

Our Year of Living Faith: The 2024 Annual Report of St Peter and St Paul's, Bishops Hull

My friends, it is my privilege to present this report reflecting on our journey through 2024, a year where our core principles of Worship, Mission, and Discipleship have continued to guide our every endeavour and shape our church family. I am hugely grateful and encouraged by all who are involved with and share the ministry of growing God's Kingdom here in Bishops Hull. My grateful thanks to each person.

Our Foundation: Worship

At the heart of our life together at St Peter and St Paul's is worship. In 2024, we remained committed to providing opportunities for meaningful encounter with God, rooted deeply in Biblical authority and with open hearts to the leading of the Holy Spirit. Our regular weekly services on Sundays and Wednesdays formed the consistent rhythm of our spiritual lives, providing solace, inspiration, and a sense of unity. The special services marking the key seasons of the Christian year – Lent, Easter, Advent, and Christmas – offered profound moments of reflection and celebration. Recognizing the gifts within our congregation, we also actively explored Diocesan initiatives for Lay Worship Assistants and Lay Pastoral Assistants, seeking to empower more members to participate in leading our times of worship. These roles have been recognised by the Diocese and certificates presented in Autumn 2024.

Our Reach: Mission

Our commitment to mission in 2024 saw us actively engaging with our community in numerous ways, striving to be a beacon of God's love and grace beyond our church walls. We prioritized making our services genuinely welcoming to all, especially those visiting for the first time, ensuring they experienced the warmth of our fellowship. We maintained a visible and supportive presence during key local festivals, recognizing the importance of connecting with our community in shared moments. While we made the thoughtful decision to focus on the power of in-person connection by ceasing online broadcasting after Easter, our mission continued through tangible acts of service. We extended care to the youngest in our community by gifting Real Advent Calendars to Reception children and offered support to those transitioning to secondary school with "It's Your Move" booklets. Our dedicated "Open the Book" team regularly shared the transformative stories of the Bible in our local Primary school, and a newly formed team lovingly brought the sacrament of Communion to residents in local Care Homes, alongside our regular services in those settings. A significant development in our mission outreach was the inspiring formation of our Healing Team, born from an in-depth Bible study on Jesus' healing ministry. This team will seek to offer prayer and support for physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being within our congregation and the wider community, embodying Christ's compassionate touch. Furthermore, we actively foster a spirit of outward focus by recognising Church Mission Society trained Pioneer Minister roles and proudly supporting both local and international missions through our partnerships with organizations like Church Mission Society, Christian Aid, Open Door, and Taunton Youth for Christ. The enriching visit from Marcio and Noemi, our CMS Link Missionaries in December, followed by a shared meal, strengthened our global connections and inspired us anew. Our commitment to community was also evident in our welcoming monthly Coffee Mornings, the provision of a weekly "Warm Space" during the colder months, and various community events like "Jumper January," Carol Singing, Christmas

Flowers, Gardening sessions, Bell ringing, Remembrance Events including a 'Light a Candle' service, our responses to emergency appeals, and poignant Baby Loss Awareness events. We made great use of our links with Gregory and Ellen Steward and offered numerous concerts, another way we seek to connect with and serve our community.

Our Growth: Discipleship

Nurturing spiritual growth and fostering deeper discipleship within our congregation remained a vital focus throughout 2024. We emphasized robust Biblical teaching and its practical application in our daily lives, utilizing resources such as the engaging just10 video series. Our homegroups (regular and seasonal) continued to provide invaluable spaces for fellowship, learning, and mutual encouragement, and we actively explored ways to expand their reach. The provision of daily Bible Study notes from the Bible Reading Fellowship encouraged personal reflection and a deeper understanding of scripture. As part of our commitment to thoughtful discernment, the Parochial Church Council and others engaged in prayerful discussion regarding the "Prayers for Love and Faith," ultimately deciding not to adopt these prayers, a decision made with careful consideration and with the support of the Church of England Evangelical Council.

Stewarding Our Church and Community:

Beyond these core areas, we remained dedicated to the careful stewardship of our historic church building, awaiting the upcoming Quinquennial Report to guide our maintenance plans, including the essential replacement of the guttering and downpipe system. We are so nearly there with the "Building Tomorrow's Church Today" project, see Church Wardens report. Our pastoral care extended to significant life events through Baptisms and Christenings for all ages, Wedding ministry, comforting Funeral services, and our ongoing ministry in local Care Homes. Ensuring a safe environment remained paramount, with our safeguarding policies diligently followed and no incidents reported in 2024.

Looking Forward with Faith:

Our journey through 2024 has been deeply shaped by our commitment to Worship, Mission, and Discipleship. These principles have guided our actions, strengthened our community, and inspired us to share God's love in tangible ways. As we look to the future, we do so with gratitude for the blessings of the past year and with a renewed sense of purpose to continue living out our faith in meaningful and impactful ways.

Rev Phil Hughes, April 2025

The Church Wardens Report, Year 2024-2025

Two new Church Wardens were appointed early in the year. Tim Venn, a local dairy farmer, and John Perry, a retired businessman. Both attended the Diocese Of Bath and Wells annual Church Warden's Day training July 24th and received an individual copy of the Churchwardens' Handbook. In its context this experience gave both wardens a firm basis on which to view their tenures in the role. As the year has progressed it has become evident that not only this initial training, but also the different backgrounds of the two wardens have proved a valuable vehicle in managing the Church's affairs.

Perhaps the best way to describe the Church's affairs this year is a calm progression

and development of its ministry. There can be no doubt that the objective in all things has been to help parishioners be faithful in their Christian faith. All things that were done e.g. Saturday coffee mornings, concerts in the Church, regular visits to care homes and the local school, healing team training, were done in the concept of unity and strength in the Parish.

The Electoral Roll has recently been updated for the next APCM. It is shown that numbers have been maintained through each year. This is no small achievement in the general context of these times, and reflects the unity that exists in the Church. An Annual Fabric Report will be presented to the next APCM which will form the basis of the Quinquennial Report. The report will demonstrate that, bearing in mind the age of the Church, the fabric of the Church remains in a good state, if some parts do appear a little dilapidated. The structure recently built to the front of the Church, The Bridge, has continued to provide the excellent opportunity of a warm welcome to the Church. In effect, being attached to the Church, the Bridge markets the interior of the Church and attracts parishioners and visitors in to enjoy the splendid age of the Church and its atmosphere. There have been snagging issues with the Bridge that have required consultation with the architects, particularly to the outside woodwork and doors, but these have been largely resolved and should be completed soon. The replacement of the guttering around the Church is still an ongoing project estimated at some £50,000 to complete. This has been approved by the Diocese and now the funding of the project via grants is being sought. In the current economic climate this could take some time to achieve but is anticipated to be completed by the end of the '25-'26 year.

The churchyard has had some issues with the large trees therein. The local authority now responsible for the maintenance of the church yard was contacted in September of the year to request an audit to be completed, particularly on the trees. This was achieved and in their report the LA saw no particular reason for action. By completing an audit the LA's responsibility for the maintenance of the Churchyard was confirmed. In this context, during a February storm one of the trees lost a large branch which presented real safety issues. The LA and police were advised and the LA responded promptly to deal with the issue.

The new Treasurer for the year has done an excellent job of maintaining the full accounts for the Parish and a proper financial authority listing has been completed.

The full balance of the Parish accounts is available to the PCC and payment authority procedure has been completed and maintained. The ongoing issue facing the Parish is the so called 'Benefice Share'. This is the new procedure established by the Diocese to establish the annual fee charged by the Diocese to the Parish. In our case this new procedure has increased the Church's parish share significantly. The PCC has not agreed this new approach and the parish is currently in discussion with the Diocese to agree a revised share.

For the rest there have been no significant events to report in the year. There have been no safeguarding incidents to report and our management of these issues has

been much enhanced by the appointment of a new Safeguarding Officer in March 2024. There have been no losses of any sort. All in all, a calm and progressive year to report.

John Perry

Monday, 28 April 2025

Home Communion Team Report

Communion Services at Heron House, The Manor, Netherclay House and Frethey Care Homes

It's been over two years since Sue Martin, Pat Barrett, Jan Acott and Christabel Ager have been going in to the above local care homes to enjoy fellowship, worship and administer communion. This outreach began in November 2022 and grown from strength to strength.

The services are extremely popular with the residents and staff and attendance has increased considerably over the years as well as their abundance of enthusiasm which is infectious. The order of service is well established and everyone enjoys choosing the hymns. Special requests for prayer are also received which I believe is an indication of the importance of these services. This has made these visits very personal and meaningful to all involved.

All of the four homes are unique and offer the team their own personal touch in their warm welcome. Small altars with battery/lit candles, Bible, hymn books and orders of service are often set out ready for the worship. One of the care homes has even written its own personal prayer composed by the residents which is said at every worship.

These monthly visits are continuing to build strong relationships with not only us, Bishop Hull church but with all involved. Our visits to the homes stretch out further than residents and staff but to family members and wider community who also join us. The atmosphere created is very special and it is a privilege to be involved in this outreach.

Praise to the Lord that are congregation numbers have increased considerably over the years and their abundance of love, commitment and encouragement is infectious.

If you would like to know more about this ministry (perhaps with a view to shadowing the team at some point?) then do have a chat with Rev Phil Hughes in the first instance.

Sue Martin, April 2025

Ministry of Healing in the Church.

Since October '24, a group has been meeting to study the Bible Particularly looking at Jesus' healing ministry and to share their own experiences of prayer for healing. In the final weeks it has also been prayed about and discussed as to how this ministry could be best introduced into the church life for the benefit of all members and those outside the church community. In the Gospels, we the Church, are instructed to go out into the whole world to preach the good news and heal the sick. How best can we fulfil this instruction?

It is planned to restart offering a prayer ministry in some of the services. Following a short sermon series, the offering of prayers for healing may be introduced. The Parochial Church Council has approved an initial policy for the ministry of Healing within this church. Advice has been sought from the Diocese and all Safeguarding checks will be made and in place.

Jan Knight, April 2025

Bible Study Group report:

"You diligently study the scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life."
John 5, verse 39.

The group meets throughout the year on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of the month. We have a short break at Christmas and a slightly longer one in the summer. During this past year, our main studies have been from a course called Holy Habits, written by Andrew Roberts and produced by BRF. It is focused on aspects of discipleship and has been very helpful. We have also read the book of Ephesians, chapters 1 to 6. This was following the sermon series we had in church on Ephesians.

We are a small group of only six people, so there is plenty of room for others to join us. You can find out more from Niall Watson, telephone 282297.

Niall Watson, March 2025

Children's Ministry - Open the Book 2024 Report

Introduction

Open the Book, a key element of the Bible Society's outreach, has once again proven to be a regular and highly impactful event in our primary school. This report celebrates the activities and achievements of our dedicated Open the Book team throughout 2024, building on the strong foundation established over the previous eighteen months. Our core mission remains to share the stories of God's work with the children, fostering their understanding of and engagement with the Bible in a way that is both fun and accessible. We often reflect on the potential for a traditional Sunday School, but Open the Book allows us to connect with approximately 200 children every fortnight – a reach we simply couldn't achieve through a church-based event. It's with immense pride that we consider Open the Book to be the primary expression of our Children's Ministry!

Regular Assemblies

Our Open the Book team, comprising ten committed members, has consistently delivered fortnightly assemblies throughout 2024. We bring Bible stories to life through engaging narration and dramatic presentation, utilizing simple yet effective costumes and a variety of props. The team's creativity and craft skills are invaluable in creating immersive scenes that captivate the children and draw them into the heart of each story.

Throughout 2024, we've shared a diverse range of stories from both the Old and New Testaments, ensuring the children encounter the breadth and depth of scripture. The Year 6 children have continued to embrace their role as 'extras' with remarkable enthusiasm, eagerly volunteering to participate in bringing these stories to life. Their involvement is always recognized with an 'I helped Open the Book' sticker, a much-treasured badge of honour. We estimate that approximately 30 Year 6 pupils participated in our Open the Book assemblies during 2024.

Experience Days

Building on the success of previous years, we were delighted to offer another enriching Experience day to the entire school in 2024: 'Experience Harvest'. This event proved to be a wonderful opportunity to explore the themes of Harvest and global awareness through a series of interactive stations. Each station culminated in a brief, reflective activity, designed to reinforce the key concepts and encourage the children to engage with the material on a personal level. The day's activities culminated in a collective gathering, where we reflected on the significance of God's gift to us through the Harvest season.

The Harvest Experience saw the participation of approximately 225 children (the entire school!) and the dedicated support of 25 adult volunteers. These volunteers played a crucial role in the day's success, contributing their time and talents to creating craft materials, staffing the stations, guiding the children, providing refreshments, and, importantly, upholding the day in prayer. The event was characterized by the exemplary behaviour of the children, the unwavering support of the school staff, and a palpable sense of joy and shared purpose among all involved. We were particularly encouraged that at the end of the day several members of staff and parents made a special trip to the church to express their gratitude for the incredible experience.

Impact and Testimonials

Open the Book continues to exert a profound and positive influence on our school community. Teachers consistently report that the assemblies effectively reinforce classroom-based religious education, providing a valuable opportunity for spiritual reflection within the school day. The children consistently demonstrate a high level of engagement during the presentations, and our Experience days have proven to be particularly effective in deepening their understanding of key biblical narratives and their relevance to their own lives.

Here are a few comments that capture the essence of this impact:

- A teacher noted, "The Open the Book team have reinforced a key principle for the school in this assembly, thank you."
- A Year 6 pupil exclaimed, "Best assemblies ever!"
- A volunteer observed, "The children are so well behaved – this is brilliant."

Prayer and Thanksgiving

The success of Open the Book is a testament to the hard work, dedication, and collaborative spirit of many individuals. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to:

- The Open the Book team, who demonstrate unwavering commitment and enthusiasm in their preparation for and delivery of every school visit.
- The numerous volunteers who generously contribute their time, talents, and energy to the Experience days, making these events so memorable and impactful.
- The school staff, for their ongoing support, partnership, and commitment to fostering a positive and enriching learning environment.

Above all, we acknowledge the indispensable power of prayer, which underpins and sustains all our activities. We continue to pray that our work will be a source of blessing to the children and the entire school community, enabling them to encounter the stories of the Bible and discover their enduring relevance to our lives today. We warmly invite you to join us in prayer as we seek to serve and inspire.

Conclusion

Open the Book is more than just a school visit; it's a vibrant and vital part of our school's life, fostering a sense of community, wonder, and spiritual exploration. It is a privilege to share these timeless stories and witness the children's consistently positive and enthusiastic responses. We extend a warm invitation to others who may wish to join us in this deeply rewarding ministry.

It's FUN and it is growing God's Kingdom one story at a time!

Christabel Ager, Open the Book Team Leader, April 2025

END

A HUGE thank you for being our church family.

**May we all know God's PRESENCE with us
and His POWER flowing through us.**

Rev Phil Hughes

St. Peter and St. Paul Bishops Hull's Receipts & Payments Account

for the year ended 31 December 2024

	Notes	General fund £	Designated fund £	Restricted fund £	2024 £	2023 £
Receipts						
Donations and Legacies:						
Planned giving		29,402	-	-	29,402	27,326
Collections, donations & other giving		11,185	2,000	-	13,185	15,437
Income tax recovered		-	-	-	-	-
Legacies		5,538	-	-	5,538	-
Other Trading activities						
Magazine/Bookstall sales/Hall Lettings etc		(24)	-	-	(24)	120
Income from other Properties		-	-	-	-	-
Annual Fete/events		1,700	-	-	1,700	420
Receipts from Investments:						
Interest & dividends		2,292	-	-	2,292	1,366
Receipts from Charitable activities:						
Parochial fees		355	-	-	355	363
Other Receipts						
Insurance claims		-	-	-	-	-
Sale proceeds from fixed assets		-	-	-	-	-
Loans received		-	-	-	-	-
Other		332	-	-	332	99
Total Receipts		50,780	2,000	-	52,780	45,131
Payments						
Charitable activities:						
Donations/Grants to charities		-	-	-	-	-
Mission & Evangelism		(8,043)	67	-	(7,976)	(574)
Parish Share		(45,762)	-	-	(45,762)	(10,000)
Clergy expenses		(2,875)	-	-	(2,875)	(176)
Church running expenses		(2,592)	(814)	(1,140)	(4,546)	(4,257)
Churchyard maintenance		-	-	-	-	-
Cost of raising funds		(738)	-	-	(738)	-
Support costs						
Support costs		-	-	-	-	-
Administration costs (inc. staff costs)		(1,777)	-	-	(1,777)	(1,435)
Governance Costs		(75)	-	-	(75)	(75)
Other		(1,353)	-	-	(1,353)	(1,058)
Major expenditure						
Repairs to church buildings		-	-	2,921	2,921	(79,194)
Repairs to other property		-	-	-	-	-
Capital purchases/additions		-	-	-	-	-
Loan repayments		-	-	-	-	-
Total payments		(63,215)	(747)	1,781	(62,181)	(96,769)
Surplus/(Deficit) of Receipts over payments		(12,435)	1,253	1,781	(9,401)	(51,638)
Transfers between funds		-	-	-	-	-
		(12,435)	1,253	1,781	(9,401)	(51,638)
Cash at bank and in hand at 1 Jan (Actual Balance)		44,992	18,628	18,335	81,955	133,593
Cash at bank and in hand at 31 Dec (Actual Balance)		32,557	19,881	20,116	72,554	81,955

*produced using the Diocesan Cashbook v5

Independent Examiner's Certificate for the PCC Accounts

Report to the trustees of:

Parish Church of St Peter & St Paul

Parochial Church Council

On accounts for the year ended:

31 December 2024

Charity Number (if applicable):

N/A

**Respective responsibilities
of trustees and examiner**

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

It is my responsibility to:

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

**Basis of independent
examiner's statement**

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

**Independent examiner's
statement**

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention (other than that disclosed below *)

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in, any material respect, the requirements:
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Acthave not been met; or
2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

** Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.*

Signed:

Pip Millard

Date:

6/6/25

Name:

Mr Pip Millard FCCA

**Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):**

ACCA

Address:

Dennett House, 11 Middle St, Taunton

Somerset, TA1 1SH

Disclosure

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material problems.

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.