



**St Thomas' Church
Lowther St
York**



**ANNUAL REPORT and FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
of the PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL**

For the year ended 31 December 2024

www.stthomasyork.org.uk

Priest-in-Charge: Revd Alistair Rycroft

Churchwardens: Mrs Jo Bloss, Mr Matt Clarke-Neale

Treasurer: Mr Ross Watson

Independent Examiner: Mr David Griffin

Bank: Lloyds Bank plc, Pavement Branch, York

Registered charity number: 1198054

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Followed by further reports and minutes of 2024 Annual Parochial Church Meeting	

Annual Report of the PCC of St Thomas' for the year ended Dec 31st 2024

St Thomas' Church (serving the parish of St Thomas with St Maurice) is on Lowther St in the Groves area of York. It is within the Diocese of York.

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is a charity registered with the Charity Commission. The PCC has the responsibility of promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the church; pastoral, evangelistic, social, and ecumenical. It also has maintenance responsibilities for the church and hall.

Membership: Members of the PCC are either ex-officio or elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting in accordance with the Church Representation Rules. All church attendees are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and are then eligible to stand for election to the PCC.

During 2024, the members of the PCC of St Thomas' Church were:

Revd Al Rycroft (priest-in-charge) – Chair
Revd Andy Hagon (curate)
David Stirk – Vice Chair
Matt Clarke-Neale – Churchwarden
Jo Bloss – Churchwarden
Ross Watson – Treasurer
Tom Dennis – Secretary
Gerald Snowden - Deanery Synod Representative
David Pennock
Viv Pennock
Peter Platts
Ruth Dunlop
Tom Button
Phil Harman
Bryony Dansey

There were seven full PCC meetings and one extraordinary PCC meeting during 2024.

Church Attendance

As of April 2025, there were 107 names on the electoral roll (35 resident in the parish). The average attendance figure for Sunday services in October 2024 was 98 adults and 23 children. In 2024, we continued to stream worship services online, live from the church building with several regular viewers.

Church Services continued at 10.30am on Sundays, usually a Eucharistic Service, but with some Services of the Word (sometimes All Age). Children's groups ran during our non- all age services. We held communion services midweek through most of the year. We held special services (Carol Service, Midnight Communion) in December.

Safeguarding: The PCC has a safeguarding policy, displayed in the church and church hall. St Thomas' follows guidance to ensure 'safer recruitment' of staff and volunteers. Staff and volunteers are appropriately trained according to Church of England guidance. The PCC has complied with the duty to have due regard to the House of Bishops' safeguarding policy.

The Parish Safeguarding Representative was Alison Taylor until end September 2024, replaced by Ellie Hindley. Tom Dennis was the PCC's safeguarding link.

Review of 2024 and Priorities for 2025 (by Al Rycroft, Priest-in-Charge)

I'm writing this as I return from three months of study leave, which means I don't really have a clue what's been going on recently, and can't remember 2024 very well! What I do know is that I want to express my heartfelt thanks to everyone for supporting and enabling my sabbatical, which I have valued greatly. My hope is that I return refreshed and with new insight and energy to do the job!

Looking back to 2024, it was quite a year for St Thomas', with ongoing growth in numbers, and we pray also growth in faith too. I loved helping to teach through the parables of Jesus, so many of which seem to remind us of our smallness, but also of God's greatness and the availability to us of his kingdom. Later, as we journeyed through the Practicing the Way resources, we were encouraged to think about how we might arrange our lives so that we can experience more of God's presence, and learn to be more like Jesus. As I come out of three months of reading and reflection, I am only more convinced that this is the great priority for all of us: to learn how to step into the kind of life God has created us for – a life where we know him, trust him, and discover more of his grace and power day by day.

It was also in 2024 that we had the joy of moving back into our renewed building after a few weeks meeting at Door 84. Aside from a couple of teething problems, it seems there is wide agreement that the new, level floor and more open space has been a great benefit both to the regular congregation, but also to the wider community as the space can be much more flexibly used. We hope that the events with music, art and food that we have already enjoyed are just a taste of what is to come in months and years to come. We pray that this building will be more and more used to the glory of God in many and varied ways.

Of course, growth in numbers comes with its challenges, as some things become more complicated, and we can be pressed for the space we need to do the things we would love to do. This is, in one sense, a good opportunity for us all to grow in grace and humility, considering others' needs as more important than our own – and I am so thankful that this is so often the way you do treat one another (and me!). However, it also prompts important questions. Things can't simply stay the same as we grow, and so we need to pray and think together about the new ways we might need to do things to encourage further growth and welcome new people who are joining us. Any change (as those of you who have been at St Thomas' for a while know only too well) means that some things are lost; but we pray and expect that the new things to come will be still better, even as they may be challenging.

In 2024, our relationship with St Wulstan's continued to develop – and in particular the team running Bubble Church at St Wulstan's, made up of people from both churches, has been an example of that. I return from my break with a heightened sense that we need to work hard together over the coming year to make this into a really fruitful partnership for the sake of the gospel. I don't know exactly where that will take us, but I hope that when I write this report next year we will have a much clearer idea and some encouraging stories to share.

Please do read through the reports later in the booklet for an overview of our many different ministries, as there are so many marvellous things going on. Not least, during 2024, we were able to launch our Keys group to provide fellowship and support for those struggling with addiction. This feels like the culmination of many years of work and prayer in this area, and we pray for many lives to be blessed and transformed. You'll also find information about the finances and the ongoing building project.

I'll end where I began, in saying thank you. Above all, to our ever-gracious God. Also to each and every person, young and old, who serves in whatever way. And this year especially, to Jo Bloss, who is now stepping down as church warden, but who has served St Thomas' and the Lord with such faithfulness and wisdom in this role for six years. We pray that all we are doing is for the glory of God as we learn more and more to live our lives with Jesus, becoming more like him.

Financial Review for 2024

Total receipts on general unrestricted funds in 2024 were £121,830 and are detailed in the financial statements on pages 5 to 7 of this report. £108,128 was spent to provide the Christian ministry from St Thomas' Church, including the freewill offering of £38,292 to the Diocese of York, which largely provides the stipends and housing for the clergy.

Planned Giving, collections, donations and Gift Aid Tax all increased this year, to give a total of £112,258. This is partially due to the Generous Giving month we ran in October, during which our congregation were encouraged to review their donations.

Our total budgeted general fund expenditure for 2025 is £125,241, which equates to £2,408 per week. The majority of this money comes from the generous giving of the congregation at St Thomas' Church. Church members are encouraged to use standing orders to provide planned regular income. The budgeted requirement for Planned Giving is £88,841, or £1,708 per week. Where possible the use of Gift Aid to maximise donations by the recovery of income tax is encouraged. The tax reclaimed for the tax year 2023/24 was £19,263, including tax from Building a Haven Project donations.

The general fund budget excludes the financing of any capital works on the structure of the Church, so in addition to all the general fund figures reported above the Building a Haven Project had fund raising of £34,735 last year. Expenditure on the project totalled £73,352. This is due to some of the major work carried out this year, including the floors in both the church and the hall.

Reserves Policy

It is necessary for the PCC to maintain a balance of unrestricted funds, equivalent to 3 months unrestricted expenditure, £31,310 against the 2025 budget of £125,241. The balance of £68,256 on unrestricted funds at the year-end exceeded this target, however some of these funds may be used to assist with the Building a Haven project this year.

Ross Watson (PCC Treasurer)

18/04/25

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to trustees of the PCC of the Church of St Thomas with St Maurice, York (Charity no 1198054)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Church of St Thomas with St Maurice, York, (the Charity) for the year ended 31 December 2024, set out on pages 5 to 7.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the Charity 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 Charity'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:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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.

Mr David Grffin
8 Lowther Court, York, YO31 7EG
8th April 2025

St Thomas with St Maurice Church, Lowther Street, York
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted Fund £	Designated Fund £	Restricted Fund £	Endowment Fund £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT							
Receipts							
Voluntary receipts from donors							
Tax efficient planned giving		65,855.66	-	1,200.00	-	67,055.66	63,711
Other planned giving		7,221.66	-	600.00	-	7,821.66	12,364
Collections		4,183.38	-	915.69	-	5,099.07	6,191
Other recurring giving/donations		-	-	-	-	-	-
Non-recurring giving/donations		17,383.31	-	-	-	17,383.31	3,219
Income tax recovered		17,614.36	-	1,649.50	-	19,263.86	21,053
		112,258.37	-	4,365.19	-	116,623.56	106,538
Other voluntary receipts	3a	-	-	5,994.00	-	5,994.00	870
Activities for generating funds	3b	-	-	19,978.44	-	19,978.44	8,319
Investment income	3c	783.39	-	3,053.05	-	3,836.44	3,371
Receipts from church activities	3d	7,995.00	-	-	-	7,995.00	7,212
Other incoming resources	3e	794.00	-	11,960.09	-	12,754.09	-
		121,830.76	-	45,350.77	-	167,181.53	126,310
Payments							
Church activities							
Diocesan Freewill Offering		38,292.00	-	-	-	38,292.00	36,468
Other payments	3f	69,835.83	-	82,068.35	-	151,904.18	91,810
		108,127.83	-	82,068.35	-	190,196.18	128,278
Excess of Receipts over Payments							
		13,702.93	-	(36,717.58)	-	(23,014.65)	(1,968)
Transfers between funds		3,053.05		(3,053.05)	-	-	-
		16,755.98	-	(39,770.63)	-	(23,014.65)	(1,968)
Bank current and deposit accounts 1 Jan		51,500.83	-	99,664.18	-	151,165.01	153,133
Bank current and deposit accounts 31 Dec		68,256.81	-	59,893.55	-	128,150.36	151,165
STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES							
Cash Funds							
Bank current account		13,820.51	-	-	-	13,820.51	2,619
Bank deposit account		54,436.30	-	19,026.64	-	73,462.94	77,679
CBF deposit fund		-	-	40,866.91		40,866.91	70,867
		68,256.81	-	59,893.55	-	128,150.36	151,165
Investment Assets							
		-	-	-	-	-	-
		68,256.81	-	59,893.55	-	128,150.36	151,165

The attached notes on pages 6-7 form part of these financial statements

Approved by the PCC on 14th April 2025 and signed on their behalf by:

Revd Andy Hagon

Ross Watson (PCC Treasurer)

St Thomas with St Maurice Church, Lowther Street, York
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

- 1 The financial statements of the PCC have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 using the Receipts and Payments basis.
- 2 The movement in designated and restricted funds during the year were:

Fund

Restricted Funds:

Martin Fund
 Restricted / Charity / Funeral Collections
 Flower Fund
 Creativity Fund
 Hardship Fund
 Building a Haven Project
 Community Café Fund
 Acts 435

Designated Funds:

Balance b/f	Receipts	Payments	Transfers	Balance c/f
55,796.23	3,053.05	-	(17,982.37)	40,866.91
229.90	1,009.03	(1,238.93)	-	-
147.49	-	-	-	147.49
2,185.08	1,023.58	(1,260.46)	-	1,948.20
8,380.13	5,360.00	(2,212.94)	-	11,527.19
25,888.32	34,735.11	(73,352.02)	14,929.32	2,200.73
7,037.03	-	(3,834.00)	-	3,203.03
-	170.00	(170.00)	-	-
99,664.18	45,350.77	(82,068.35)	(3,053.05)	59,893.55
-	-	-	-	-

- 3 Receipts and Payment Analysis

a Other voluntary receipts

Legacy
 Recurring grants
 Non-recurring grants

b Activities for generating funds - receipts

Fund raising

c Receipts from investments

Dividends and interest
 Rent from PCC owned property

d Receipts from church activities

Fees retained by the PCC
 Bookstall
 Letting of Hall and Church
 Rent from car park

e Other incoming resources

Insurance claims
 Loans
 VAT reclaim

Unrestricted Fund £	Designated Fund £	Restricted Fund £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	5,994.00	5,994.00	870
-	-	5,994.00	5,994.00	870
	-	19,978.44	19,978.44	8,319
-	-	19,978.44	19,978.44	8,319
783.39		3,053.05	3,836.44	3,371
-	-	-	-	-
783.39	-	3,053.05	3,836.44	3,371
475.00	-	-	475.00	1,352
-	-	-	-	-
3,230.00	-	-	3,230.00	2,540
4,290.00	-	-	4,290.00	3,320
7,995.00	-	-	7,995.00	7,212
-	-	-	-	-
794.00	-	-	794.00	-
-	-	11,960.09	11,960.09	-
-	-	-	-	-
794.00	-	11,960.09	12,754.09	-

St Thomas with St Maurice Church, Lowther Street, York
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

3 Receipts and Payment Analysis

f Church activities - payments

Costs of generating funds

Fund raising costs

Donations (grants) to charities

Overseas missions

Home missions

Secular charities

Activities directly related to the work of the church

Salaries, wages & honorarium

Working expenses of the incumbent

Working expenses of assistant staff

Parsonage house expenditure

Mission & evangelism costs

Church insurance

Church cleaning

Church admin costs

Church maintenance costs

Upkeep of services

Upkeep of churchyard

Other PCC property upkeep

Support costs

Loan interest paid

Church administration and administrator

Gas costs

Electricity costs

Water costs

Oil costs

Costs of trading

Bookstall costs

Letting direct costs

Parish magazine costs

Governance costs

Major expenditure

Major repairs to church buildings

Major repairs to church hall

New building or major works

Unrestricted Fund £	Designated Fund £	Restricted Fund £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
756.00	-	-	756.00	-
5,500.00	-	605.03	6,105.03	6,869
5,000.00	-		5,000.00	2,500
500.00	-	633.90	1,133.90	387
34,550.88	-		34,550.88	31,622
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-
280.00	-	-	280.00	150
1,720.90	-	1,260.46	2,981.36	3,106
2,499.70	-	-	2,499.70	2,416
2,470.88	-	-	2,470.88	2,659
1,012.71	-	-	1,012.71	1,339
1,641.14	-	-	1,641.14	7,187
4,456.96	-	-	4,456.96	3,316
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-
60.00	-	2,382.94	2,442.94	3,195
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	1,128
5,012.07	-	-	5,012.07	7,394
2,633.18	-	-	2,633.18	2,594
455.03	-	-	455.03	331
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-
1,186.38	-	-	1,186.38	828
-	-	-	-	-
100.00	-	-	100.00	90
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	3,834.00	3,834.00	8,612
-	-	73,352.02	73,352.02	6,087
69,835.83	-	82,068.35	151,904.18	91,810

4 The expenses paid to clergy may include a small immaterial proportion, which relates to their function as PCC members.

5 Working expenses of the incumbent allocated to specific cost centres.

6 No payments were made to PCC members.

St Thomas with St Maurice Church
General fund budget 2025

	Total	Per Week
INCOME	£	£
Planned giving	88841	1708
Collections	4000	77
Income tax	19000	365
Donations	3600	69
Fees	1000	19
Car parking	5000	96
Hall income	3000	58
Interest	800	15
TOTAL	125241	2408

	Total	Per Week
EXPENDITURE	£	£
Charity giving	5,500	106
Support Chris & Suzy	6,050	116
Free Will Offering	41,355	795
Vicarage water	460	9
Church & Hall running	16,000	308
Maintenance	4,000	77
Training / Scholarship	800	15
Misson / Outreach	1,500	29
Services / Children's work	3,000	58
Admin	1,600	31
Miscellaneous	400	8
Lay Outreach Workers	23,784	457
Children's Worker	11,892	229
Administrator	8,900	171
TOTAL	125241	2408

Further Reports:

Church Wardens' Report 2024/25

Reflecting on the past year in church is a great way of realising just how much has been going on and how our vision to be a Haven in the Groves is taking shape.

Our priorities during the year have been about deepening faith, learning more about being disciples of Jesus, being a community that welcomes and cares for one another and one that nurtures and values our children and young people.

None of this is possible without significant contributions of time, money, and prayerfulness from many volunteers within the church and from our staff team.

We are blessed to have Al as our Priest in Charge – currently on Extended Study Leave after serving here for 10 years. His commitment to leading us and St Wulstan's, has continued to lead to significant growth in the church and of our reputation and presence in the local community. Al is supported in this ministry by a gifted staff team, by our Curate Andy and by several retired clergy who have made St Thomas's their home.

Every Sunday involves up to 20 volunteers who do so many things that make our services possible. From making the tea and coffee, to helping with the kids work, to organising the sound and tech. You know who you are – we could not do all this without you! If you are not already on a team, then we would really encourage you to do so – this is an important way in which we can feel part of the church community and get to know others.

We particularly wanted to mention Dave Stirk who tirelessly looks after the church building and plays a key role in the Building Project. Dave Stirk and Dave Pennock have spent hours in recent months redecorating parts of the church and we are really grateful for all they do. Another person who puts in a huge amount of work is Phil Harman who has greatly improved our tech and overseen all sorts of changes to make our sound and vision even better. Thank you, Phil.

We have welcomed many new people into church this year - those moving into the area, finding faith for the first time or reengaging with church after time away. We regularly have over 110 adults and 25 children on Sunday mornings.

BUILDING a Haven

We were thrilled this year that our floor levelling was able to take place in May/June. A transformation took place over 8 weeks during which time we met on Sundays at Door 84 down the road. This was a real answer to prayer as we were able to continue to gather locally. The new floor has enabled us to have a multi-functional space with all sorts of future possibilities for worship and also for community use. Next stages include toilet/kitchen facilities and new heating. More information is available about the building in Dave Stirk's report.

Communal Worship

Once again we have been blessed with some excellent teaching series in the past year and are grateful to Al, Andy and Sam, in particular, for their commitment to teaching and helping us grow in understanding and faith. Our most recent series has been about the Lord's Prayer. Last year we all were given a copy of Practising the Way to read alongside the sermon series. We were encouraged to study together in home and other groups. Prior to this we had a Generous Giving month and had teaching about all aspects of giving - time, money, skills. The month led to an increase in monthly, as well as one-off, giving, and in volunteering – thank you!

Al has encouraged new leaders to lead services, and we have now started having young people co-leading as well. During Al's absence we have had a number of visiting preachers as well as welcome leading and teaching from our own "retired" clergy.

Our services have remained available online for those unable to attend.

We have a growing number of musicians in the worship team with a variety of instruments and are so grateful for their commitment to lead us each week in worship. It is particularly encouraging to have several teenagers taking part on a regular basis.

Events and Activities during the year

It is good to look back and remember how much has happened with a big variety of one off and regular activities.

One highlight was the live music gig with Ron James' band, Still Crazy – a fitting celebration of our new floor!

Another highlight was Dave Nevard's inspiring art exhibition -Drawn to Imperfection- which also led to another visit from Songs of Praise.

Many other events have taken place – all with the desire to build relationships both within the church and with the local community. From trips to the seaside to Women's Breakfasts to Sunday lunches at church.

We have a growing number of families and children in the church and are grateful to Lucy and Dan Baines for their prayerful and creative leadership of this ministry. The year has seen lots of fun one off events for families and young people. We are grateful also to Jonny Wooldridge for his leadership of the young teenagers' group, Deeper (and action songs on Sundays!). It was great to see several of our young people being baptised and giving heart felt testimonies.

This year Bubble Church started, led by Andy with support from Dan, Lucy and others. The services are based at St Wulstan's, so this has been a good opportunity to work together.

St Wulstan's

We continue to think and pray about our future relationship with St Wulstan's and how both congregations can thrive and support each other. We thank Stuart and Dee Dyas for taking a key role in leading services there and supporting the church pastorally.

Mission Partners

We continue to support Chris and Suzy Wilson working with CMS in Ethiopia. We also support several local charities and organisations including the local Scout group, Family Matters York, Restore, YoYo, Besom York and Chocolate & Co.

Jo Bloss and Matt Neale

May 2025

Midweek Cafes

It has been another year of the Lord's gracious provision for us at St Thomas' as we've continued to run weekly cafes at the church: approximately two every week (on Tuesdays & Thursdays) for nearly 50 weeks in the year! The Tuesday cafe has followed a similar pattern to the "Encounter cafe" we used to run pre-covid, with attendees served a bacon sandwich, tea & cake. Attendees play games & there are opportunities for prayer, relationship-building & sorting out issues with housing/benefits etc. This past year has seen a real growth in the number of people attending, with every Tuesday averaging around fifteen people (with many more on the books as occasional attendees)! The Thursday cafe is usually preceded by communion in the church, after which tea & cake are served.

We're very grateful to God for his provision of several volunteers that enable these cafes to take place, mentioning particularly Reg Evers & Janet Norris who help make sandwiches, serve cups of tea & wash up every week! We're also grateful that grants have been provided to help replace the hall carpet & that the hall has been re-decorated, with which we're able to serve people better.

God has answered our prayers over the year for workers in the harvest field & He's equipped those that continue to serve him regularly.

Students & young adults

We're again thankful to God for the young adults he has brought to be a part of St Thomas'! We have been blessed with a larger-than-normal new intake in September 2024, including some students from York St. John's but mainly from the University of York. At St Thomas', we've tended to encourage young adults to join the wider fellowship of the church in midweek home groups, and many of them are part of these groups. I want to express my thanks to the various home group leaders that care & facilitate God's working in the lives of these young adults, week-by-week.

Our main, regular activity for the students is a monthly young adult evening, where we meet to eat together, look at the Bible, pray & worship together. This year, we've continued to meet at Roger Boulton & Ruth Dunlop's house (thank you!), which has provided a wonderful, homely venue. I tend to meet one-to-one with each student once a term, which is probably the most enjoyable part of my role at St. Thomas'! There are a number of people in the congregation that mentor different students, for which I'm also very grateful. If you'd like to do this, just let me know! I'm also particularly grateful that several people in the congregation have provided accommodation to students, especially during the past six months & several that have given lifts to students on Sundays!

Our big event is an annual young adult weekend away, which took place in March 2024. We went to Wydale to the Emmaus Centre & were very blessed by Phil Harman, who gave us a little taster of Read-Mark-Learn. We were also thankful to Aurelia Jones who led us in worship!

Do pray for me as I try to balance my Sunday commitments with my desire to serve these young adults that so ably serve the church (in worship, kids & youth work, the P.A. & more!).

Sam Nunes

Community and Pastoral Work Report April 2025

At first glance, it may seem that community work and pastoral work are very different to each other, and it's true that these two areas of work have different aims and sometimes require very different skills. Community work is about blessing our community as well as outreach, helping to draw people in so that we can build relationships with them and hopefully help them to come to know God. Pastoral work is about answering Christ's call to 'take care of my sheep'. However, these two areas of work very much go together and are often closely related. Whether someone is experiencing loneliness, bereavement, depression or addiction, being in community frequently brings relief, and it's often through the various groups we run that people's pastoral care needs are met. Conversely, many of the people who attend our groups disclose pastoral needs to us, so the community work generates more pastoral care work.

With God's grace, our Creative Café, Tuesday Community Café, and Thursday Communion Cafe have all gone from strength to strength this year. I've also continued to organise a Women's Breakfast once every two months, which now averages 25-30 guests, and led our first Women's Weekend away at the Jonas Centre in July, which was attended by about 30 of us. Lydia and Andy Hindle and I also organised several joint St Wulstan's/St Thomas's board games events during the last year. Many thanks are due to the numerous volunteers who help to run these events, all of which aim to build community and indirectly address various pastoral care needs.

Many of these community events have also fed into other areas of church life. This year I helped on our Alpha, Read Mark Learn and Practising the Way courses, all of which were attended by various people who we've come to know through our cafes and community events. Similarly, our 'Peaced Together' and 'Going Deeper' courses both serve to draw in new people and to bring healing to those who attend.

While our community work is advertised at church, and visible to everyone, much of what we do in pastoral care is confidential and happens behind the scenes. In the last year, this has included doing hospital visits, visiting people at home if they're unable to get out, meeting with people regularly to listen and pray, organising meal rotas for people who've had operations or had babies, helping people to move house, sourcing and delivering furniture for people, putting in applications to ACTS 435, helping people to apply for PIP and for social housing, giving people lifts, attending medical appointments with people, delivering emergency food parcels and addressing safeguarding issues.

As well as the pastoral care provided by the staff team, I'm aware that a lot of excellent pastoral care is also carried out within home groups and by other members of church. As our church continues to grow, there is more demand for pastoral care. There are already plans in place to look at how we can formalise our pastoral care and perhaps take a more strategic approach to meet this growing demand. As with everything in church, 'unless the Lord builds the house, the builders labour in vain' and we are dependent on God for wisdom and strength to do this work. Please do pray for our community and pastoral work, that God will continue to guide us and to show us the way forward.

Anne Wooldridge

Children and Families at St Thomas' April 24-April 25

It's been another blessed year for the Children & Families at St Thomas. We have grown again in numbers, but also seen families flourish in their relationships both with God and between one another. Tiny Tots on Friday continues to be a highlight of the week. It is such a joyful place to be with many returning and new families, meaning that recently we've moved into the main church. It has been great to be able to push the chairs back and make a wonderful accessible space. We have been supported so well by a team of dedicated children's workers both at Tots and on a Sunday; thank you to everyone who serves our children and families so faithfully.

Our fantastic team has also enabled us to expand our Sunday provision to meet the growing numbers and needs of the diverse range of children God has entrusted us with at St Thomas'. Recently we have been able to take the Waves children (older primary school age) over the road - thank you so much Choc and Co! This space allows for age-appropriate sessions that go deeper into the Bible and encourage faith exploration.

This year in Splash and Waves we have explored the Books of the Bible, what it means to be a disciple, and studied Psalms. In Bubbles we have enjoyed journeying through Bible Stories, from creation to the Easter Story.

Highlights of the year have been our Light Party and New Years Eve Party – we sure know how to party at St T's; the first 4 sessions of Bubble Church at St Wulstan's, Sports in the Park through the summer holidays and spending time together with a few church families at Cedarwood Festival in the summer. The festival weekend encouraged us all in our faiths to step out and be bold in following Gods calling over our lives.

We've also recently formed a Children & Families Steering Group' to prayerfully support and guide our ministry moving forward.

As we continue to grow, let's keep thinking creatively about how to make church a welcoming, inclusive, and accessible space for every child and family. Thank you for your ongoing love, service, and patience.

Lucy and Dan Baines

Deeper (Younger Youth)

Deeper has been led this year by myself, Ben and Esther and meets on a Sunday evening between 6 and 7:30.

The aim of the group is, as the name suggests, a time to go deeper into exploring faith. We do this in a variety of ways, from following a particular set programme (like Youth Apha), to having guests who talk about their own faith and how it affects their lives or discussion of the sermon most have heard that morning in church.

We start by eating together and chatting, then have some form of study and then end with a game.

We have 13 on the register and average around 10 in attendance each week.

If we are short of leaders then we meet at the Rycroft's house for a social evening instead.

We are planning a weekend away to the Lake District in June.

Five of the group were baptised this year.

We try to encourage them to feel a part of the church as individuals (not just by association with their parents) and so encourage them to play an active part in volunteering. It's great to see most of them involved in things such as helping with Sunday School, welcoming, doing the drinks after the service, leading services, being in the music group and leading the action songs etc..

The only slight issue we have with the group is the age range has become a little stretched with it being tricky to aim the studies at the right level for the older kids without going over the heads of the younger ones. With a few Year 6's about to move to secondary school and becoming old enough for Deeper, this is something we need to think about for 2025-2026.

Report from the Children and Families Steering Group

We have had two meetings of the Children's and Families Steering Group

Our aim is to support our Children's and Families worker and Team of Volunteers to plan and deliver a quality programme for under 11s and their families. And to support and pray for Lucy and Dan in their work and lives including their family.

We have so much to rejoice about;

- children growing in faith, learning to pray and knowing about Jesus in their Bible and as their friend.
- We appreciate the way family services have evolved
- Increasing numbers of children on Sunday morning - we now have three groups with Waves now meeting separately from Splash at Choc and Co on Sunday - thank you Linda and Choc and Co team.
- Some new volunteers to help with these groups (and we need a few more!)
- Some families new to church joining us each week
- We are especially pleased to welcome families with additional needs, when they are experiencing church as inclusive and say they feel safe here.

Blessings of children's ministry team who work so hard and work so well together.

It is also our vision to grow well and be healthy individuals, families and church. Safeguarding is a top priority, and the steering group ask all parents to be responsible for their child in the service before they go out into groups and when they return towards the end of the service. We ask parents to register each child - if you've not yet done this please see Lucy. If you can't be with your child on a particular week it's important to nominate another adult to care for your child at that time, and to tell them each time that you need their help.

We aim to encourage couples and people without other responsibilities in the service to 'adopt a family'. This will start in September and if you are interested in being partnered with a family please see me, Lucy, Rachel, Dave or Bryony.

There will be a Volunteers training day on 21st June for Volunteers working with children led by Bev Nunes and another OT, about how we aim to be inclusive especially for children with additional needs.

Please talk with us if you are interested in helping or learning more.

Ruth Dunlop, Dave Nevard, Rachel Harman, Bryony Dansey, Lucy Baines

St Thomas' Church KEYS Recovery Project Centre Annual Report April 2025

Our KEYS Recovery Centre launched in November 2024 with a weekly drop in on Monday evenings for anyone who's currently struggling with, or in recovery from, addiction. This felt very much like a God-led initiative, and God graciously brought it into being, providing us with a wonderful team of volunteers and the funding we needed.

To date, we've had 20 clients through the door and 94 attendances in total. Attendance at the group has been steadily increasing, as shown below:

Nov 24: 8

Dec 24: 11

Jan 25: 13

Feb 25: 14

Mar 25: 30

Apr 25: 18 (mid-way through month)

It's very encouraging that we now have about 10 regular clients and there's a lovely, and growing, sense of community in the group. KEYS is a Christian group, and God is at the heart of our teaching as we believe it is only through God that we can find true and lasting freedom!

I'm currently co-ordinating the group on a voluntary basis, working about 10 hours per week. Prior to the group launching, I had regular weekly online training with KEYS head office for several months, but this has now dropped down to monthly supervision. As well as preparing and leading the weekly drop-in, much of my time has been spent recruiting volunteers, helping volunteers with training, messaging clients, keeping attendance logs, processing registrations, leading team meetings, conducting individual volunteer supervision, leading Big Green Heart sessions and networking with other York organisations who work in this field (CYC, York in Recovery, AA etc). I am also currently doing online training with ISAAC (International Substance Abuse and Addiction Coalition) for 2 ½ hours every Friday morning for 10 weeks.

We have a great team of 7 volunteer befrienders, drawn from St Thomas' and from other churches around York, and are hoping to start one-to-one work with clients outside of the drop-in sessions in

the next few weeks. We are very grateful to all our volunteer befrienders for their support and hard work, and to Eddy and Maya James for volunteering to cook once a month for our drop-in sessions. Prior to us launching KEYS, Maya James helped us to successfully apply to York Foodbank for funding and we were given £5K per year for three years. Part of this funding will be used for our Centre Co-ordinator's salary. It was always intended that the Centre Co-ordinator role would become a paid role after the centre had been established and we'll be recruiting for this role on Al's return.

In November, all our volunteers attended the KEYS National Team Day in London, and last month I spent a weekend at the ISAAC conference in Bristol with the KEYS head office team and other KEYS centre co-ordinators from around the country. Next month, the KEYS Recovery Project founder, Dr Steve Smith, and Operations Manager, Laura Waters, will be visiting us to provide in-person training to our volunteers, and the following day, on 1st June, they'll be joining us for our Sunday service, where Steve will be speaking, and we hope one of our clients will share their testimony. Do please join us if you can to hear more about our work!

Anne Wooldridge

Fabric Report

There is little to report this year, other than we continue to maintain the church buildings and grounds, keeping an eye on anything that may need up-dating and repairing, such as re-painting the hall and replacing the hall carpet for a more suitable covering. However there has been plenty going on in the Building a Haven Project, report elsewhere.

In last year's report, I referred to the condition of the stonework, I'm pleased to report that towards the end of the year the Building Group began the process of applying for funding from the Heritage Lottery fund to help pay for repairs. We pray that this will be forthcoming, plus money raised through our own fundraising efforts and with God's blessing the work will begin in 2025.

I would like to once again take the opportunity to thank everyone for the work they have done during this past year in helping maintain and care for our church and also to Steve Turner for the cleaning and gardening throughout the year. If anyone feels that they can offer time to help in carrying out cleaning, gardening or general maintenance work, please get in touch by contacting me on:

davidstirk@hotmail.com or 07903 979703.

Dave Stirk

Building a Haven

This last year has been a significant one in that levelling of the church floor was completed in the summer, together with installing new automatic doors within the vestibule, the most visible progress so far. What are we planning next?

Much remains to be done of course, externally to repair stonework and to improve church surroundings, internally to add a disabled toilet in the vestibule, to make preparation of hot drinks easier within the church itself, and to bring the west balcony back into safe use. And that is not an exhaustive list! The other significant matter relates to heating and moving to a low-carbon system for the future. All of this requires funding of course, which guides our priorities and inevitably constrains how quickly we can progress further. Our current emphasis is on the disabled toilet, which is affordable, and costing stonework repairs, for which substantial funding is needed.

It is a little hard to believe that the first meeting of the Building Group was four years ago (29 April 2021) and it has met on average every 7 weeks since. The Group currently comprises Dave Pennock, Dave Stirk, Jonny Wooldridge, Tom Dennis and Roger Boulton (chair). Jonny Stokeld recently stepped down but remains available to guide us on environmental matters. We would welcome hearing from anyone interested in helping with fundraising or communications.

Finally, we owe particular thanks to Dave Stirk, our expert on St Thomas's the building, for all the time and thought he gives both to the maintenance of our church and to Building a Haven.

Roger Boulton

Growing Together, Achieving More: A Year at 2nd St Thomas (York) Scout Group

Since 1956, 2nd St Thomas (York) Scout Group has proudly served our community from our dedicated headquarters on Haxby Road. While our roots remain firmly in The Groves and Haxby Road, our reach continues to expand, drawing in young people from across the city thanks to strong word of mouth and enthusiastic local support. We're especially grateful to St Thomas' Church, whose backing remains a vital part of our success.

This year has been filled with energy, creativity, and learning. Our young people have thrown themselves into a wide variety of adventures—from model-making workshops at Warhammer in the city centre, to engaging museum visits and the timeless thrill of camping. Their achievements inspire us daily. We were especially proud to present our Scout section's very first Chief Scouts Gold Award, as well as a Young Leader belt to a member who began their Scouting journey with us at age six. These prestigious honours join a steady stream of Chief Scouts Bronze and Silver Awards achieved by our Beavers and Cubs.

None of these accomplishments would be possible without the dedication and passion of our exceptional volunteer leadership team and trustee board. Their tireless efforts create the foundations for everything we do.

Looking ahead, we're excited about the future. With continued leadership and community backing, our vision is to grow into a thriving group with four sections, offering opportunities for young people aged 4 to 18. To get there, we're focused on vital initiatives: enhancing accessibility at our Scout Hut, expanding our volunteer base, and launching a new Squirrel Section for 4–6-year-olds.

We believe every young person deserves the chance to shine—and that takes a team. If you're interested in supporting the next generation as a volunteer, or if you have a child, you'd like to add to our waiting list, we'd love to hear from you.

Tom Mann

On behalf of the Leadership Team

2ndstthomasyork@gmail.com

Minutes of the St. Thomas' Mission Unit Annual Parochial Church Meeting, 2024

The St. Thomas' Mission Unit Annual Parochial Church Meeting was held on 21st April 2024 at 12:30pm.

Parishioner's Meeting

1. Opening Prayer

A. Rycroft opened with a prayer, welcoming both those in the room and those listening on Zoom.

2. Appointment of a secretary for the meeting

T. Dennis was appointed as secretary for the meeting. Approved unanimously.

3. Apologies for absence

R. Boulton and G. Snowden

4. Minutes of the Parishioner's Meeting and APCM 23rd April 2023.

Minutes were approved with no alterations. Proposed: J. Bloss. Seconded: P. Platts.

5. Matters arising

No matters arising.

6. Elections: Church Wardens for the year 2024/25

J. Bloss and M. Neale have been nominated as churchwardens.

J. Bloss. Proposed: R. Dunlop. Seconded: P. Platt.

M. Neale. Proposed: B. Dansey. Seconded: E. Hindley

The church was informed that J. Bloss wishes to stand down at the end of this term and a replacement will be needed.

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

1. Apologies for absence

See Point 3 in the Parishioner's Meeting

2. Minutes of APCM, 23rd April 2023

See Point 4 in the Parishioner's Meeting

3. Matters arising

No matters arising

4. Electoral Roll Officer's Report

a) Electoral roll numbers

A. Stirk reported to the secretary that there are 123 people on the electoral roll – 42 residents in the parish, 81 non-residents in the parish.

The church was informed that next year would be a new roll as this refreshes every six years.

b) Electoral Roll Officer election

A. Stirk elected unanimously.

5. Further Elections:

a) Synod Representatives

G. Snowden's term continues (two years remaining on his three-year term). Two spaces remain.

b) PCC Members to serve for 3 years

B. Dansey. Proposed: R. Dunlop. Seconded: R. Boulton.

P. Harman. Proposed: J. Bloss. Seconded: J. Hattan.

T. Button. Proposed: T. Dennis. Seconded: J. Bloss.

6. Reports

a) Treasurer's Annual Report and Presentation of Accounts for the year ending 31st December 2023

Accounts enclosed in annual report.

A question was raised about church giving. A. Rycroft responded with an explanation of charity giving and giving to mission partners.

b) Appointment of Examiner of Accounts for the year 2024

J. Kasiuk has stood down from this role. This will be filled later in the year.

c) Vicar's report

A. Rycroft drew attention to the Vicar's report (this was distributed prior to the meeting).

He emphasised how some churches talk about a period of consolidation but this does not always feel how the Lord works. Things are always moving and new endeavors are always emerging. This is particularly evident with the recent growth of the church and how we meet these needs and fulfil the congregations needs.

Thankfulness was also expressed for the children and young people who are members of our congregation.

7. AOB

A. Rycroft shared about an open evening happening on 28th April 2024 where congregation members are able to reflect and consider how they might support the work of the church.

The congregation also reflected on how the church has grown over the last 10 years and how, when we look back at the PCC vision from 10 years ago, many of those have come to fruition.

A member of the congregation also reflected on sharing the PCC Minutes and we will ensure this occurs.

The congregation wished to minute their thanks to A. Rycroft for the work he has done and continues to do.

8. Closing prayer

Members of the congregation prayed.