liturgical year

following the tradition of our parish church, although in a less formal but nonetheless beautiful setting.

Our outreach continues with regular household leaflet drops, the weekly changes to our notice board, the large banners on the building, the ringing of the church bell and the visible presence of a 'Dog Collar' seen out and about in the area. This church presence continues with our weekly time spent with the children at Westgate Pre-School. Let's pray that the Holy Spirit may guide us in all we do, but also lead others to return or seek out our Church in Westgate, where a warm welcome will be found for ALL - friends and strangers alike.

We also have connections to Westgate Primary School, although this is proving rather difficult due to the involvement of the 'Church on the Bay', who meet every Sunday in the school hall, and have got themselves established working with the school.

Our Thursday Social Group (Open Door) continues and is well received by the locals, with an average of twelve + people attending. This takes the form of a drop-in gathering with light refreshments and an occasional quiz plus lots of wonderful cakes!

We have hosted several special services and events during the past year including Harvest, Easter, Carol and Christingle services. A pancake party, a Mothers' Unions fundraiser and of course all of the above with more wonderful cakes!

I would just like to point out all of the above could not have been achieved without the help and support of many people, (you know who you are), so thank you to all who help in any way to spread God's word and His love at St Martin's. A beacon of light in Westgate, which will shine brighter, but only with your help and prayers.

Father Keith Fenton.

The Secretary's Report

Since the previous Annual Parish Meeting, the Parochial Church Council has met on 4 occasions. The average attendance being 14.

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.

Michala Parkin - Secretary

The Christian Stewardship Report

During 2023, there were 76 parishioners contributing to our Stewardship Scheme, giving a total of £32,198.20. That is just £111 more than last year.

Among the 50 or so people giving occasionally throughout the year using the orange envelopes, there are 10 parishioners, who give regularly but have not joined the Stewardship Scheme. Their Giving amounted to £1559 of the £4188 recorded for “Occasional Giving” in 2023.

Similarly, 13 parishioners give regularly each month by Standing Order – but have not joined our Stewardship Scheme. In 2023, this amounted to £2688.

Gift Aid claims, including GASDS - that is collections in the basket, the use of the SumUp machine at the back of the church and the QR codes on the pews - total to £41,547.91, from which we expect to receive a further £10,391 from HMRC.

Perhaps next year HMRC will increase the £8k limit on these claims for “collections”. I live in hope!

Gordon Arkwright – Stewardship Recorder

The Mothers' Union Report

At our first Corporate Communion of the year we enrolled three new members Liz Turner, Carol Gretton and Val Townson. The service was led by Father Tom Bill.

In February a Candlemas service was held at Shireshead where we enjoyed a service lead by Rev Chris Walker and Janet Adams.

The next meeting was the AGM held in February and chaired by Father Keith. Audrey Taylor resigned as secretary due to ill health . Pam Winder was elected as secretary and will gradually take over the secretarial duties. The other members of the committee remained the same.

In March David Bateman gave us a very interesting talk and slides on the Grand Theatre from the 1800`s until the present day, followed by many questions.

In April our speaker was unable to attend therefore the afternoon was taken up with bingo and socialising.

The May afternoon began with a service followed by a presentation to the Food Bank. Briony, Jenni and Angela were on hand to answer the many questions. Mary Davies provided us with a craft table enabling members to try their hand at card making.

In June Mrs. Katharine Pym, the head teacher of Torrisholme Community School, gave us a very inspiring talk about how she came to Torrisholme, the connections with the school and the Church of the Ascension. She concluded the talk by giving each of us an envelope containing Psalm 100 and a picture made by the children in year 4.

In July many of us attended the Deanery Midsummer Party, held at Winmarleigh. We were entertained by the ukulele band and a lovely afternoon tea was prepared by their members.

In August we celebrated the Mary Sumner Day at Holy Trinity Church Bolton-le-Sands. Kath Lane deputy president, Lancaster Archdeaconry led the service which was followed by afternoon tea. Later in August we held a Summer Fair with our friends at Westgate. The stalls were busy and a total of £400 was made, this was donated to the diocese for The Summer of Hope charity.

In September a talk was given by Michelle Dixon from our local hospice. She gave us an overview of the way the Hospice works, the role of volunteers and the Hospice at home.

In October Kath Lane gave us a talk on prison projects and the forthcoming event at Lancaster Priory Church regarding gender abuse, entitled "Souls of our Shoes". A varied display reflected peoples feelings.

In the October Corporate Communion we celebrated "Wave of Prayer", members participated in the service. The service was given by Father Damian.

The Deanery Festival was held at St Chad's. The theme was "Away from it all. Elaine Speight and Audrey Irvine received their October forty years certificates.

In November Marvin Bamford presented some interesting slides regarding his experiences in Uganda, who along with his wife worked in education in that country. He discussed the work of the Mothers' Union in Uganda.

In December Father Damian led "Reflections of Jerusalem". Father Tom, Kath, Father Keith and David Wilde presented aspects of our

pilgrimages. Father Damian produced a colourful programme taken from the last pilgrimage with music to accompany.

An Epiphany Story given by Father Tom Bill was about the 4th wise man, Artiban who got lost on the way to meeting the three wise men so didn't arrive in time to set off with them.

In January we celebrated our Christmas Lunch at Morecambe Golf Club 35 members attended. Throughout the year indoor members and sick members have been visited. Sadly Kath Wilcock died in early January 2024.

We celebrate Mothering Sunday as a service in church, with members reading and praying.

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.

I would like to thank the committee for their continued support. We are also well supported by our clergy. Thank you all for your help and guidance..

Jenny Hebblethwaite - Branch Leader

Junior Church Report

Structure:

Junior Church structure benefits from the breadth of skills brought by its parent volunteers; utilising a co-operative approach it aims to draw on personal strengths to enhance sessions. In September 2022, Joanna Dent assumed the role of Junior Church Co-ordinator with Louise Potter responsible for DBS application and renewals. Both of them have continued as part of the Junior Church Team, leading sessions together with other parent volunteers. These are currently:-

Megan Matthews, Helen O'Hagan, Adelle Blacow, Joanne Bisgrove-Peel, Jenny Thompson. In 2023, two parent volunteers stood down due to personal commitments and Jenny Thompson has recently stood down due to her pregnancy due date approaching.

This has reduced the parent volunteers from 9 to 6. Parent volunteers hold current DBS and are the Junior Church leaders who take turns to lead the sessions working in small teams. They plan and prepare sessions on their nominated week. Where possible the sessions will follow the Church Lectionary with ideas provided by the Parish Priest, Father Damian. All Junior Church leaders have access to the Weekly@, Twinkl and other church resources to assist with planning the sessions.

Although Junior Church does benefit with other parent helpers on an ad hoc basis, it very much relies on those parent volunteers and more of them are required for Junior Church to continue in the future.

It has recently welcomed a new volunteer which brings the number of volunteers back to 7.

Joanna Dent and Louise Potter have both indicated that after 20 years and 10 years respectively they wish to step down as Junior Church leaders at the end of the school year, July 2024. However,

they are both happy to continue with their role 'behind the scenes' i.e., emails, nominal role, medical forms and DBS.

More parent volunteers need to be recruited to replace Joanna and Louise.

Junior Church is made up of Pre-School, Keystage 1 & Keystage 2 aged children.

Weekly numbers can vary from 25 to 35 children as in the previous year.

As much as numbers do fall slightly following the completion of Ripley admissions forms from September onwards, numbers also rise with new children starting Junior Church.

Having monitored numbers of children on the nominal role, 120 passed through Junior Church in 2022/2023 and 99 in 2023/2024 to date. Of the 99 on the nominal role since September 2023, 34 no longer attend Junior Church, 45 attend regularly and we have welcomed 20 new children since January 2024.

Of the 45 who attended regularly, this can be once a month or every session. Some children have other activities they participate in at weekends which means attending every session is difficult. This is reflected in the weekly numbers being around 30 children.

These figures are purely Junior Church attendance and not any of the other church services.

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

We continue to commence the Junior Church session with the children meeting in church for the first part of the service. They are then taken into the Hall by the Junior Church leaders before returning into church for the Eucharist/blessing. This provides approximately 45 to 50 minutes for the session. Since this was

introduced, it appears to work well and encourages parents/families to be part of the service.

Previously, we saw children dropped off for the sessions and collected afterwards. Whereas now, a parent or guardian must be in church. The introduction of this format does not appear to have had any significant effect on the number of children attending Junior Church each week.

Sessions run by the Junior Church leaders generally start with a short introduction of the session which sometimes includes a story and some role play followed by a craft activity either to take home to for a church display.

The leaders have access to a number resources to enable them to find the most appropriate activity for their session.

Christmas 2023 saw a small production from Junior Church with a Christmas poem about the Nativity and the children were dressed up to fit their role. This was well received by the congregation and all children present had a part to play.

Following this, the Junior Church leaders hosted a Christmas Movie and food was provided. It was something different and a great time was had by all.

Easter 2024 saw a family event on Good Friday organised by Father Damian and supported by some of the Junior Church leaders. It was very well attended and a resounding success.

Ignite / Sparks Youth Group Report

Youth and Childrens work continues to be a strong focus within the parish. This is in no small part due to the fantastic and dedicated efforts of our volunteer youth and children workers within the parish who help to organise, deliver, and maintain the ongoing mission and vision of the parish.

Our Youth Group, Ignite, has grown in such popularity since our last AGM that we were forced to open a second youth group catering to younger children (years 6 to 7), which is operating concurrently with Ignite.

Our pattern of meeting and worship remains the same: we meet on the third Sunday of every month to explore a theme, study the scriptures, and to play some games (often with snacks or a meal during the session).

Themes are pre planned in advance by the team, with input from the curate and the vicar.

Additionally we run one-off events such as our Historical Fencing Event, hosted by Academie Gloria in 2023, and our table top games afternoon being hosted later this month. The fencing in particular was a huge success and we had to limit numbers as this event brought in a number of children outside our usually catchment.

Our youth group has doubled in size, and we have approximately 30 children 'on the books', and our youth team has also grown to include new team members, to whom we are very grateful.

Later this year Fr Matteo will, as in the past 3 years, take our children on the Bishop's Youth Holiday, which will no doubt continue to be a popular event in our children's social calendar.

Our thanks once again to our amazing team.

5th Morecambe Brownies Report

5th Morecambe Brownies have had a very busy year. Since moving to using the lounge in January 2023 we have felt part of the church community and we love being involved where we can. We love being able to use the wonderful Kitchen to cook and have made lots of things including pancakes, Haggis, neeps and tatties for Burns Night. We have made Chinese food to celebrate the New Year and Mince pies for Christmas plus cakes and biscuits throughout the year.

The Brownies have been working on a number of badges and Theme Awards. We have completed our Know Myself and Express Myself Theme, these involved activities based on how we look after ourselves and our feelings using mimes. We have also completed the Take Action Theme award, this looked at our environment and we made junk models and helped at home to recycle more.

In May last year we celebrated the Kings Coronation with all the Rainbows, Brownies, Guides and leaders across Lancashire at a special adventure day. Over 500 members were there and we took part in cheerleading, inflatable assault course, silent disco and much more.

In June we went on a 2 night Brownie Holiday to Guys Farm Activity Centre in Forton. We had a Hawaiian theme and did lots of crafts and activities. On the Friday night we had a campfire and toasted marshmallows and made smores before settling into our rooms for bed. On Saturday we did create stacking and archery. We made mocktails and had a BBQ on the Saturday Night. On Sunday we went Paddleboarding and then had to clean the house before parents collected at 2pm.

In September we went to Silver Sapling campsite in Silverdale for a Wild West Day Theme Day for Brownies. We made bandanas, did some line dancing, shot water pistols at tins, made our own

cowboy beans, woodcrafts, we even got to ride a Rodio Bull and lasso a rocking horse.

We took part in the Remembrance Parade along Morecambe promenade in November. We also helped at the Church Autumn fayre and ran a game on our stall where you had to try and get a coin in the small jar at the bottom of a large vase of water.

In December we welcomed Father Keith to our Christmas party and presentation evening when he presented the Brownies who were moving up to Guides with their Gold awards (this award is presented to those that have completed 6 interest badges, 6 Skill builders and all 6 Theme awards while being a brownie.)

We have lead 2 Family service's one in July where we acted out the story "The Storm on the lake" and one in February where we lead Candlemas.

We are looking forward to continuing our connection with the church community over the coming years.

Many Thanks

Hayley, Sally and all the Brownies at 5th Morecambe.

The Breaking Bread Lunch Group Report

Breaking Bread Lunch Club, now in its ninth year, continues to meet on the first and third Thursdays of each month in the Vestry Meeting Room for a light lunch, preceded by a short and simple Eucharist Service in church at 12 noon.

With over forty members on the register and an average attendance of thirty plus, we are well blessed with a great team of volunteer drivers and refreshment providers.

A lunch of soup, four varieties of sandwiches and home-made cakes is served by two separate teams.

In 2023 we held a very special Breaking Bread Party to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III (yes, we did all wear crowns!), as well as our regular Summer and Christmas Parties.

A very big thank you is due to Father Damian for his help, guidance, and support, and for his meaningful services, along with Father Matteo, Father Keith and Father Tom, who also lead services and to Father Marvin who has joined the team this year. They all join us for food and chat after the service.

Thanks also to Father Tom, David Hammond, and Jeremy Suter, who provide transport on a regular basis, and to Liz Turner and Father Marvin Bamforth, who have joined the transport team in 2023, as more and more members need regular transport to and from Breaking Bread.

Another big thank you to the two teams of soup stirrers, sandwich makers and cake bakers, who also wash up, clear away and tidy up very faithfully month after month. Jenny Hebblethwaite, Carole Hammond, Julie Unsworth, Yvonne Coupe, Margaret Mellin, Pam

Winder, Jackie Foy and I make up the two teams: we are always on the look-out for extra help, if you feel like volunteering.

Finally, another big thank you to Yvonne Porter, who prepares all the birthday cards, Easter and Christmas cards for each member. The cards are very much appreciated by everyone.

Kath Bill

The Deanery Synod Report

The Deanery Synod met in February, June and October 2023 and in March 2024.

The February 2023 report was included in the last PCC AGM.

The meeting in June was held at St Chad's Church, Skerton and was led by Rev Craig Abbot the Area Dean. Suzie Shearsby from St Thomas' Church Lancaster spoke about the work of CAP (Christians Against Poverty). This organisation has 300 Debt Centres in the UK. A Debt Centre offers free accredited advice to people in debt similar to the Citizens' Advice Bureau. It works in partnership with local churches and has a Christian emphasis. The Lancaster and Morecambe Debt Centre which was created six years ago has two Advisers who each meet around four clients each month. This meeting was followed by a Jacob's Join supper.

In October the Synod was held at St Thomas' Church, Lancaster and members were welcomed by the Vicar, Rev Mark Bradford. Bishop Philip presided at the Eucharist and reflected on the Gospel reading concerning Mary and Martha and invited members to see that activity and prayer are both important. He spoke about three themes that are priorities for action - Building joyful Christian Communities, addressing the need for justice for vulnerable families, and a focus on children and young people.

The meeting in March was held at St James' Church, Heysham and Sion Hall Chair of the Pan Lancashire Anti-Slavery Partnership and Ruth Packwood, Hope at Home coordinator spoke on the theme of Modern Slavery and what we can do to help. The key message was – Do summat, don't do nothing. If it doesn't look right report it – one chance to save a life. The meeting ended with Compline led by Rev Mark Nelson.

These Synod Meetings help us to focus on topical issues and debate and take action on matters of concern to the Deanery.

Janet Diamond, Carole Hammond and David Wilde
Deanery Synod Representatives

The Study Group Report

LENT GROUPS 2023

The Parish was pleased to host two very successful groups, which followed the Blackburn Diocese's Lent Course entitled 'Bread of Life'. The groups met in the vestry on 5 of the Mondays during Lent at 1.30 in the afternoon and then again at 7 in the evening and were led by Fr. Matteo and David Wilde. Both sessions had good support averaging 17 or 18 in the afternoons and about a dozen in the evenings. The course looked at the purpose and origin of the Eucharist, discussing the Lord's command 'to do this in remembrance of Me'. Some relaxed Bible study was a feature of each group with some lively and stimulating discussion.

Please do come and join us in any groups we hold in the future. Everyone found the meetings a real blessing.

David Wilde

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 and / or home bakes.

This group reaches ladies from beyond our congregation and has also brought in new people to our worshipping community. All are welcome!

Walsingham Pilgrimage

Once again we took a goodly number of people on our Walsingham Pilgrimage, and we also gathered up some pilgrims from other parishes. Altogether a total of 30 pilgrims. This pilgrimage provides opportunities for worship, refreshment and fellowship in the beautiful gardens and Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham. We used to have a candle which burned every day for our parish, and this has been reinstated. It is good that we are visibly present and regularly prayed for in this wonderful, ancient place of prayer and pilgrimage, the National Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham.

Mens Group Report

Our informal Men's Group has met roughly bi-monthly. We have been out for meals together, been ten pin bowling, enjoyed a whisky tasting evening, a bbq at the vicarage's and enjoyed a Christmas Meal at The Lothersdale Hotel.

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

Representatives from Churches in Bare and Torrisholme meet twice a year to discuss joint ventures shared between our Parishes.

Torrisholme Methodist and the Ascension both had Lent Lunches in 2023 and the money raised went to Christian Aid along with donations from the Ascension Breaking Bread Lunch Club.

A Songs of Praise afternoon was enjoyed in St Christopher's grounds on 4 June and this was followed by refreshments.

An Ecumenical service for Rev Roy Burley's farewell was held on 16 July at Torrisholme Methodist Church.

The Ecumenical service for Harvest was held at the Ascension on 1 October. We welcomed the new Methodist Minister Rev Linda Catlow at this service.

Carols in the Square on Christmas Eve had to be held in the Ascension Church hall due to bad weather. It was well attended by the community and the money raised went to the local charity CAP (Christians Against Poverty).

A Christian Unity service was held at Torrisholme Methodist on 21 January 2024.

The united service on Palm Sunday was held at 3pm at Torrisholme Methodist Church followed by carrying a Cross and our palm crosses on to the Barrow. Refreshments after this at the Ascension.

These Ecumenical services give us a chance to meet and share fellowship with members of the local Churches and the community.

Carole Hammond

The Safeguarding and Vulnerable Adults Officers Report

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

Through Blackburn Diocese we now have access to “The Parish Safeguarding Dashboard Tool, which is an online resource to help keep track of safeguarding governance. Father Damian and Janet attended a training session and Hazel has completed on-line training. The dashboard is now up and running for the Parish and will be monitored and updated as necessary.

Hazel Higgins and Janet Diamond – Safeguarding Officers

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.

In last year's report, I said that there had been several new initiatives and changes, and our focus this coming year would be consolidation. I believe this is a fair reflection of the year that has passed.

Our various groups and activities for all ages have continued to thrive, which is very encouraging.

We've maintained good attendances in our congregations, with new people joining us, which is always a wonderful thing. The continued 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 continuing to develop.

Over the past year we have welcomed a new minister at the Methodist Church, Rev Linda Catlow, and our ecumenical relationships continue to be strong, as they are with our Greek Orthodox brothers and sisters, with whom we shared a day of celebration in honour of St Martin in October.

Much time over the past year has been given to supporting parishes in periods of Interregnum, and our staff team regularly provide cover for other parishes when clergy are away on holiday. It is good that we are able to support other parishes in this way.

During the past year, I have been active as a governor at Torrisholme School, now regularly lead assemblies and am present in areas of school life. Our links with the school have continued to grow. This is in no small part due to the leadership of Mrs Pym and the welcome of the school community.

I am involved on several Diocesan committees, including being Chairman of the Diocesan Property Committee, which also means

serving on the Diocesan Board of Finance and Bishop's Council. I am grateful for the opportunities to serve the wider Church in this way.

The Parochial Council, after consultation with the congregation, chose two charities to support this year, alongside the usual fundraisers. We have supported an educational charity in Uganda and a local support group for people who suffer from Pulmonary Fibrosis. I believe that we should be a giving church, so am pleased we have agreed this. It will soon be time to seek ideas for next year!

There has been over the past year, a continued 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 much of that work is now complete. We have spent 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 involved with safeguarding, 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... practically, prayerfully and financially too. And it all continues when the Vicar isn't here for a while...(sabbatical!) Which again is very healthy! So to each and every one, my heartfelt thanks.

The year ahead will bring some inevitable change to our ministry team, as Fr Matteo will continue his formation and move on to the next stage of his ministry. I am delighted, however, that the Bishop has agreed to extend Fr Keith's time with us for a further two years from November.

It is my hope that over the next year we will continue to prioritise our work with young people, and that we will build on our nurture through opportunities for prayer, bible study and teaching. We will also undertake a review of our Parish Safeguarding processes and ensure we are up to date with current requirements. Indeed, this has already begun. 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.

Fr Damian Porter, Vicar.

**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL
PARISH OF TORRISHOLME
BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2023**

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023	Total Funds 2022
<u>ASSETS</u>					
Cash in Hand	4(a)	277.08		277.08	564.68
Bank Accounts	4(b)	192423.27		192423.27	213428.83
<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		15777.61		15777.61	15287.65
Church Hall Investment Account		<u>23464.68</u>		<u>23464.68</u>	<u>23442.86</u>
		<u>287732.62</u>	<u>1400.82</u>	<u>289133.44</u>	<u>309914.82</u>

**Kathryn Thompson
Gavin Glennon**

**Hon Treasurer
Independent Examiner February 2024**

Approved by the Parochial Church Council on

and signed on its behalf by:

Rev. D Porter (Chairman)

**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL
PARISH OF TORRISHOLME
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2023**

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.

2. <u>Incoming Resources</u>	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2023	Total 2022
(a) Voluntary Income				
Planned Giving:				
Gift Aid Donations	32026.20		32026.20	32098.70
Occasional Giving	6848.00		6848.00	6858.41
Income Tax Recoverable	10953.89		10953.89	10893.28
Sum Up collections	2025.56		2025.56	2201.98
Collections	3797.40		3797.40	4428.35
Donations/Legacys	1408.95		1408.95	94328.33
	<u>57060.00</u>		<u>57060.00</u>	<u>150809.05</u>
(b) Activities for Generating Funds				
Fund raising:				
Coffee Money	1614.56		1614.56	1514.53
Lunch Club	1132.55		1132.55	1003.61
Autumn Fayre	1860.00		1860.00	1385.86
Pudding Party				374.60
Easter B/fast				58.83
Craft Money	195.35		195.35	
Bear Sales	75.00		75.00	
50/50	435.00		435.00	
Plants	147.06		147.06	
	<u>5459.52</u>		<u>5459.52</u>	<u>4337.43</u>
(c) Income from Investments				
Fixed Int	8.43		8.43	
National Savings	21.82		21.82	2.34
Church Deposit Fund	2172.13		2172.13	389.01
Church Deposit Funds @ Blackburn	489.96		489.96	198.32
	<u>2692.34</u>		<u>2692.34</u>	<u>589.67</u>
(d) Income from Church Activities				
Church Hall Lettings	68881.50		68881.50	59279.00
Fees	2586.00		2586.00	3252.00
	<u>71467.50</u>		<u>71467.50</u>	<u>62531.00</u>
(e) Missions Received				
Childrens Society	574.00		574.00	62.00
Christingle	262.60		262.60	354.73
Bishops Harvest Appeal	338.50		338.50	202.00
Gaza Appeal	314.13		314.13	
Friends of Holy Land	47.00		47.00	
Earthquake Appeal	320.00		320.00	
St Johns Hospice	125.00		125.00	
ACS	71.00		71.00	
Christian Aid	253.20		253.20	
	<u>2305.43</u>		<u>2305.43</u>	<u>618.73</u>

(f) Other Income

Flowers	1270.30	1270.30	1532.00
BDBF Grant	2455.97	2455.97	3574.08
Candles	789.90	789.90	411.00
Misc	100.00	100.00	845.05
Memorial Book	70.00	70.00	
Walsingham Monies	<u>1178.30</u>	<u>1178.30</u>	
	<u>5864.47</u>	<u>5864.47</u>	<u>6362.13</u>

3. Resources Expended

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2023	Total 2022
(a) Missions				
Childrens Society		935.23	935.23	814.00
Bishops Harvest Appeal		338.50	338.50	202.00
Bishops ordination Fund				148.85
St Peter & St Davids PCC				130.00
Earthquake appeal		320.00	320.00	
St Johns Hospice		125.00	125.00	
Christian Aid		253.20	253.20	
Friends of Holy Land		47.00	47.00	
ACS		<u>71.00</u>	<u>71.00</u>	
		<u>2089.93</u>	<u>2089.93</u>	<u>1294.85</u>

(b) Fund Raising Costs

Coffee	362.24	362.24	177.39
Lunch Club	95.25	95.25	64.00
Easter Breakfast			<u>24.03</u>
	<u>457.49</u>	<u>457.49</u>	<u>265.42</u>

(c) Church Activities

Ministry:			
Vicar's Expenses	1287.01	1287.01	2098.44
Vicarage Expenses	7622.81	7622.81	8419.59
Sunday Schools	1861.94	1861.94	988.93
Organists	2720.00	2720.00	2800.00
Wages	11040.00	11040.00	11020.00
Stationery and Admin	1637.71	1637.71	1576.38
Photocopier charges	3069.93	3069.93	3713.70
Flowers	1423.00	1423.00	1440.05
Church Services	3142.78	3142.78	5416.05
Organ	294.00	294.00	504.00
Sundries	<u>119.80</u>	<u>119.80</u>	<u>86.00</u>
	<u>34218.98</u>	<u>34218.98</u>	<u>38063.14</u>

(d) Church & Church Hall Running Costs

Electricity	4018.90	4018.90	3473.18
Gas	7365.72	7365.72	4743.95
Insurance	2850.26	2850.26	2738.46
Repairs & Renewals	9941.78	9941.78	8150.99
Cleaning Materials	2318.16	2318.16	2334.26
Garden Maintenance	2190.94	2190.94	582.47
Water Rates	1678.19	1678.19	1511.81
Phones	<u>3027.69</u>	<u>3027.69</u>	<u>2576.37</u>
	<u>33391.64</u>	<u>33391.64</u>	<u>26111.49</u>

(e) Church and Church Hall Repairs

Special Works including :

Lounge doors			5373.60
Flat roof	47163.60	47163.60	2850.00
Gate	743.00	743.00	
Painting	<u>5566.00</u>	<u>5566.00</u>	
	<u>53472.60</u>	<u>53472.60</u>	<u>8223.60</u>

4. Assets

Unrestricted
Funds £

Restricted
Funds £

Total
2023

Total
2022

(a) Cash in Hand:

PCC Parish Of Torrisholme	16.37	16.37	3.36
Church Hall	35.14	35.14	183.05
Flower Fund	<u>225.57</u>	<u>225.57</u>	<u>378.27</u>
	<u>277.08</u>	<u>277.08</u>	<u>564.68</u>

(b) Bank Accounts

PCC Parish of Torrisholme	107003.74	107003.74	149645.97
Hall Account	<u>85419.53</u>	<u>85419.53</u>	<u>63782.86</u>
	<u>192423.27</u>	<u>192423.27</u>	<u>213428.83</u>

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL
PARISH OF TORRISHOLME
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
1ST JANUARY – 31 DECEMBER 2023

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £	Total Funds 2022 £
<u>INCOMING RESOURCES</u>					
Voluntary Income	2(a)	57060.00		57060.00	150809.05
Activities for Generating Funds	2(b)	5459.52		5459.52	4337.43
Income from Investments	2(c)	2692.34		2692.34	589.67
Church Activities	2(d)	71467.50		71467.50	62531.00
Missions Received	2(e)		2305.43	2305.43	618.73
Other Income	2(f)	5864.47		5864.47	6362.13
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES		142543.83	2305.43	144849.26	225248.01
<u>RESOURCES EXPENDED</u>					
Parish Share		42000.00		42000.00	42000.00
Missions	3(a)		2089.93	2089.93	1294.85
Fund Raising Costs	3(b)	457.49		457.49	265.42
Church Activities	3(c)	34218.98		34218.98	38063.14
Church & Church Hall Running Costs	3(d)	33391.64		33391.64	26111.49
Church & Church Hall Repairs	3(e)	53472.60		53472.60	8223.60
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED		163540.71	2089.93	165630.64	115958.50
NET INCOMING/ (OUTGOING)		(20996.88)	215.50	(20781.38)	109289.51
RESOURCES					
Balances brought forward at 1/1/23				309914.82	
Balances carried forward at 31/12/23				289133.44	

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of The Parish Of The Ascension Torrisholme With Westgate

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of The Parish Of The Ascension Torrisholme With Westgate (the Trust) for the year ended 31st December 2023.

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 2011 ('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: *GAVIN GLENNON*

Relevant professional qualification or membership of professional bodies (if any):

Address: *27 NORWOOD DRIVE
MORECAMBE
LA4 6LT*

Date: *28 FEB 2024*