

SUNDERLAND MINSTER PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

England & Wales · Charity number 1203743

Details

Other names	SUNDERLAND MINSTER
Status	Registered
Legal form	Other
Registered	2023-06-26
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	Sunderland Minster High Street West Sunderland SR1 3ET
Phone	01915654066
Email	admin@sunderlandminster.org
Website	https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/13725/

Activities

Objects: PROMOTING IN THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH THE WHOLE MISSION OF THE CHURCH.

Activities: Church of England Minster church in the heart of Sunderland

Classification

- **How:** Provides Buildings/facilities/open Space, Provides Services
- **What:** Religious Activities
- **Who:** Children/young People, Elderly/old People, People With Disabilities

Geography

- Sunderland

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-12-31	£210,683	£203,202	-	-
2024-12-31	£117,143	£71,329	-	-
2023-12-31	£70,827	£60,585	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Rev Clare MacLaren-Sheppard	Chair	2024-04-14
ANN CRAIG		2020-11-23
Annick Estefania Carruthers		2025-05-11
ELAINE LAWSON		2023-04-30
Ekenedilichuknu Ogochukwu Ejiofor		2024-05-20
GILLIAN WALKER		2023-04-30
GRAEME ANDREW JOBES		2021-05-30
HEATHER CRAWFORD		2017-05-25
HOLLIE CATHERINE JOBES		2022-05-29
Jacqui Ann Johnson		2025-05-11
Kathleen Carruthers		2025-05-11
Peter Sullivan		2026-03-23
REV CHRISTOPHER STEWART HOWSON		2017-05-02
REV JACQUELINE TYSON		2017-05-25
Rev Raymond Keith Leonard		2025-06-25

SUNDERLAND MINSTER PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

England & Wales - Charity number 1203743

Accounts

Sunderland Minster Parochial Church Council
(Registered Charity 1203743)
Annual Report for the period 1st January to 31st December
2025

Aims and Purposes

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is the governing body of the Parish of Sunderland Minster and has the responsibility of cooperating with the ministry team in promoting the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. It is also responsible for maintaining the fabric of Sunderland Minster.

The PCC have had regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on their legal duty to public benefit, and are satisfied that Sunderland Minster delivers public benefit, and due regard is paid to the guidance on public benefit when deciding on what new projects the church should undertake.

Objectives and Activities

The mission of the Church of England in the Diocese of Durham is to 'Bless our communities in Jesus' name for the transformation of us all.' At Sunderland Minster, we express this through our own local-context mission statement, 'Open to God, Open to All.'

As part of the Diocese of Durham, our objectives and activities are further shaped by the four Diocesan priorities of challenging poverty, energising growth, caring for God's creation, and engaging with children, youth and 18-25s.

Sunderland Minster engages in a wide range of activities in support of these objectives, many of which overlap. These include a regular and varied pattern of worship and discipleship opportunities, ecumenical partnership to support refugees and asylum seekers; living out what it means to be a fully Inclusive Church; providing a focal-point for community cohesion events in the city, and the marking of civic events and national celebrations; running regular baptism and confirmation preparation classes, in both English and Farsi; and supporting families facing holiday hunger.

Achievements and Performance

For an overview of the charitable activities of Sunderland Minster in 2025 please see the Provost's report later in this document.

The Electoral Roll (at 31st December 2025) is 53, with one addition and one removed (due to a death in December).

Further information is given in the reports that follow.

In 2025 we conducted 21 baptisms (11 adults, 10 infants), 3 weddings, and 11 funerals (5 at the Minster, 6 at the crematorium) and 1 burial of ashes.

Financial Review

See accompanying accounts.

Structure, governance and management

The PCC is a corporate body established by the Church of England and operates under the Parochial Church Council Powers Measure.

The appointment of PCC members is governed by and set out in the Church Representation Rules.

The PCC is registered with the Charity Commission and has Registered Charity Number 1203743.

Administrative information

Sunderland Minster is located on High Street West, Sunderland, SR1 3ET. It is part of the Diocese of Durham within the Church of England. The correspondence address is as above.

The members of the Parochial Church Council (PCC) are:

Canon Provost	Revd. Canon Clare MacLaren
Associate Priest	Revd. Jacqui Tyson
University Chaplain	Revd. Chris Howson
Curate	Revd. Ray Leonard
Minster Wardens	Heather Crawford Elaine Lawson
Deanery Synod Reps	Heather Crawford Gillian Walker
Treasurer	Robert Stenlake (co-opted)
Elected members	Kath Carruthers Annick Carruthers Jacqui Johnson Graeme Jobses Hollie Jobses Ann Craig Sarah Hill (to June 2025) Ekene Ejiofor

Vacancy

Fabric report (Heather Crawford, Church Warden; Brogan McKenna, Director of Operations)

Lighting: A major upgrade of Sunderland Minster’s lighting system began in January 2025 and was completed within the six weeks predicted timescale and within budget. This work included updates to the electrical system, fuse boxes etc. The new energy-efficient lamps should cost less to run than the older lamps. The work has greatly improved the versatility of lighting, which should make the Minster an attractive venue for future events. The emergency lighting is now serviced yearly by an external provider, tested weekly in-house and recorded in the Minster fire safety logbook.

Fire alarm: The fire alarm system was upgraded at the same time as the lighting to benefit from economies of scale. The new system is digital and is more cost-effective than the old system. The fire alarm is tested once per week and serviced every six months.

Café: Prior to the new café tenant moving in, the PCC agreed to replace the old hatch shutter. The new shutter is now automatic and meets fire regulations. Safety flooring was fitted to the strip of concrete in the café floor which houses heating pipework.

Heating: The boilers have been repaired and are now regularly serviced. Gas safety checks are up to date as per statutory regulations.

Quinquennial Inspection June 2024: We have completed all works identified in the Quinquennial Inspection as ‘urgent’ and ‘within one year’ priorities, and are working towards those priorities identified as needing to be addressed within two years.

Health and Safety: All statutory compliance is fully up to date and all urgent actions from fire risk assessment completed.



Deanery Synod report 2025 (Gillian Walker, Deanery Synod representative)

The Deanery Synod met on Thursday, 26th June at St Matthew's Silksworth. The meeting was given over to guest speakers from Communities Together Durham (CTD). CTD is the chosen partner of Durham Diocese helping us to engage with the Diocesan priority of “Challenging Poverty” in all its forms.

Parochial reports for 2025

Canon Provost's report (Revd. Canon Clare MacLaren)

2025 was quite a rollercoaster of a year for Sunderland Minster – and you will see from reading all the reports that follow, that a huge amount has gone on both “front of house” and behind the scenes.



The 1st of January 2025 was the day that the Minster officially got its parish back – covering most of Sunderland City Centre, and the whole of Millfield – a parish of over 6000 people and in the highest 4% of deprivation in the country. During the summer, we delivered 2000 welcome postcards through their doors – inviting them to come and get to know their new parish church, as a first step to exploring a fresh journey of faith.

Much of the first half of the year was spent, for me at least, knee-deep in paperwork, writing all the policies and procedures necessary for us to be able to appoint to the four fully-funded posts that the Church of England had given us grant money for. I am delighted to say that in May we interviewed and appointed to the roles of Director of Operations (Brogan McKenna) and Administrative Officer (Ellie Clewlow) - both of whom have been huge assets to the Minster and have lifted a great weight of administration from my shoulders.

In May, also, a new tenant, Angie Lang, took up the running of the Minster Café, providing not only a welcome monthly income stream, but an invaluable social hub and opportunity to welcome visitors and tourists into our beautiful building. Angie's presence has been good for the Minster, and it has been wonderful to see her business gradually get established and begin to grow.

We seemed to be very much in demand in 2025 as a placement parish, and so we welcomed Julie Gana, Ronald Kock, Phoebe Power, and Sean Barrington into our midst – each offering their own rich and diverse gifts, as they learned with and from us.

It was a great joy, at the end of June, to welcome back Ray Leonard as our Minster Curate for his first diaconal year with us. Very much on course to be priested in 2026, Ray has been a joy to have as part of the team – rolling up his sleeves and getting stuck in, and taking seriously the call of the Deacon both to service and to pastoral care.

er we also advertised the two Mission Enabler posts for which we d received funding, and made an excellent appointment in Marie  rn-Peltz, with the brief for Spirituality, Creativity and Well-being.  rting in October, she quickly got her feet under the table, and s innovative new role was just beginning to show its potential as   year drew to an end.

October 2025, as members of the PCC are already aware,  ver, we received some shock news from the Diocese.  parently, the funding grant of which we had been assured, had t been properly signed off in London, and we were told that we  re going to have to resubmit the bid, and that no further funding  uld be forthcoming until we had done this.

 sequently, we were advised that the salaries of our Director of  erations and our Administrative Officer would be honoured - as  uld what we had already spent on upgrading our lighting and ating systems - but the salary of our new Mission Enabler would   longer be paid, and neither would the balance of the money we d been promised for spending on the building.

is was a body blow to our plans - and terrible piece of news to ve to break to Marie, whose dignity and grace through this whole  cess has been a testament to her deep faith and courage. We  re advised that the bid would need to be resubmitted by around ster 2026. Fortunately, the Diocesan Secretary persuaded  shop's Council to commit to paying Marie until September 2026. the meantime, the Diocesan Mission Team told us that they would  write the bid in consultation with us and share it with us before it is resubmitted in April 2026.

 realise that this timeline now takes us beyond the technical scope this annual report, but I think it only appropriate to advise you at in Holy Week of 2026, I was informed that the draft bid (which s still not been shared with us) was shown to the Diocese's link rson in London. Apparently, she advised the Diocesan Team that  re was no point resubmitting it, as there was no way that it  uld be successful. We - and Marie in particular - have been  ated shamefully, and while I will be working hard to try and find  er sources of grant funding to secure her post beyond ptember, it is possible that we will have to make her redundant me September. I cannot express how angry and dismayed I am this turn of events.]

 ile all this has been going on, I really want to emphasise,  ver, that while the institution of the Church may have let us wn drastically, God has continued to be faithful - "a refuge and a  ngth in times of trouble."

  have seen gradual growth in our congregations. Our Christmas rvides attracted twice as many people in 2025 as in 2024. New ristians have been coming to faith, and December saw us begin

to prepare 10 candidates for Baptism or Confirmation, plus the many Iranian friends who were baptised during the course of the year.

We have held engaging study and prayer groups. Our links with the city and the wider community are going from strength to strength. We are regularly holding services in the two care homes in our new parish. Thanks to Brogan's tireless work, our governance, health and safety and maintenance schedule is all under control for the first time in many years. Ellie has done a power of work to streamline our administrative systems and improve our social media presence. Our finances are beginning to turn around. God is good.

I want to pay tribute to all of my colleagues, lay and ordained, whose wisdom, prayerful and practical support has been, and continues to be, invaluable.

Colleagues with Permission to Officiate, Jonathan, Pete and Stephen, and Associate Priests, Jacqui and Chris have been so dedicated to the Minster, despite their various health challenges and other commitments.

Our wardens, deputy wardens, PCC members and fabulous team of volunteers continue to amaze me with their energy, enthusiasm and great ideas!

And today, we need to say an enormous "thank you" to Robert Stenlake, who is stepping down as our Treasurer after several years of meticulous troubleshooting, detangling and generally sorting out our "far from organised" finances. Robert - you have been not just a Treasurer but a treasure. I don't know what we'd have done without you!

As we step into 2026, may God continue to bless us. And may we remain ever faithful, and lovingly committed to one another, and to the community we serve, as we follow God's call into whatever the future may hold.

Parochial Church Council (Kath Carruthers, PCC Secretary)

There were six scheduled meetings, and one extra-ordinary meeting of the PCC held over the course of 2025, chaired by our Provost Revd Canon Clare MacLaren. At this stage sincere thanks must go to Liz Tinker for her many years of hard work as secretary of the PCC, and my personal thanks must go to Ellie for taking the minutes at PCC meetings.

The PCC exercised its oversight of Minster finances, as well as updates to policies and Health and Safety practice, planned improvements to the building and fabric, and the thriving programme of events. It also received regular updates on mission activity, Eco-Church and Safeguarding.

Meetings of the Leadership Team take place monthly to deal with day to day running of events at the Minster, while the standing committee meets in advance of the PCC to discuss agenda items.

Friendship Group (Gillian Walker)

We met on the first Tuesday of each month for coffee other than August and the usual Summer and Christmas outings. In July we celebrated Margaret Caffrey's

80th Birthday in the Minster café with lunch followed by birthday cake. Our Christmas celebration was held at Bellini's Italian restaurant.

Choir (David Cox, Organist and Choirmaster)

The Minster Choir rehearses weekly on Thursdays and sings at the 9.45am Sunday service and at the monthly 5.00pm Choral Evensong.

During the Eucharist the Choir supports:

- the singing of hymns with an occasional descant
- a sung Eucharist setting composed by Dom Gregory Murray - People's Mass
- a Gospel Acclamation with alleluias sung by all and a sung Gospel refrain during Lent and Advent
- the set Psalm from *The Parish Psalter* with occasional different chants and revision of wording when necessary
- an Anthem sung during Communion.

At Choral Evensong the Choir supports the singing of:

- Hymns and Ferial Responses
- the set Psalm for the evening
- Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis
- an Introit and an Anthem appropriate to the season.

Recently, more modern songs have been introduced to the morning Eucharist accompanied by Pete Vivash using piano/keyboard.

The Choir also sang at special services, including: Deanery Confirmation, Welcome Service for Revd. Ray Leonard, Ascension Day, Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, the Mayor's Carol Service and the Minster Carol Service:

A huge thank you to our loyal Choir members who have sung so well during the year. We look forward to future challenges as Provost Clare updates our service booklets and introduces more modern hymns.

Our Choir, although small in number, are big in heart and voice! New members would always be welcome!

FEAST (Revd. Chris Howson)

FEAST has seen numbers steadily drop over the last year, (20-30 weekly, 4-8 children) with a significant decrease in Iranian members due to changes in local area demographics. Asylum seeker numbers have been frozen in much of the North East since September 2025 which means less of a throughput of Sanctuary Seekers in the area - and a big drop in Iranian numbers as a percentage of those who are here. Continued changes in Government policy have impacted on international student numbers arriving in the city, making it impossible for students to come with their families, and reducing the time they

can stay at the end of their studies. There have also been no new baptism families at FEAST for over a year now, but we would love to see new families come along and would love to baptise their children during our FEAST services.

FEAST continues to welcome all and tries to provide a taste of the kingdom whilst people are with us. Ray has moved on to be an integral part of the team since his ordination. Shiny Princess also continues to help with our craft table. Mariam and Hooman are our trusty translators for our Farsi speakers.

FEAST gives folk a chance to talk about their faith and react to the Gospel stories in a fresh way, and we hope it can continue, but is always open to change and letting the spirit move us. We are always looking to improve our offering, and always welcome suggestions. If you would like to help in any way, please talk to Clare, Chris, Jacqui or Ray.



Open Table (Revd. Jacqui Tyson)

Although attendance varies month to month, we have been blessed with a growing congregation pool and a deepening sense of community this last year. It has been a joy to have members involved in leading prayers, reflections, and discussions, over the last year and look forward to more of the same in the coming year.

Mission Enabler for Creativity, Spirituality and Wellbeing (Marie Stern-Peltz)

I started at Sunderland Minster as the Mission Enabler for Creativity, Spirituality and Wellbeing in October of 2025, and quickly got involved with the existing activities of the Minster, including Unity in the Community. I also spent time getting to know the various groups at the Minster, from the Leadership to the Friendship group, to FODI and the SMart group, and going out to meet other organisations, to get a sense of the local area and the work that is happening in the city.

In December, I started Collect, a weekly prayer group which met on a Wednesday between 12 and 1pm. Envisioned as a drop-in prayer space, Collect has a small group of regular visitors, who attend every week, but also casual

drop-ins, and people who have stayed and taken part after coming in to the Minster. During Lent, I had led a more formalised version of Collect in person and also online which had between 4 and 10 attendees every week across the two platforms.

I am also working to develop a series of accessible worship events, following the success of the 2024 Accessible Carol Service. The 2025 "Haway in a Manger" was very successful, and we had some lovely feedback from people who attended, who felt welcomed and at home in the Minster. I am planning to make these accessible services part of a regular pattern in 2026.



As part of the work we're doing around accessibility, we have begun to collaborate with Becoming Visible and the National Deaf Society, including Canon Clare leading a Christmas reflection service we co-organised with Becoming Visible.

Part of the joy of my job has also been developing relationships with other churches and learning from them. I have had the opportunity to visit churches across the diocese and find inspiration in the work they are doing. One of the aspects that has grown out of this has been a Pilgrimage Project. Initially started with funding awarded from Sunderland Council, following a visit to GATHER church in Bishop Auckland, I am now working with them to develop something a bit different, and more directed.

I am continuing to learn and develop as I go, getting to know the parish and finding new connections and opportunities. I look forward to seeing what might be next!

Sanctuary Seekers (Revd. Chris Howson)

The Minster continues to be a place of refuge and support to all those seeking sanctuary in the city of Sunderland. We are a fortnightly home to FODI, a drop-in for asylum seekers and refugees, and we host the important annual United Nations Human Rights Day event in December which often has speakers who have been forced to seek sanctuary due to war and oppression. We also hosted a Walk of Friendship at the start of Refugee Week and held a Refugee Week celebration on the Sunday afternoon.

Our support for Iranian sanctuary seekers has continued despite the drop in Iranian asylum seeker numbers in our region. The Clergy team continue to write support letters for those who need them, and attend court hearings, as well as hosting baptism classes translated into Farsi.

Friends of the Drop-In (Heather Crawford)

Friends of the Drop-In (FODI) continues to provide practical support to refugees and asylum seekers, collecting and distributing many donated items such as clothing, household items, and toys, as well as providing support with housing advice, and vouchers for activities such as swimming, bus fares, etc. Attendees are also offered an assortment of fresh, dried and canned food, provided by FODI.

Sunderland Minster continues to host these fortnightly sessions and provides a welcoming environment for people to meet up with others in similar situations and enjoy a cuppa and a chat. FODI pays a nominal charge for room hire and refreshments.

Craft Fairs (Heather Crawford)

The monthly craft fairs, which celebrated their 10th anniversary in 2025, have continued to provide some much-needed regular income for the Minster, from the stallholder fees and visitor door charge. With the installation of a new tenant in the café, we don't make as much from refreshments but still offer a limited selection to stallholders for which they make donations.

We have a few crafters who have traded at our fairs since we began in October 2015, and we welcome new crafters, often who are trading for the first time. Thank you to all the hardworking volunteers without which the fairs could not take place.

Church Fairs (Elaine Lawson)

Two church fairs were held in 2025. It was decided to make them a little different to those of recent years – with a later start time, free entry, games for children and adults, free craft activities, Pimms or mulled wine bars, and live music the whole time. Both fairs were extremely well attended, raising a total of over £4,100. A huge thank you to everyone who helped, donated, provided the music, and attended the fairs.

Events (Elaine Lawson, Brogan Mckenna)

Another busy year at the Minster began with an Epiphany party for the congregation held by Canon Clare and Lyndon.

Special services in 2025 included the 80th VE Day Commemoration, Deanery Evensong with Durham Cathedral choir, the Institution of the Archdeacon of Sunderland, and a welcome service and celebration of Ray Leonard being ordained deacon. There were memorial services for the Holocaust, City of

Benares Tragedy, Connection Recovery, and former bell ringer, Major R C Hudson.

Our Christmas Carol Services for various organisations were, as always, well attended. The Minster “walking” Carol Service attendance doubled in 2025, all following the “Star”, Canon Clare.

In the year that Sunderland became a Music City, the Minster contributed by



hosting a variety of concerts – from Bishopwearmouth Choral Society, Sunderland College Candlelight Classics, an evening of jazz with “After Evensong”, The Bunker, Rock Choir, Houghton Brass, the Boundaries Festival, and The Old Black Cat Jazz Club which holds monthly evenings at the Minster.

Other events were the Mayor’s Civic Celebration of Unity, Tinderbox Film Day, the launch of the Sunderland Heritage Trail by the 620 Group, Recovery Connections Women’s Event, Covid Day of Reflection, International Workers Day, Climate Action Sunderland Supporters meeting, Sunderland Lit and Phil Evening, SAFC Heaven Branch, Bishopwearmouth Choral Society Singing Day, the Art Room Sunderland urban sketching session, Human Rights Day Vigil, Minster coffee morning to raise funds for new tables, Activism Against Domestic Violence art exhibition, Standing

Together exhibition.

For Mothering Sunday, we were given permission to set up a stall in The Bridges Shopping Centre, asking people to “Hold a Candle” and write a prayer for their mothers or those who looked after them. The prayers were displayed and the candles lit in the church on Mothering Sunday. The annual Cider and Carols charity event was held at the Ivy House.

The “Kingdom Kids” Summer Club was a great success on Tuesdays in August with children taking part in a wide range of activities. The annual Big Lunch was attended by many people enjoying food, music and games on a lovely summer’s day. Once again, a Unity in the Community day was held in October, bringing together our city’s wonderful diverse community.

The biennial Major Churches Conference was held at the Minster from the 24th- 26th September and was a huge success, as we welcomed delegates from around the country to the Minster and to our city.

Once again, the VCAS Open Arms awards ceremony was held at the Minster, and we were honoured to receive two Influence and Collaboration awards: for Large Group, and for the Unity in the Community event.



The Minster now sees a regular pipeline of income from repeat events and continues to perform strongly in November and December.

A wonderful busy year which was only possible with the hard work of the clergy, office staff, caretaker and cleaner, and volunteers.

Bellringing (David Cox, Elaine Lawson)

Thank you to Revd. Richard Brown for leadership as Tower Captain of the Belfry team during 2025, monthly Monday night practices continued over the year. Thanks too to Christine Richardson and her team of ringers at St Andrew's Church, Roker for their continued support.



One of our regular bellringers, Gillian Lathan, died suddenly in 2025. Gillian rang regularly on practice nights, rang for weddings, and tolled a bell for funerals (when requested).

Major Robert Challis Hudson Memorial Service 6th November 2025

A short service was held in November in memory of Major Hudson who died 100 years before in the church belfry. Major Hudson was a church warden and bell ringer. He was killed in a terrible accident whilst muffling the bells in preparation for them to be rung on the day of Queen Alexandra's funeral.

At the service, which was conducted beside the Memorial Lectern in the South Transept, we also heard about Major Hudson and his family's life in Sunderland, and, in remembrance, our young bell ringer, Ben Hundley, tolled the 7th bell under the supervision of former Tower Captain, David Cox.

The following named Ringing has taken place this year:

Rung by local D&N members and visiting ringers

- Friday 10th January: 2025 Grandsire Caters in 1 hour 18 minutes
Date touch to celebrate the New Year
- Sunday January 19th: 1282 Yorkshire Surprise Royal in 47 minutes
In memory of Sir Paul Nicholson, former Lord Lieutenant
- Friday 21st February: 1350 Grandsire Caters in 49 minutes
Arranged and rung in Memory of Rachel H Dyson
- Sunday 22nd June: 1250 Plain Bob Minor in 44 minutes
For the Deanery Confirmation Service and in loving memory of the Revd. Dick Bradshaw, sometime Rural Dean of Wearmouth
- Monday 25th August: 5040 Yorkshire Surprise Royal in 2 hours 53 minutes.

Rung by the Yorkshire Association of Bellringers

- Saturday 30th September: 1296 Plain Bob Caters in 50 minutes
Rung prior to the Collation and Institution of the Revd. Canon Katherine Bagnall as Archdeacon of Sunderland.

Eco Church & Net Zero 2025 (Graeme Jobes)

The focus of the Eco Church group has been to embody the Diocesan priority:

“Caring for God’s Creation.”

Together, as individuals, parishes and a Diocese we will Care for God’s Creation, taking action and using our resources, gifts, time and prayers to:

- 1. Cultivate a shared Christian vision for God’s creation and our call to steward, nurture and protect it, in Jesus’ name, for the good of everyone, everywhere*
- 2. Promote responsible consumption & behaviour as individuals and churches*
- 3. Work together to challenge environmental indifference and injustice.*

This has been reflected at the Minster in several ways throughout 2025, including but not restricted to:

- Services and sermons which have reflected shared Christian vision for God’s creation stewardship, nurture and protection for all
- Ongoing discussions at FEAST and in other spaces in respect of our individual practices which support nature recovery and reflect responsibility in consumption
- The Leadership team has incorporated recycling initiatives for waste, paper and cardboard as part of the ongoing commitment and practice of the community in the church
- A survey for the proposed installation of swift boxes in partnership with Durham Wildlife Trust took place in late autumn and forms part of the Minster’s commitment to meaningful action in nature and stewardship. The boxes will be installed in 2026, and this will be promoted alongside a reframing of our eco church group
- Engagement by members of the community in local litter picking, volunteering with environmental groups and charities (including Tunstall Hill Protection Group, Durham Wildlife Trust and Groundwork)
- The PCC agreed to move utility (gas and electric) provision to sustainable suppliers in alignment with the community’s ethical framework and commitment to God’s creation
- Attending meetings and public gatherings which challenge environmental indifference and injustice
- We held a big lunch in June which is also part of the Eden Project’s commitment to community engagement, hospitality and sustainability.

The year ahead should offer our community more opportunities to engage further in Eco Church and look to gaining accreditation. As proposed last year we will be looking to create a Friends of Minster Park Group with a possible launch during the installation of the swift boxes.

Safeguarding Report 2025 (Graeme Jobes, Parish Safeguarding Officer)

The Minster team has remained vigilant throughout the year in respect to its duties and responsibilities as a community. There is a strong safeguarding culture embedded in the Minster and this particularly is important as we support vulnerable adults and have a range of ages attending our various activities and services. This is embedded in PCC meetings, Leadership meetings and at the heart of the community.

Training and Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) checks: Training and up-to-date DBS checks are at the core of our safeguarding model. An update from last year is that where training has been updated, PCC and other members have been asked to link my account with theirs so I can hold a direct and up to date record of training and this in turn is fed back to the PCC and Church Leadership. Clergy have their own specific training and ongoing equivalent.

Graeme, Heather and Elaine have – as required – applied to do or attended and completed the Leadership module of the CofE Safeguarding Training. Graeme completed his training in June 2025.

All DBS were up to date.

Parish Safeguarding Dashboard: Graeme is registered on the Dashboard along with Canon Clare. It has been updated, and Graeme has held meetings with Diocesan Safeguarding Lead to discuss progress.

Reporting and Safeguarding Review: Graeme's mobile is available to all (07899008278) and his details along with those of Canon Clare have been updated with suitable pictures and are displayed in the Minster as required, along with those of the Diocesan Safeguarding Contact. The Safeguarding Policy and Safer Church statement are also displayed. Safer Recruitment and all Safeguarding 'linked' policies were put in place and or monitored by Canon Clare following a review in 2024.

Graeme was invited to speak as Safeguarding Officer as part of the Church of England Safeguarding Sunday 16th November 2025. The feedback was positive and two members of the congregation have expressed an interest in training in safeguarding and becoming part of the safeguarding team.

Any reports or concerns have been forwarded to me using my email address: gaj@hardings-solicitors.co.uk. We have had no serious safeguarding issues in the last year, but all have remained vigilant, and we still have WhatsApp group (I am aware some people need to be added to this) for sharing information and I am available whenever needed using my contact details.

Safeguarding Policy Statement

In accordance with the Church of England's Safeguarding Policy, "Promoting a Safer Church"¹, the PCC of Sunderland Minster is committed to observe best practice in:

- Promoting a safer environment and culture.
- The safer recruitment and ongoing support and management of all those with any responsibility related to children, young people and vulnerable adults within the church.
- Responding promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation.
- Caring pastorally for victims/survivors of abuse and other affected persons.
- Caring pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns or allegations of abuse and other affected persons.
- Responding to those that may pose a present risk to others.

Sunderland Minster will:

- Continue to create a safer and more caring place for all people.
- Appoint a Minster Safeguarding Officer (CSA) and Deputy Minster Safeguarding Officer (DCSA) to work with the PCC to implement policy and procedures.
- Safely recruit, train and support all those with any responsibility for children, young people and adults to have the confidence and skills to recognise and respond to abuse.
- Ensure that there is appropriate insurance cover for all activities involving children and adults undertaken in the name of the Minster.
- Display across the Minster premises, and on the Minster website the details of who to contact if there are safeguarding concerns or support needs.
- Listen to, and take seriously all those who disclose abuse.
- Take steps to protect children and adults when a safeguarding concern of any kind arises, following House of Bishops guidance, including notifying the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA) and statutory agencies immediately.
- Offer support to victims/survivors of abuse regardless of the type of abuse, when or where it occurred.
- Care for and monitor any who relate to, and spend time in, the Minster who

¹ The PCC of Sunderland Minster has adopted 'Promoting a Safer Church' as its own safeguarding policy. The full policy may be read here: <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-11/promoting-a-safer-church-policy-notes.pdf>

may pose a risk to children and adults whilst maintaining appropriate confidentiality and the safety of all parties.

- Ensure that health and safety policy, procedures and risk assessments are in place and that these are reviewed annually.
- Review the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Practices at least annually.

The PCC of Sunderland Minster has appointed:

Graeme Jobs as Minster Safeguarding Officer, and is currently seeking to fill the vacancy for Deputy Minster Safeguarding Officer.

Policy Statement reviewed by the PCC: 23 March 2026

Policy Statement to be reviewed: March 2027

Sunderland Minster

Financial Statements for the Year ended 31st December 2025

Statement of Assets and Liabilities

	£		£
Brought forward 01.01.2025	63,969.83 *	Resources used (2)	203,201.87
Incoming resources (1)	<u>210,683.46</u>	Balance carried forward 31.12.2025 (3)	<u>71,451.42</u>
Total	<u>274,653.29</u>	Total	<u>274,653.29</u>

Notes 1 See Analysis of Income and Expenditure

2 See Analysis of Income and Expenditure

3 Represented by	Current Account	Note 4	11,321.39
	Petty Cash		111.14
	Petty Cash Flower Fund		407.28
	Co-operative Deposit Account		59,485.87
	CBF Deposit Account		<u>125.74</u>
			<u>71,451.42</u>

4 Bank current account reconciliation at 31.12.2025

Balance at Co-operative Bank	25,866.07
Plus: Income due but not received	3,779.00
Less: Payments not cleared	8,252.00
Less: Accrued Expenditure	671.68
less: paid in advance for 2026	0
Less: Loan from Durham Diocesan Board of Finance	9,400.00
Less: Monies held in suspense for Inter-Faith Forum	<u>0</u>
Balance at 31.12.2025	<u>11,321.39</u>

*Restated to take account of £10,000 loan from Durham Diocesan Board of Finance

Approved by the Parochial Church Council and signed on its behalf by:

Chairman of PCC

Clare MacLaren

Churchwarden

E. Lane

Sunderland Minster

Financial Statements for the Year ended 31st December 2025

Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2025

		2025	2024
		£	£
Current Assets	Current Account Co-operative	25,866.07	26,981
	Petty Cash	111.14	87
	Petty Cash Flower Fund	407.28	387
	Co-operative Deposit Account	59,485.87	36,848
	CCLA CBF Deposit Account	125.74	119
	Year end amounts due to us	3,779.00	19,381
TOTAL ASSETS		89,775.10	83,801
LIABILITIES	Accounts payable	8,923.68	4,881
	Payments in advance for 2026	0	951
	Durham Diocesan Board of Finance Loan	9,400.00	0
	Suspense Account (inter Faith Forum)	0	4,000
TOTAL LIABILITIES		18,323.68	9,832
NET ASSETS	(Total Assets – Liabilities)	71,451.42	73,970
BALANCE	Starting Balance *	63,969.83	33,157
	Income less Expenditure	7,481.59	40,813
	Closing balance	71,451.42	73,970

Movement in Funds during 2025

Fund	01/01/2025	Income	Expenditure	31/12/2025
	£	£	£	£
Flower Fund	386.51	20.77		407.28
Interfaith forum	895.37		895.37	0
Asylum Seeker Support	251.45		44.97	206.48
Legacy	24,547.39		5,987.59	18,559.80
SMMIB	0	109,295.92	109,295.92	0
Unity in the Community	0	5,427.75	5,427.75	0
Summer Special	0	530.00	505.13	24.87
Total Restricted and Endowment	26,080.72	115,274.44	122,156.73	19,198.43
Unrestricted Funds*	37,889.11	94,445.64	80,081.76	52,252.99
TOTAL ALL FUNDS	63,969.83	209,720.08	202,238.49	71,451.42

*Restated to exclude £10,000 loan from Durham Diocesan Board of Finance incorrectly omitted from 2019 to 2024 accounts. Income includes £5,000 legacy

Movement in Funds during 2024 - Prior Year for Comparison

Fund	01/01/2024	Income	Expenditure	31/12/2024
	£	£	£	£
Flower Fund	471.06	845.00	929.55	386.51
Interfaith forum	1,390.45	0	495.08	895.37
Asylum Seeker Support	406.25	0	154.80	251.45
Legacy	0	24,547.39	0	24,547.39
SMMIB	0	18,417.95	18,417.95	0
Summer Special	0	850.00	850.00	0
Total Restricted and Endowment	2,267.76	44,660.34	20,847.38	26,080.72
Unrestricted Funds	30,888.93	72,482.22	55,482.04	47,889.11
TOTAL ALL FUNDS	33,156.69	117,142.56	76,329.42	73,969.83

Sunderland Minster

Analysis of Income and Expenditure for the Period 1st January to 31st December 2025

		Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL 2025 £	TOTAL 2024 £
INCOME and ENDOWMENTS					
Donations and legacies	**	45,528.21	30.00	45,558.21	57,376
Income from Charitable Activities		47,826.54	6,891.13	54,717.67	39,724
Other trading activities			20.77	20.77	845
Income from Investments		644.84		644.84	504
Other income		446.05	109,295.92	109,295.92	18,693
Total Income and Endowments		94,445.64	116,237.82	210,683.46	117,143
EXPENDITURE					
Costs of generating funds		4,104.02		4,104.02	4,381
Expenditure on charitable activities		75,977.74	58,208.74	134,186.48	192,395
Other expenditure		0	64,911.37	64,911.37	184,179.95
Total Expenditure		80,081.76	123,120.11	203,201.87	326,322
INCOME less EXPENDITURE		14,363.88	-6,882.29	7,481.59	599
BALANCE b/f AT 1st JANUARY 2025*		37,889.11	26,080.72	63,969.83	
BALANCE c/f AT 31st DECEMBER 2025	**	52,252.99	19,198.43	71,451.42	

*1st January 2025 unrestricted funds restated to exclude £10,000 from Durham Diocesan Board of Finance

**Includes £5,000 legacy

The notes on subsequent pages form part of the accounts

Sunderland Minster

Financial Statements for the Year ended 31st December 2025

Analysis of Income and Endowments

	Unrestricted Fund	Restricted Fund	Total 2025	Total 2024
	£	£	£	£
Donations and Legacies				
Planned Giving:	18,605.61		18,605.61	16,008
Non-recurring donations	6,173.74	30.00	6,203.74	3,580
Collections at Services	4,371.46		4,371.46	3,279
Card reader and donations boxes	4,359.48		4,359.48	3,028
Income Tax recovered	7,017.92		7,017.92	6,934
Legacies received	5,000.00		5,000.00	24,547
Total	45,528.21	30.00	45,558.21	57,376
Income from Charitable Activities				
Grants	860.97	6,891.13	7,752.10	950
Fund raising	16,648.88		16,648.88	18,105
Craft Fairs	3,045.69		3,045.69	3,808
Heating charges	2,756.00		2,756.00	2,474
Café lease income	10,400.00		10,400.00	
Room Hire	12,290.00		12,290.00	12,855
Statutory Fees:	1,825.00		1,825.00	1,532
Total	47,826.54	6,891.13	54,717.67	39,724
Income from Investments				
Interest and bank payments	644.84		644.84	504
Total	644.84		644.84	504
Other Income				
Grants received	0	109,295.92	109,295.92	18,418
Flower Fund	0	20.77	20.77	845
Other	446.05		446.05	275
Total	446.05	109,316.69	109,762.74	19,538
TOTAL INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS	94,445.64	116,237.82	210,683.46	117,143

Sunderland Minster

Financial Statements for the Year ended 31st December 2025

Analysis of Expenditure

	Unrestricted Fund £	Restricted Fund £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Costs of Generating Funds				
Fund raising	4104.02		4,104.02	4,381
	4,104.02		4,104.02	4,381
Expenditure on Charitable Activities				
Parish Share	11,166.70		11,166.70	5,500
Clergy and Staffing Costs	3,768.14		3,768.14	4,502
Employee Pay	3835.23	36491.12	40,326.35	0
Pension costs	-59.30	834.98	775.68	0
Parish Mission and service costs	3,722.69	3,023.00	6,745.69	3,061
Hospitality	873.02		873.02	128
Utility Costs	19,823.10		19,823.10	16,754
Church Insurance	13,415.42		13,415.42	12,432
Maintenance / repairs	8,514.06	6,170.92	14,684.98	4,833
Organ	1,366.16		1,366.16	312
Printing and office costs	2,674.13	18.49	2,692.62	1,437
Telephone /computing	1,612.07		1,612.07	1,173
Governance	0		0	0
Banking costs	66.59		66.59	86
Flower Fund	0		0	930
SMMIB relaunch costs	0	6,774.57	6,774.57	0
Other costs	5,199.73	4,895.66	10,095.39	2,383
	75,977.74	58,208.74	134,186.48	53,531
Other Expenditure				
SMMIB -1.15 Building	0	64911.37	64911.37	18,418
	0	64,911.37	64,911.37	18,418
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	80,081.76	123,120.11	203,201.87	76,329

Sunderland Minster - Notes on the Financial Statements 2025

See note 3 (SMMIB) regarding future financial liabilities not included in financial statement

1. Basis of Financial Statements. These have been prepared under The Charities Act 2011 and in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 governing the individual accounts of PCCs, together with applicable accounting standards and the Statement of Recommended Practice for charities (SORP) FRS102.

The Financial Statements have been prepared using the accruals and prepayment method.

The accounts were subject to an independent examination. The Independent Examiner's Report is attached to the Financial Statements.

2. Restatement of 2024 accounts. In early 2016, the then Minster Council drew down a short-term loan of £10,000 from the Durham Diocesan Board of Finance (DDBF), to be repaid within 18 months. During 2025 it emerged that the loan had not been repaid and had not been included as a debt in any PCC accounts since 2018. It is not obvious how the loan disappeared from the financial records during 2019 but the PCC has agreed that the loan should be repaid in instalments. The opening balances of these financial statements have been adjusted to move £10,000 from unrestricted funds to being a debt to the DDBF.

3. SMMIB (Archbishop's Council's Strategic Mission and Ministry Investment Board). In late 2024 the PCC commenced a SMMIB funded project (all costs reimbursed) to fund specific capital works and to meet the costs of employing 4 staff on fixed term contracts. Works to repair the heating system and upgrade the lighting were completed as planned but no further works are now approved.

Three staff were recruited during 2025, with SMMIB continuing to commit to fund the pay and pension costs (but not other costs) for 2 of the employees. The Durham Diocesan Board of Finance has underwritten the cost of the third employee until September 2026. The PCC has no guarantee of funding its contractual liability beyond then. The PCC has reported the financial issues to the Charity Commission as a Serious Incident.

4. Bankers. The PCC has a current account and an instant access deposit account with The Co-operative Bank.
5. Petty Cash. The Flower Fund is held as petty cash. Petty cash is also held to be used as a float at events and is kept in a secure safe. £28.10 of 2025 petty cash expenditure is undocumented.
6. Policy for Reserves. To hold sufficient reserves of approximately 3 months expenditure for unavoidable costs including redundancy costs for employees, together with additional reserves of at least £20,000 to finance the expected regular monthly cashflow requirements for SMMIB project.
7. Employees, Pay and Pensions. The PCC employs a caretaker (4 hours per week) and a cleaner (6 hours per week). These employees are paid at the Living Wage Foundation's living wage rate. Neither employee qualified for Automatic Enrolment pension contributions. The PCC also employs three staff under the SMMIB funded project. These employees are on fixed term contracts with gross pay and related employer costs reimbursed (but see note 3). Gross pay for the 5 employees in 2025 was £40,326.35

The PCC has a defined contribution pension scheme with The People's Pension. Employer contributions are at the rate of 3% of qualifying earnings. Pension costs were £834.96 (but offset by an overpayment of £59.30 from 2020).

8. PCC remuneration. PCC members receive no remuneration.
9. Payments to Connected Persons. None.

10. Contracts with Central and Local Government. The PCC has no contracts with Central or Local Government other than for routine services (waste collection, pest control)
11. Grants from Central and Local Government. £11,476.25 (2024: £3,069.66) was claimed from the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme, which makes grants equal to the amount of VAT paid on eligible works.
- Grants totalling £5,427.75 were made by Sunderland City Council to cover most of the costs incurred by the PCC in respect of the Unity in the Community event. The Sunderland City Council grant of £4,000 in March 2024 to the Inter-Faith Forum was passed to that organisation in early 2025.
12. Other Grants received. Communities Together Durham made a grant of £500.00 towards the cost of funding summer activities for children. A grant of £1,570.00 was received from The St Hild and St Bede Trust and held in the suspense account on behalf of Sunderland University Chaplaincy. The grant was used to meet some of the costs of a retreat for students. Durham Diocesan Board of Finance reimbursed a total of £99,644.02 in respect of the SMMIB project.
13. Legacies. The PCC received one legacy of £5,000.00. No restrictions were placed on the usage of the legacy. (2024: one legacy of £24,547.39).
14. Parish Share. The Parish Share paid to the Diocese in 2025 was £11,166.70 (2024: £5,500.00).
15. Utility Costs: Expenditure was £19,823.10 (2024: £16,754.02), offset by user heating charges of £2,756.00 (2024: £2,474.00). Gas and Electricity are purchased through the Church of England's Parish Energy Scheme.
16. Photocopier. The PCC leases a printer /photocopier from Siemens.
17. Governance Fees. No costs have been incurred in the Independent Examination of the Accounts. £172.45 (2024: £28.74) was incurred obtaining DBS safeguarding checks.
18. Agency Monies. The PCC acts as collecting agents for certain connected parties and also where monies are raised for a specific charity. These transactions are not included in the financial statements.

Agency	Amount received £	Amount paid out £
Diocesan Fees for weddings and funerals	2,824.00	2,824.00
Organist fees for playing at funerals	540.00	540.00
Sunderland Mayor's Charity	287.41	287.41
Verger fees weddings and funerals	320.00	320.00
Inter-Faith Forum (monies received 2024)	4000.00	4000.00
Sunderland University Chaplaincy	1,570.00	1,570.00
Sunderland Inter-Faith Forum (note 11)	-	4000.00
Durham DBF Ordinand's Fund	£368.82	£368.82
The Children's Society (Christingle)	135.10	135.10
Bunker Music	329.05	329.05

19. Accounting records. Accounting records are maintained on Data Developments' MyFundAccounting software.
20. Review of Financial Controls. The PCC updated its financial controls during 2025.

Sunderland Minster Parochial Church Council (the "Minster")
Registered Charity 1203743

Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2025

Independent Examiner's Report

I report to the members on my examination of the accounts of the Minster for the year ended 31 December 2025.

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.

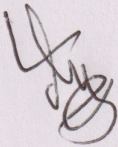
Independent examiner's statement

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; or
3. the accounts do 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.

Signed:



Lewis Ayers
2 The Green
Long Newton
Stockton-on-Tees
TS21 1DL

Date: 11 February 2026

SUNDERLAND MINSTER PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

England & Wales - Charity number 1203743

Accounts

Sunderland Minster Parochial Church Council (Registered Charity 1203743)

Annual Report for Period 1st January to 31st December 2024

Aims and Purposes

The Parochial Church Council is the governing body of the Parish of Sunderland Minster and has the responsibility of cooperating with the ministry team in promoting the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. It is also responsible for maintaining the fabric of Sunderland Minster.

The PCC have had regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on their legal duty to public benefit, and are satisfied that Sunderland Minster delivers public benefit, and due regard is paid to the guidance on public benefit when deciding on what new projects the church should undertake.

Objectives and Activities

The mission of the Church of England in the Diocese of Durham is to 'Bless our communities in Jesus' name for the transformation of us all.' At Sunderland Minster, we express this through our own local-context mission statement, 'Open to God, Open to All.'

As part of the Diocese of Durham, our objectives and activities are further shaped by the four Diocesan priorities of challenging poverty, energising growth, caring for God's creation, and engaging with children, youth and 18-25s.

Sunderland Minster engages in a wide range of activities in support of these objectives, many of which overlap. These include ecumenical partnership to support refugees and asylum-seekers; partnering with Sunderland Pride, Inclusive Church and the Open Table Network to support the LGBTQIA+ community; providing a focal-point for interfaith cooperation in the city, and the marking of civic events of both an annual and responsive nature; running regular baptism and confirmation preparation classes, in both English and Farsi; and supporting families facing holiday hunger.



Achievements and Performance

For an overview of the charitable activities of Sunderland Minster in 2024 please see the Provost's report later in this document.

The Electoral Roll (at 31st December 2024) stands at 51, with 4 people being added, and 1 removed.

Reverend Canon Dave Tolhurst was appointed as Acting Provost in March 2023 and was in post until 14th April 2024 when the Revd Canon Clare MaLaren was installed as Canon Provost.

Further information is given in the reports that follow.

In 2024 we conducted 21 baptisms (12 adults, 9 infants), 3 weddings, and 7 funerals (5 at the Minster, 2 at the crematorium).

We continue to be thankful for the committed team of volunteers who assist in all of our activities.

Financial Review

See accompanying accounts.

Structure, governance and management

The PCC is a corporate body established by the Church of England and operates under the Parochial Church Council Powers Measure.

The appointment of PCC members is governed by and set out in the Church Representation Rules.

The PCC is registered with the Charity Commission and has Registered Charity Number 1203743.

In 2024, Sunderland Minster PCC met 6 times to discuss the business of the Minster.

Administrative information

Sunderland Minster is located on High Street West, Sunderland, SR1 3ET. It is part of the Diocese of Durham within the Church of England. The correspondence address is as above.

Parochial Church Council (PCC) are:

Canon Provost	Revd Canon Dave Tolhurst (until 14th April 2024) – Acting Provost Revd Canon Clare MacLaren (from 14th April 2024)
Associate Priest	Revd Jacqui Tyson
University Chaplain	Revd Chris Howson
Minster Wardens	Ann Craig Heather Crawford (from April 2024 APCM)
Deanery Synod Reps	Heather Crawford Gillian Walker
Treasurer	Robert Stenlake (co-opted 20th May 2024)
Elected members	Sarah Hill Graeme Jobes Hollie Jobes Elaine Lawson Elizabeth Tinker Ekene Ejiofor (co-opted 20th May 2024)

FABRIC REPORT

The latest Quinquennial inspection, completed by architect David Beaumont June 2024 has listed a 5-year list of priorities to keep Sunderland Minster and its fixtures and fittings in good order.

We are fortunate to have been granted considerable funding from the Church of England's Strategic Mission and Ministry Investment Board, a proportion of which may be used on capital works to further the mission and ministry of the Minster.

Using the priorities list, we have already commissioned a complete refresh of the lighting system, which will benefit not only the congregation and our day-to-day functions but also will make the building a more attractive concert and conference facility.

We have also had works completed on both heating systems which have improved efficiency.

Heather Crawford (Church Warden)



DEANERY SYNOD REPORT 2024

The meeting on the 1st May was held at St Cuthbert's, Red House. We dealt with the election of officers, the introduction of new chapter members and notice of election of Diocesan Synod representatives. The meeting was cut short as the main item was to be the Archdeacon speaking on the purpose and function of Deanery Synod. Unfortunately, he had to cancel because of illness.

The meeting on the 17th September was held at St. Nicholas, Bishopwearmouth and the Ven. Bob Cooper discussed with us the role of the Deanery within the context of Diocesan Transformation.

The final meeting of the year was held on 13th November at St Cuthbert's Red House. Lilian Jordan was elected as Lay Chair. Amy Burns was due to address the Transformation Agenda on behalf of the Diocese, and how the team might facilitate developing a coherent and deliverable deanery plan based on growing our churches, however she failed to attend.

Gillian Walker (Deanery Synod rep)

PAROCHIAL REPORTS FOR 2024

Canon Provost's Report

The Canon Provost's Report will be given verbally, together with a presentation of images from some of the Minster's events and achievements in 2024.

A copy of the Powerpoint may be found here, after the APCM: <https://tinyurl.com/ProvostReport-2024>



Parochial Church Council

There were six meetings of the PCC during 2024, chaired at first by Acting Provost Revd Canon Dave Tolhurst and from May by our new Provost Revd Canon Clare MacLaren. Our meetings were greatly enhanced by the guidance, enthusiasm and sheer hard work of Canon Clare, now our sole full time clergy person.

Our financial situation improved during the year due largely to the work of our treasurer, Robert Stenlake, and also because of an increase in the number of events where a fee was charged and money made from refreshments, organised by Elaine Lawson. As a result, the PCC was able to approve that we give more in Parish Share than previously, though nowhere near the Guided Pledge requested by the Diocese. A start was made on producing a lettings agreement, fees table and booking forms for events.

Discussions took place regarding the money we were to receive from the national church, which would enable improvements to the heating and lighting and the appointment of paid staff. The architect's Quinquennial Inspection report was received and there were no urgent matters needing attention. A decision was made about the type of new outdoor noticeboards we required and it was agreed that the updating of the clergy board in church should go ahead.

The PCC also discussed and agreed to the Diocese's proposals for new parish boundaries (which came into force on 1st January 2025)

A PCC Away Day was held in September and resulted in a Missional Plan for the future of the Minster.

Regular discussions also took place regarding Ecochurch and safeguarding and, to supplement the work of the PCC, clergy and wardens' (now Leadership Team) meetings continued to take place monthly, to deal with matters relating to the day to day running of the Minster, while the standing committee met in advance of the PCC to decide an agenda.

This is my last report as PCC secretary as I am retiring at the 2025 APCM. I would like to thank all those who have helped me so much over my years in office.

Liz Tinker (PCC Secretary)

Minster Choir

The Minster Choir rehearses in the Choir Room on Thursdays from 7.00pm—8.00pm.

On Sundays we meet at 9.30am in the Choir Room to robe and rehearse the music for the 9.45am service; for the monthly 5.00pm Choral Evensong we rehearse in the Choir Room at 4.30pm.

During the year 2024 we took a holiday on the Sundays after Christmas and Easter as well as Sundays in August.

The Choir enhances the following services with music:

9.45am Sung Eucharist

The Choir gathers in the Vestry and processes into the Choir stalls during the first hymn. Owing to physical problems, some members enter the stalls before the start of the procession.

During the Eucharist the Choir supports: the singing of hymns with an occasional descant; a sung Eucharist setting composed by Dom Gregory Murray – a People's Mass; Gospel Acclamation with alleluias sung by all and a sung Gospel refrain during Lent and Advent; the set psalm from the Parish Psalter with occasional different chants and revision of wording where necessary; an Anthem is sung during communion.

5.00pm Choral Evensong on the 3rd Sunday of the month.

The choir supports the singing of Hymns and Ferial Responses; the set Psalm for the evening to a chant, Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis to one of four chants; an Introit and an Anthem appropriate to the season.

The Choir also sang at special services including: Ascension Day, Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Mayor's Carol Service and the Minster Carol Service.

A huge thank you to our loyal choir members who have sung so well during the year.

We look forward to future challenges as Provost Clare updates our service booklets.

Our Choir, although small in number, are big in heart and voice!

David Cox (Organist and Choirmaster)

FEAST

FEAST numbers have been steady over the last year, (30-45 weekly, 6-10 children) As predicted in last year's report the announcement that Sunderland's hotel for asylum seekers was to close meant that there was a decrease in Iranian members at the Minster. Again, our numbers of African (Nigerian) students dropped due to changes in government policy, making it harder for students to come with their families.

However, FEAST continues to welcome all and tries to provide a taste of the kingdom whilst people are with us. Ray on placement has continued to offer steady support to Clare, Chris and Jacqui over the year. Shiny Princess has also helped with our craft table, and Phoebe on placement also led FEAST very well.

Clare has been a real blessing to the clergy team and leads FEAST in an exciting and joyful way. We are always looking to improve our offering, and always welcome suggestions.

Revd. Chris Howson

Open Table

We celebrated a joyful 3rd anniversary of Sunderland Open Table in February this year with a service of thanksgiving and afterwards a social time together.

We meet on the 2nd Sunday of each month (apart from August) holding both services of the word and services of Holy Communion, always with social/community time after the service.

Over the last three years we have grown together as a small but faithful congregation. We are still welcoming enquirers and new members regularly and our congregation is growing. This is both

encouraging and indicative that we are meeting a real need for safe worship spaces for our LGBTQIA siblings.

Sunderland Minster's presence as a safe welcoming and inclusive space for all is important and Open Table is very much a part of that ministry. Thanks be to God.

Revd Jacqui Tyson



Work with Asylum Seekers and Refugees

This year we have continued to provide letters of support for our Iranian Christians, for courts, for housing and other needs. Again, we have provided 2 10 week courses for those seeking baptism from Iran. These are carefully constructed and very spirit filled. Huge thanks this year to both Melika and Hooman for providing excellent translation during the courses.

English Conversation classes on Friday had to cease when our teachers were caught up in the cuts at the University, but we are looking at helping with language provision in other ways. FODI has continued to use the Minster on a fortnightly basis, and we are grateful to Heather for supporting this work and for providing food supplies from The Bread and Butter Thing on Sundays, for those in food poverty.

The Minster fully supported Refugee week – hosting the start of the annual 'Walk of Sanctuary' and an event celebrating the work of those who had contributed significantly to the lives of Sanctuary Seekers in the city.

Revd Chris Howson

FODI

FODI provide practical support to refugees and asylum seekers, many donated items such as clothing, household items, toys, as well as support with housing advice, vouchers for activities such as swimming, bus fares etc. Attendees are also offered an assortment of fresh, dried and canned food, provided by FODI.

Sunderland Minster continues to host fortnightly sessions and provides a welcoming environment for people to meet up with others in similar situations and enjoy a cuppa and a chat. FODI pay a nominal charge for room hire and refreshments. We continue to facilitate the service of refreshments, with volunteers from outside the Minster community.

Heather Crawford

Craft Fairs

The monthly craft fairs have continued to provide much needed regular income for the Minster, from the stall holder fees, visitor door charge and the café. We have a few crafters who have traded at our fairs since we began in October 2015, and we welcome new crafters, often who are trading for the first time. Thank you to all the hardworking volunteers without which the fairs could not take place.

Heather Crawford

Minster Fairs

We held two fairs in 2024. The summer fair raised £934.17 and the autumn fair £2020.00, making a total of £2954.17.

I would like to thank everyone who helped in any way to support these events.

Ann Craig

Mothers' Union

Sunderland Minster's branch of the Mothers' Union has met for over 26 years on the first Thursday of the month in the Choir Vestry.

The three remaining members of the branch, Carole Pattison, Betty Malaugh and myself met for our first meeting of 2024 on 1st February. We discussed the future of the branch and sadly decided that we would continue as members of the Mothers' Union but no longer hold any meetings. This was mainly due to the lack of heat in the church and our ages and health problems. We said we would continue to attend the weekly Thursday eucharist whenever possible.

We have sent a few emergency toilet bags to Sunderland Royal Hospital and we attend any M. U. events which are held in Durham Cathedral.

Ann Craig (Branch leader)

Friendship Group

The Friendship Group continued to meet on the first Tuesday of each month throughout the year. As the majority of those attending prefer to meet during the day, we met for coffee between 10.00.a.m. and noon.

We enjoyed three outings together. We spent a summer lunchtime in the local Italian in July, an evening at The Barnes in September and a Christmas party at the Rosedene in December.

We were sad to lose two loyal members during the year. Lily Holcroft is now in a nursing home and unable to attend and Betty Wilson died in June. They are very much missed.

We are always delighted to welcome anyone who would like to join us - even if they can only make the odd meeting.

Gillian Walker & Sandra Thurlbeck

Events

2024 was a very busy year.

Several special services took place including the Holocaust Memorial, Remembering Srebrenica, D-Day Commemoration, and, of course, the Canon Provost Clare MacLaren's Licensing Service. An award ceremony took place at the Minster in July, when the Revd. Chris Howson received the British Empire Medal for services to higher education.

The Rock Choir performed two fabulous concerts to packed "houses", Musica Johannis gave us their Music for a Summer Evening programme, and Bishopwearmouth Choral Society continued to provide their wonderful regular performances. Fever Events held a further five Candlelight Concerts, Fishburn and Houghton Brass Bands filled the church with wonderful music, and the Rotary Club organised a concert featuring Sunderland Symphony Orchestra.

Other music events included the Boundaries Music Festival, The Bunker Showcase, and a Ukrainian evening featuring a Ukrainian Folk Band and Ukrainian food!

In October the Minster along with approximately 60 organisations and businesses organised the Unity in the Community festival which brought together a diverse gathering of hundreds of people throughout the day. This was in response to the rioting in the summer and was an opportunity to express solidarity and inclusivity in our city.

In December, the annual VCAS Open Arms Event was held at the Minster, and we were pleased to receive the Small Group Places and Spaces Award.

Other events included SAFC Heaven Branch, BID meeting (with a Minster tour for interested parties), White Ribbon Event including an exhibition (in collaboration with Wearside Women in Need), U3A tour of the church, Victoria Hall Memorial installation, Bishopwearmouth Heritage Townscape Scheme exhibition with tours and cake! In October, the Minster hosted the live recording of the BBC Radio 4 "Any Questions?" Programme.

There were also the annual Minster events, or events in which we participated – Amnesty Vigil, Heritage Open Days, Interfaith Walk, Summer Activities for Children - Tuesdays in August, the Big Lunch, Cider and Carols.

At Christmas the carol services were for Sunderland University, Age UK, the Mayor of Sunderland, Recovery Connections, and an accessible carol service. However, the most memorable was the Minster Carol Service where we followed the star (Canon Clare!) with Mary and Joseph and met shepherds, angels, inn keepers, and wise men in the "Almshouses Advent Calendar", and finally the baby Jesus in the "stable" in the Minster. A wonderful variety of events which would not have been possible without the clergy and volunteers. Thank you.

Elaine Lawson.

Bellringing Report

It was wonderful to, once again, hear the bells ringing out for Canon Clare's installation as the Canon Provost of Sunderland Minster after several years of almost silence.

After numerous discussions, I agreed to work with David to restart the ringing at The Minster. We usually practice on the first Monday of every month and have met at other times during the year for special ringing events, including the Durham and Newcastle Central District AGM, the D&N 10 and 12 bell quarter peal weekend (of which two quarter peals were successful at The Minster). The bells have also been rung for special church events including the Archdeacon of Sunderland's Visitation.

Bellringing Report cont.

We rely heavily on ringers from other towers who give up their time to help keep the ringing going at The Minster. Sunday morning ringing is difficult due to ringing at other towers and my role as a member of clergy covering at various churches on a Sunday from one end of the Diocese to the other.

We have had some interest in training new ringers, but the bells are particularly difficult to handle because of the large draught between the ringing room and the bells. We will need, during 2025, to consider changing the bell ropes on all ten bells to terylene-topped ropes (which stop the bounce). This will be a significant expense but will ultimately make the bells easier to ring, control, and teach on.

We are hoping to increase the number of ringers during 2025, so if you would like to 'have a go' please do speak to Canon Clare or one of The Minster Team who will put you in touch with me.

Richard Brown

Eco Church

The Minster has been adapting to significant change throughout the 2024 period including the installation of the new Canon Provost. In our Eco Church group, the focus has been to embody the Diocesan priorities: -

Caring for God's creation Together, as individuals, parishes and a Diocese we will care for God's creation, taking action and using our resources, gifts, time and prayers to:

1. Cultivate a shared Christian vision for God's creation and our call to steward, nurture and protect it, in Jesus' name, for the good of everyone, everywhere.
2. Promote responsible consumption & behaviour as individuals and churches.
3. Work together to challenge environmental indifference and injustice.

This has been reflected in several ways and actions throughout the year including:

- Services and sermons which have reflected shared Christian vision for God's creation stewardship, nurture and protection for all. Ongoing discussions at Feast and other spaces in respect to our individual practices which support nature recovery and reflect responsibility in consumption.
- Leadership team, including Wardens have incorporated recycling initiatives for waste, paper and cardboard.
- Engagement by members of the community in local litter picking, volunteering with environmental actions and charities (such as Durham Wildlife Trust and Groundwork).
- Attending Church Network meetings and Net Zero Action Plan online meetings
- Attending meetings and public gatherings which challenge environmental indifference and injustice.
- Submitted the Minster's Phase 1 Net Zero Action Plan
- Installation of new lighting at the Minster as part of a commitment to lower energy outputs and be an exemplar for better energy consumption
- Held a big lunch in June as part of the Eden Projects commitment to community engagement, hospitality and sustainability.

Eco Church cont.

The year ahead should offer our community an exciting opportunity to engage further in Eco Church and look to gaining accreditation. We have discussed the possibility of a Minster Park Eco Green Group who will be able to collaborate with the Sunderland Heritage, Durham Wildlife Trust and Sunderland City Council Carbon team. Please liaise with me or Sarah Hill for further information.

Graeme Jobes



Safeguarding

The Minster team have remained vigilant throughout the year in respect to our duties and responsibilities as a community. There is a strong safeguarding culture embedded in the Minster and this is particularly important as we support vulnerable adults and have a range of ages attending our various activities and services. This is embedded in PCC meetings, Leadership Monthly meetings and at the heart of the community.

Training and DBS

Training and up to date DBS are at the core of our safeguarding model. Upon the completion of the APCM we will know training requirements for new members of the PCC.

An update from last year is that where training has been updated, PCC and other members have been asked to link my account with theirs so I can hold a direct and up to date record of training and this in turn is fed back to the P

CC and Church Leadership. Clergy have their own specific training and ongoing equivalent.

Parish Safeguarding Dashboard

Graeme is registered on the Dashboard along with Canon Clare. It has been updated, and Graeme has held meetings with Diocesan Safeguarding Lead to discuss progress.

Reporting and Safeguarding Review

My mobile is available to all 07899008278 and details along with Canon Clare have been updated with suitable pictures and are displayed in the Minster as required together with the Diocesan safeguarding Contact. Safeguarding Policy and Safer Church statement is also displayed. Safeguarding Policy will again be read and signed off at the APCM. Safer Recruitment and all Safeguarding 'linked' policies are now in place following a review by Canon Clare.

Any reports or concerns have been forwarded to me using my email address: gaj@hardingsolicitors.co.uk . We have had no serious safeguarding issues in the last year, but all have remained vigilant, and we still have WhatsApp group (I am aware some people need to be added to this) for sharing information and I am available whenever needed using my contact details.

Graeme Jobes (Parish Safeguarding Officer)



Safeguarding Policy Statement

In accordance with the Church of England's Safeguarding Policy, "Promoting a Safer Church"¹, the PCC of Sunderland Minster is committed to observe best practice in:

- Promoting a safer environment and culture.
- The safer recruitment and ongoing support and management of all those with any responsibility related to children, young people and vulnerable adults within the church.
- Responding promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation.
- Caring pastorally for victims/survivors of abuse and other affected persons.
- Caring pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns or allegations of abuse and other affected persons.
- Responding to those that may pose a present risk to others. **Sunderland Minster will:**
- Continue to create a safer and more caring place for all people.
- Appoint a Minster Safeguarding Officer (CSA) and Deputy Minster Safeguarding Officer (DCSA) to work with the PCC to implement policy and procedures.
- Safely recruit, train and support all those with any responsibility for children, young people and adults to have the confidence and skills to recognise and respond to abuse.
- Ensure that there is appropriate insurance cover for all activities involving children and adults undertaken in the name of the Minster.
- Display across the Minster premises, and on the Minster website the details of who to contact if there are safeguarding concerns or support needs.
- Listen to, and take seriously all those who disclose abuse.
- Take steps to protect children and adults when a safeguarding concern of any kind arises, following House of Bishops guidance, including notifying the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA) and statutory agencies immediately.
- Offer support to victims/survivors of abuse regardless of the type of abuse, when or where it occurred.
- Care for and monitor any who relate to, and spend time in, the Minster who may pose a risk to children and adults whilst maintaining appropriate confidentiality and the safety of all parties.
- Ensure that health and safety policy, procedures and risk assessments are in place and that these are reviewed annually.
- Review the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Practices at least annually.
-

The PCC of Sunderland Minster has appointed:

Graeme Jobes as Minster Safeguarding Officer, and is currently seeking to fill the vacancy for Deputy Minster Safeguarding Officer.

Policy Statement Adopted 17 March 2025

Policy Statement to be reviewed 11th May 2025 (APCM)

¹ The PCC of Sunderland Minster has adopted 'Promoting a Safer Church' as its own safeguarding policy. The full policy may be read here: <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-11/promoting-a-safer-church-policy-notes.pdf>

Sunderland Minster

Financial Statements for the Year ended 31st December 2024

Statement of Assets and Liabilities

	£		£
Brought forward 01.01.2024	33,156.69	Resources used (2)	76,329.42
Incoming resources (1)	<u>117,142.56</u>	Balance carried forward 31.12.2024 (3)	<u>73,969.83</u>
Total	<u>150,299.25</u>	Total	<u>150,299.25</u>

Notes 1 See Analysis of Income and Expenditure

2 See Analysis of Income and Expenditure

3 Represented by	Current Account	Note 4	36,529.84
	Petty Cash		86.71
	Petty Cash Flower Fund		386.51
	Co-operative Deposit Account		36,847.68
	CBF Deposit Account		<u>119.09</u>
			<u>73,969.83</u>

4 Bank current account reconciliation at 31.12.2024

Balance at Co-operative Bank	26,980.59
Plus: Income due but not received	19,380.77
Less: Payments not cleared	4,705.52
Less: Accrued Expenditure	175.00
less: paid in advance for 2025	951.00
Less: Monies held in suspense for Inter-Faith Forum	<u>4,000.00</u>
Balance at 31.12.2024	<u>36,529.84</u>

Approved by the Parochial Church Council and signed on its behalf by:



Chairman of PCC



Churchwarden

Sunderland Minster

Financial Statements for the Year ended 31st December 2024

Statement of Assets and Liabilities

	£		£
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	Less: Monies held in suspense for Inter-Faith Forum		4,000.00
	Balance at 31.12.2024		36,529.84

Approved by the Parochial Church Council and signed on its behalf by:

Chairman of PCC

Churchwarden

Sunderland Minster Parochial Church Council - Registered Charity 1203743

Sunderland Minster

Financial Statements for the Year ended 31st December 2024

Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2024

	2024	2023
	£	£
Current Assets		
Current Account Barclays	0	9,553.86
Current Account Co-operative	26,980.59	8,787.37
Petty Cash	86.71	14.71
Petty Cash Flower Fund	386.51	471.06
Barclays Deposit Account	0	45.27
Co-operative Deposit Account	36,847.68	5,000.00
CCLA CBF Deposit Account	119.09	113.11
Year end amounts due to us	19,380.77	15,446.65
TOTAL ASSETS	83,801.35	39,432.03
LIABILITIES		
Accounts payable	4,880.52	6,275.34
Payments in advance for 2025	951.00	0
Suspense Account (inter Faith Forum)	4,000.00	0
TOTAL LIABILITIES	9,831.52	6,275.34
NET ASSETS	(Total Assets – Liabilities)	73,969.83
BALANCE		
Starting Balance	33,156.69	22,914.64
Income less Expenditure	40,813.14	10,242.05
Closing balance	73,969.83	33,156.69

Movement in Funds during 2024

Fund	01/01/2024	Income	Expenditure	31/12/2024
	£	£	£	£
Flower Fund	471.06	845.00	929.55	386.51
Interfaith forum	1,390.45	0	495.08	895.37
Asylum Seeker Support	406.25	0	154.80	251.45
Legacy	0	24,547.39	0	24,547.39
SMMIB	0	18,417.95	18,417.95	0
Summer Special	0	850.00	850.00	0
Total Restricted and Endowment	2,267.76	44,660.34	20,847.38	26,080.72
Unrestricted Funds	30,888.93	72,482.22	55,482.04	47,889.11
TOTAL ALL FUNDS	33,156.69	117,142.56	76,329.42	73,969.83

Movement in Funds during 2023 - Prior Year for Comparison

Fund	01/01/2023	Income	Expenditure	31/12/2023
	£	£	£	£
Flower Fund	467.19	552.60	548.73	471.06
Interfaith forum	1,889.00		498.55	1,390.45
Asylum Seeker Support	406.25			406.25
Total Restricted and Endowment	2,762.44	552.60	1,047.28	2,267.76
Unrestricted Funds	20,152.20	70,274.87	59,538.14	30,888.93
TOTAL ALL FUNDS	22,914.64	70,827.47	60,585.42	33,156.69

Sunderland Minster Parochial Church Council - Registered Charity 1203743

Sunderland Minster

Analysis of Income and Expenditure for the Period 1st January to 31st December 2024

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL 2024 £	TOTAL 2023 £
INCOME and ENDOWMENTS				
Donations and legacies	32,829.07	24,547.39	57,376.46	43,023.01
Income from Charitable Activities	38,874.32	850.00	39,724.32	26,683.91
Other trading activities	0	0	0	552.60
Income from Investments	503.83		503.83	190.15
Other income	275.00	19,262.95	19,537.95	377.80
Total Income and Endowments	72,482.22	44,660.34	117,142.56	70,827.47
EXPENDITURE				
Costs of generating funds	4,241.71	139.08	4,380.79	694.90
Expenditure on charitable activities	51,240.33	1,360.80	52,601.13	5,221.96
Other expenditure	0	19,347.50	19,347.50	54,668.56
Total Expenditure	55,482.04	20,847.38	76,329.42	60,585.42
INCOME less EXPENDITURE	17,000.18	23,812.96	40,813.14	10,242.05
BALANCE b/f AT 1st JANUARY 2024	30,888.93	2,267.76	33,156.69	
BALANCE c/f AT 31st DECEMBER 2024	47,889.11	26,080.72	73,969.83	
The notes on subsequent pages form part of the accounts				
Sunderland Minster Parochial Church Council - Registered Charity 1203743				

Sunderland Minster

Financial Statements for the Year ended 31st December 2024

Analysis of Income and Endowments

	Unrestricted Fund	Restricted Fund	Total 2024	Total 2023
	£	£	£	£
Donations and Legacies				
Planned Giving:	16,008.49		16,008.49	15,495.03
Non-recurring donations	3,579.75		3,579.75	4,908.53
Collections at Services	3,278.98		3,278.98	3,643.23
Card reader and donations boxes	3,028.01		3,028.01	2,815.96
Income Tax recovered	6,933.84		6,933.84	16,160.26
Legacies received	0	24,547.39	24,547.39	0.00
Total	32,829.07	24,547.39	57,376.46	43,023.01
Income from Charitable Activities				
one-off grants	300.00	650.00	950.00	0
Fund raising	18,105.12		18,105.12	5,266.97
Craft Fairs	3,808.20		3,808.20	4,141.24
Heating charges	2,474.00		2,474.00	1,800.20
Room Hire	12,655.00	200.00	12,855.00	15,001.50
Statutory Fees:	1,532.00		1,532.00	474.00
Total	38,874.32	850.00	39,724.32	26,683.91
Income from Investments				
Interest and bank payments	503.83		503.83	190.15
Total	503.83		503.83	190.15
Other Income				
Grants received (one-off)	0	18,417.95	18,417.95	377.80
Flower Fund	0	845.00	845.00	552.60
Other	275.00	0	275.00	0
Total	275.00	19,262.95	19,537.95	930.40
TOTAL INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS	72,482.22	44,660.34	117,142.56	70,827.47

Sunderland Minster

Financial Statements for the Year ended 31st December 2024

Analysis of Expenditure

	Unrestricted Fund £	Restricted Fund £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Costs of Generating Funds				
Fund raising	4,241.71	139.08	4,380.79	694.90
	4,241.71	139.08	4,380.79	694.90
Expenditure on Charitable Activities				
Mission Giving to charity			0	0
Parish Share	5,500.00		5,500.00	200.00
Clergy and Staffing Costs	4,502.18		4,502.18	3,607.73
Services: expenses	2,350.02	710.92	3,060.94	1,199.44
Hospitality	128.43		128.43	214.79
Utility Costs	16,754.02		16,754.02	33,002.97
Church Insurance	12,431.94		12,431.94	11,776.96
Maintenance / repairs	4,832.73		4,832.73	4,490.77
Organ	312.05		312.05	1,030.48
Church cleaning			0.00	91.95
Printing and office costs	1,437.06		1,437.06	1,399.96
Telephone /computing	1,173.14		1,173.14	1,388.72
Governance			0	0
Banking costs	86.02		86.02	334.67
Flower Fund		929.55	929.55	548.73
Other costs	1,732.74	649.88	2,382.62	603.35
	51,240.33	2,290.35	53,530.68	59,890.52
Other Expenditure				
SMMIB-1.15 Building	0	18,417.95	18,417.95	0
	0	18,417.95	18,417.95	0
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	55,482.04	20,847.38	76,329.42	60,585.42
<i>Sunderland Minster Parochial Church Council - Registered Charity 1203743</i>				

**Sunderland Minster Parochial Church Council (the “Minster”)
Registered Charity 1203743**

Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2024

Independent Examiner’s Report

I report to the members on my examination of the accounts of the Minster for the year ended 31 December 2024.

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; or
3. the accounts do 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.

Signed:



Lewis Ayers
2 The Green
Long Newton
Stockton-on-Tees
TS21 1DL

Date: 2 February 2025

Sunderland Minster - Notes on the Financial Statements 2024

1. Basis of Financial Statements. These have been prepared under The Charities Act 2011 and in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 governing the individual accounts of PCCs, together with applicable accounting standards and the Statement of Recommended Practice for charities (SORP) FRS102.

The Financial Statements have been prepared using the accruals and prepayment method. The accounts were subject to an independent examination. The Independent Examiner's Report is attached to the Financial Statements.

2. Bankers. The PCC has had a current account and an instant access deposit account with The Co-operative Bank throughout 2024. The current and deposit accounts with Barclays Bank were closed during the year.
3. Petty Cash. The Flower Fund is held as two amounts of petty cash, with its income and expenditure transacted through the petty cash. Petty cash is also held to be used as a float at events.
4. Policy for Reserves. The PCC aims to hold sufficient funds to meet short term cash flow.
5. Pay, Employees and Pensions. The PCC employs a part-time caretaker (4 hours per week) and a part-time cleaner (hours variable to suit cleaner's availability). Employees are paid at the Living Wage Foundation's living wage rate. No employees qualified for Automatic Enrolment pension contributions.
6. PCC remuneration. PCC members receive no remuneration.
7. Payments to Connected Persons. None.
8. Contracts with Central and Local Government. The PCC has no contracts with Central or Local Government other than for routine services (alarm monitoring, waste collection, pest control)
9. Grants from Central and Local Government. £3,069.66 (2023: £377.80) was claimed from the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme. This Scheme makes grants equal to the amount of VAT paid on certain specific works relating to the maintenance of the Minster.

A grant of £4,000 by Sunderland City Council was made in March 2024 to the Inter-Faith Forum. This grant is being held in the suspense account pending transfer to the Inter-Faith Forum.
10. Other Grants received. Communities Together Durham made a grant of £650.00 towards the cost of funding summer activities for children. A grant of £300.00 was made by Bishopwearmouth Area Deanery towards the costs of an accessible Christmas service. A grant of £1,430.00 was received from The St Hild and St Bede Trust and held on behalf of Sunderland University Chaplaincy. The grant was used to meet some of the costs of a retreat for students.
11. Legacies. The PCC received one legacy of £24,547.39. It is to be used for upkeep and use of the Minster, as approved by the PCC (2023: no legacies).

12. Parish Share. The Parish Share paid to the Diocese in 2024 was £5,500.00 (2023: £200.00).
13. Major Expenditure 2024. 25% of the contract cost for remedial works to the lighting was paid in 2024. This amounted to £18,417.95. This is offset by the grant from the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme of £3069.66. Works commenced in January 2025. The balance of this cost is to be reimbursed from Church of England central funds and is included in the accounts as income due but not received.
14. Utility Costs: Expenditure during the year was £16,754.02 (2023: £33,002.97). Of this, £7,494.51 (2023: £17,353.65) was in respect of Gas and £8,661.86 (2023: £14,437.81) in respect of electricity. Gas usage was minimised until the contract expired on 31st October 2024, as the unit cost was unaffordable. From 1st November 2024, the gas contract has been in the Church of England's Parish Buying energy basket at a much lower unit rate. Electricity is also purchased via the Church of England's Parish Buying Energy Basket. The lower electricity cost for 2024 is because of lower unit rates and reduced usage after the closure of the café.
15. Photocopier. The PCC leases a printer /photocopier from Siemens.
16. Governance Fees. No costs have been incurred in the Independent Examination of the Accounts. £28.74 (2023: £4.79) was incurred obtaining DBS safeguarding checks.
17. Gift Aid. Gift Aid is in respect of donations received in 2024. Small Gift Aid is in respect of donations received in 2024, as well as £1,483.60 in respect of earlier years. Gift Aid is also included in the Accounts in respect of indirect giving via the Parish Giving Scheme.
18. Expenditure Commitments 2025
- Gas central heating repair works. A contract has been entered into for completion in early 2025. The cost will be £7,000 (no VAT). The cost of these works is to be reimbursed from Church of England central funds.
 - Alarm system. The PCC has contracted to repair the system and move to 4G DualCom in January 2025. The cost of these works and the 2025 maintenance charges are £1,977.00 (including VAT).
 - Lighting. Repairs and upgrade are to be carried out, commencing in January 2025. The cost of these works is £73,671.79 (including £12,278.63 VAT), of which 25% was paid in December 2024 to secure the contract. The cost excluding VAT is to be reimbursed from Church of England central funds. Grants equal to the amount of VAT will be claimed under the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme (grant received in 2024 in respect of the 25% payment made).
19. Agency Monies. The PCC acts as collecting agents for certain connected parties and also where monies are raised for a specific charity at a service or event. These transactions are not included in the financial statements. The amounts are set out in the table below:

Agency	Amount received £	Expenses deducted £	Amount paid out £
Diocesan Fees for weddings and funerals	1,741.00	-	1,741.00

Organist fees for playing at funerals	607.50	-	607.50
Sunderland Mayor's Charity	138.99	-	138.99
Verger fees for verging at funerals	320.00	-	320.00
Inter-Faith Forum	4000.00	-	0
Sunderland University Chaplaincy	1430.00	-	1,430.00
Funeral Collection for British Heart Foundation	88.75	-	88.75

20. Accounting records. Accounting records are maintained on Data Developments' MyFundAccounting software.

21. Review of Financial Controls. The PCC updated its financial controls during 2024.

Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2024

Independent Examiner's Report

I report to the members on my examination of the accounts of the Minster for the year ended 31 December 2024.

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; or
3. the accounts do 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.

Signed:



Lewis Ayers
2 The Green
Long Newton
Stockton-on-Tees
TS21 1DL

Date: 2 February 2025

SUNDERLAND MINSTER PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

England & Wales - Charity number 1203743

Accounts

2023 Annual Report

Sunderland Minster Parochial Church Council (Registered Charity 1203743)

Aims and Purposes

The Parochial Church Council is the governing body of the Parish of Sunderland Minster and has the responsibility of cooperating with the ministry team in promoting the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. It is also responsible for maintaining the fabric of Sunderland Minster.

The PCC have had regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on their legal duty to public benefit, and are satisfied that Sunderland Minster delivers public benefit, and due regard is paid to the guidance on public benefit when decided on what new projects the church should undertake.

Objectives and Activities

The mission of the Church of England in the Diocese of Durham is to *'Bless our communities in Jesus' name for the transformation of us all.'* At Sunderland Minster, we express this through our own local-context mission statement, *'Open to God, Open to All.'* As part of the Diocese of Durham, our objectives and activities are further shaped by the four Diocesan priorities of *challenging poverty, energising growth, caring for God's creation, and engaging with children, youth and 18-25s.*

Sunderland Minster engages in a wide range of activities in support of these objectives, many of which overlap. These include ecumenical partnership to support refugees and asylum-seekers; partnering with Sunderland Pride, Inclusive Church and the Open Table Network to support the LGBTQIA+ community; providing a focal-point for interfaith cooperation in the city, and the marking of civic events of both an annual and responsive nature; running regular baptism and confirmation preparation classes, in both English and Farsi; and supporting families facing holiday hunger.

Achievements and Performance

For an overview of the charitable activities of Sunderland Minster in 2023 please see the Acting Provost's report in the Appendix.

The Electoral Roll now stands at 48, with 2 people being added, and 4 removed.

Reverend Canon Dave Tolhurst was appointed as Acting Provost in March 2023 and was in post at the year end. He has been supported by a team of part-time clergy.

Further information is given in the Appendices.

In 2023 we conducted 13 baptisms (5 adults, 8 infants), 1 wedding, and 4 funerals (3 at the Minster, 1 at the crematorium).

We continue to be thankful for the committed team of volunteers who assist in all of our activities.

Financial Review

See accompanying accounts.

Structure, governance and management

The PCC is a corporate body established by the Church of England and operates under the Parochial Church Council Powers Measure.

The appointment of PCC members is governed by and set out in the Church Representation Rules. At present, our elected members are elected annually.

The PCC registered with the Charity Commission in 2023 and has Registered Charity Number 1203743.

In 2023, Sunderland Minster PCC met 6 times to discuss the business of the parish.

Administrative information

Sunderland Minster is located on High Street West, Sunderland, SR1 3ET. It is part of the Diocese of Durham within the Church of England. The correspondence address is as above.

Parochial Church Council (PCC) are:

Canon Provost	Revd Canon Dave Tolhurst (from 1 st March 2023)
Minster Priest	Revd Dr Andrew C Dowsett (until 28 th February 2023)
Associate Priest Revd	Jacqui Tyson
University Chaplain	Revd Chris Howson
Curate	Revd Chris Watson (retired September 2023)
Minster Wardens	Ann Craig Heather Crawford (until 2023 APCM)
Deanery Synod Rep	Vicki Hedley (resigned January 2023) Heather Crawford (from 2023 APCM) Gillian Walker (from 2023 APCM)
Treasurer	Jo Dowsett (co-opted to the PCC) (until 28 th February 2023) Robert Stenlake (from 1 st March 2023) (not on PCC)
Elected members	Sarah Hill Janine Hobson (resigned January 2023) Cat Howson (until 2023 APCM) Ellen Hunt (until 2023 APCM) Graeme Jobes Hollie Jobes Elizabeth Tinker Elaine Lawson (from 2023 APCM)

Safeguarding

The Minster team have remained vigilant throughout the year in respect to our duties and responsibilities as a community. There is a strong safeguarding culture embedded in the Minster and this particularly important as we support vulnerable adults and have a range of ages attending our various activities and services.

Training and up to date DBS are at the core of our safeguarding model. Upon the completion of the APCM we will know training requirements for the PCC and others including where training may have already been taken and what other training is required or wanted by the Minster community who hold positions where training and DBS is mandatory. Clergy have their own specific training and ongoing equivalent.

Graeme Jobes is registered on the Parish Safeguarding Dashboard and will use this throughout the year as will report to PCC and Provost. His mobile is available to all 07899008278 and details are displayed in the Minster as required together with the Diocesan safeguarding Contact. The details have remained on display throughout the year.

Any reports or concerns have been forwarded to me using my email address: gaj@hardings-solicitors.co.uk We have had no serious safeguarding issues in the last year, but all have remained vigilant, and we have created a WhatsApp group (some people may need to be added to this) for sharing information. We have been mindful of the vulnerability

of volunteers at the Minster, and this was discussed by the PCC and Safety policy created and adapted by acting Provost Dave Tolhurst.

Graeme Jobs (Parish Safeguarding Officer)

APPENDICES

(Acting) Canon Provost - Annual Report 2023

I have been reading the prophet Jeremiah again over the last few weeks and so as I reflect on 2023 a difficult and joyous year in the life of the Minster I would like to start with scripture. The background to our passage is a people who have been moved on, it is the reign of King Zedekiah and some the Jewish people are in exile in Babylon and the future is unclear and uncertain, and everything has changed. Jeremiah writes them these words:

For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.

Jeremiah 29:11-13

As a minster we continued to face change and challenge in 2023 and these words as I reflect not only give me hope for the future but have helped me see God's hand in the year that was 2023.

I joined the Minster team from the beginning of March 2023 and had the privilege to work alongside a team of dedicated and faithful lay people and clergy. We faced significant financial concerns as I arrived and had to make some uncomfortable decisions, my thanks for the sacrifice of heat for some activities as we tried to balance the budget!

My heartfelt thanks to Robert Stenlake who stepped in as treasurer. Together we were able to identify a number of budget areas that needed attention, and then with Robert's hard work and tenacity we have turned the red into black! We have also managed to introduce new income streams and with the Candlelight concerts welcome new visitors to our beautiful church.

The PCC and its members have had to continue work to ensure the smooth running and legal standing of the Minster as a parish and I thank them for their support (and for putting up with me). The first big piece of work for the PCC was the parish profile as we sought to understand who we were as a minster and what we needed in a new Provost. A lengthy piece of work which has born much fruit over the year, not least of all in the appointment and licensing of Clare our new provost.

The prophet Jeremiah was right all along, in difficult times we have not been harmed, we have indeed prospered and grown and the shoots of growth that I have seen give me great hope for the future of the minster and its place in spreading the life changing news of Jesus Christ to the City of Sunderland.

I am not going to write a 'traditional' report this year, much of the life of the church will be covered by the reports written by you. Instead I want to highlight a few things in my annual report that have given me hope.

A Place of Blessing

Despite the upsets and the challenges, this past year has I believe brought us to a new place together which continues to be a place of blessing. I see friendships building, understanding of one another growing and a minster church that really reflects some of the diversity of not only the city but of the amazing kingdom of God.

For me it is has been an incredible blessing to be the acting Provost of such a diverse community and the Sunday congregations and their differences, the style of worship and community have both taught and blessed me much since March 2023

A Place of Life

Having experienced in effect "a year in the life of Sunderland Minster" from the joys of Easter through to the delight of Christmas I have journeyed with you. From hosting civic dignitaries to supporting the homeless and vulnerable,

from Candlelight Concerts to Taizé in the Yurt, from the beauty and quiet of the Bede Chapel to the drums of Feast – there is so much I can reflect on - this is a place of life and joy and will continue to be as you walk forward together.

A Place of Hope

The start of a new journey is always filled with hope, the signs have been there for a long time, I see real shoots of hope in the ministry and mission of the Minster, its partnerships with the city and its people. It is not all about the busy of course, the minster remains a place of prayer – an oasis of hope for all around and I know that ministry of place and of prayer can only grow to provide hope, the hope of Christ to all around.

I am hugely excited for what God has in store for Sunderland Minster and it is my prayer that you will continue to 'seek God with all of your hearts' and as we do so you will make the name of Christ known throughout our beautiful City. I started my time with you using a prayer from the inaugural service of Sunderland Minster on January 11th 1998 and I leave it with you.

May God inspire us when we lack vision

May God strengthen us when we are tired

May God chastise us when our motives are unworthy

May God encourage us when things get tough

May God bless this Minster Church and use it to make

this a Holy City where his name is honoured,

his truth obeyed, and his presence known. Amen

The Right Reverend Michael Turnbull,

Lord Bishop of Durham at Sunderland Minster on January 11th 1998

The Reverend Canon David Tolhurst

DEANERY SYNOD REPORT 2023

The September meeting was the first to be held for some months. Following updates and reports, the Area Dean gave an introduction to Deanery Synod and explained its role.

The main item on the agenda at the November meeting was the Deanery Mission and Action Plan. There were four discussion groups and members were split into geographical areas.

Gillian Walker (Deanery Synod rep.)

PAROCHIAL REPORTS 2023

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

There were six meetings of the PCC during 2023, chaired at first by Revd. Andrew Dowsett and then by Revd Canon Dave Tolhurst after his appointment as Acting Provost. These meetings were dominated by discussions about our very worrying financial situation, the cost of energy and the problems of heating the church. We have been

extremely grateful to our treasurer, Robert Stenlake, for all that he has done to help us through these difficulties and improve the situation, which has also included the long and frustrating process of changing our bank and registering us as a charity with the Charity Commission.

The PCC also had to deal with the use of the café and while we welcomed the presence of Thornhill Park School and good relations were maintained throughout with those who ran the café and with the School, it became clear that the Minster was losing money which as a charity ourselves we could not allow to continue and so the difficult decision was made to give the school notice at the end of the year.

With our Acting Provost, Dave Tolhurst's guidance we compiled a parish profile for the applicants for the post of Canon Provost and chose our representatives to be on the interview panel.

There were also security problems to be dealt with during the year which thankfully seemed to have declined of late, while discussions also took place regarding Ecochurch, safeguarding and the development of our website.

To supplement the work of the PCC, clergy and wardens' meetings also took place, usually monthly, to deal with matters relating to the day to day running of the Minster and the standing committee met in advance of the PCC to decide an agenda.

The PCC is grateful for the support and guidance of the Acting Provost during this difficult year.

Liz Tinker (PCC Secretary)

TREASURER'S REPORT

The Minster faced serious financial challenges during 2023. We started the year running short of funds because of huge gas and electricity bills. The gas is on a 2 year contract at a very high unit rate through to October 2024 and we have had to limit heating to keep costs manageable and charge hirers for heating.

It has been a year of reviewing contracts and closely monitoring expenditure. We have significantly reduced regular monthly outgo. Income has remained stable and we have ended the year with more funds than at the start.

Utilities expenditure was 60% of our expenditure, with a further 21% of expenditure for insurance. Parish Share paid in the year was £200.

Along with many other charities, we encountered difficulties with Barclays Bank, with restrictions placed on our account for much of the year. The inability to update the signatory mandate, or to ascertain what we needed to do to resolve matters, proved very challenging. The PCC therefore agreed to move to the Co-operative Bank and this transition was completed in early 2024. To change bankers, the PCC had first to register with the Charity Commission. The PCC now has a registered charity number: 1203743.

During the year, accounting records were moved to Data Developments' specialist church accounting software MyFundAccounting.

Finance is a team effort. The Treasurer relies on the assistance of many others, counting and banking cash, maintaining card readers, processing payments and more. My thanks to all of them.

Robert Stenlake (Treasurer)

CHOIR

The Minster Choir rehearse in the Choir Room on Thursdays from 7.00pm—8.00pm.

On Sundays we meet at 9.30am in the Choir Room to robe and rehearse the music for the 9.45am service; for the monthly 4.30pm Choral Evensong we rehearse robed in the Choir Stalls at 4.00pm.

During the year 2023 the Choir took Sundays off during Lent and returned for Palm Sunday, Holy Week, Easter Day and took a holiday on Sundays in August. There was no service on Christmas Day.

Several times this year the Choir have taken to wearing their bespoke outside cloaks in the church due to the very

low temperatures in the building. The Choir continue to use black files which I introduced when the Choir were first allowed back into the church after Covid 19. They have proved very useful and we will continue their use for the foreseeable future.

Owing to physical problems of some members, the Choir continues to gather in the Vestry and process into the Choir stalls from the Sacristy, prior to the priests processing to the altar.

We welcomed Hazel Hazlett back to the choir during the year after Stephen's jobs took him to Rotterdam and Scotland. Huge thank you to our loyal choir members who have sung so well during the year.

The Choir enhances the following services with music:-

9.45am Sung Eucharist

supporting the singing of hymns with an occasional descant;

sung Eucharist settings composed by Dom Gregory Murray - People's Mass (Before Lent, in Lent , before Advent and in Advent) and David Thorne - Mass of St Thomas (Easter to 4th before Advent and Christmas to Sundays before Lent). This mass has not been reintroduced since Covid but we hope it can be sung again in the near future.

a Gospel acclamation with alleluias sung by all and a sung Gospel refrain during Lent and Advent

after trying out various Responsorial and Metrical psalms I decided that the choir should sing the set Psalm

from Parish Psalter with occasional different chants and revision of wording when necessary;

an Anthem is sung during Communion.

4.30pm Choral Evensong on the 3rd Sunday of the month.

The choir support the singing of Hymns and Ferial Responses;

the Magnificat & Nunc Dimittis sung to chant sets A,B,C & D;

the set Psalm for the evening to a chant, an Introit and an Anthem.

The Choir also sang at special services: Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Coronation Evensong, Mayor's Carol Service and the Minster Carol Service:

Our Choir, although small in number, are big in heart and voice!

David Cox (organist and choirmaster)

BELL RINGING

The bellringers have not met regularly since the start of Covid.

The bells have been rung at the following times:-

Saturday 14th January 2023 12-1pm.

1296 Little Bob Royal

Rung as part of the D&N 10 and 12 bell Quarter Peal Weekend.

(D&N—Durham and Newcastle Diocesan Association of Church Bellringers.)

Monday 8th May 2023 9.15am

Coronation Ringing in Sunderland Towers for the Crowning of King Charles III.

Organised by Christine - St Andrew's Tower Captain.

Tuesday 19th September 2023 10am

Guildford Ringing Tour visitors. Open ringing.

(No repairs have been needed this year. Before each ringing Gordon and myself ascend the belfry to do a visual check on the bells and ropes.)

David Cox

EVENTS

2023 events began with a service led by the Bishop of Durham, the Right Reverend Paul Butler, to celebrate the 25th anniversary of our church becoming Sunderland Minster. Also in January, we held the annual Holocaust Memorial Service. Later in the year there was a “Remembering Srebrenica” event and the annual Amnesty International Vigil.

We have developed a very good relationship with the Bishopwearmouth Townscape Heritage Scheme and have hosted a variety of their events, namely:

- o Homeowner Care of Old Houses Workshop,
- o Durham Wildlife Trust children’s event in the Minster grounds,
- o Fun Day in Minster Park and the Minster,
- o Heritage Open Days including Minster Tours and Afternoon Tea,
- o Heritage Christmas Crafts,
- o Storytelling, Christmas Crafts and Hot Chocolate for Hudson Road schoolchildren,
- o Cultural Creatives Township Heritage exhibition of their screen-printing project, and celebratory event.

There have been art exhibitions by Sunderland, Houghton, and Hetton Art Clubs, an Open Table exhibition by artist Elizabeth Grey-King exploring equality and inclusivity of God’s love, and a display of painted glass jars to commemorate the 1883 Victoria Hall disaster.

In December the Annual Open Arms Awards event to honour voluntary sector workers was held at the Minster. Also, the Blue Light Carol Service for the emergency services workers led by the Bishop of Jarrow, the Right Reverend Sarah Clark, and which featured the Blue Light Choir.

In November and December, the first of a series of Candlelight Concerts were held at the Minster. Quartets of musicians play their interpretation of a wide range of music – anything from Hans Zimmer to Pink Floyd – in the beautiful setting of the Minster completely lit by candlelight.

Other events have included the Boundaries Music Festival, UK Liberation Theology Gathering, the Big Lunch, Age UK Carol Service and The Mayor’s Carol Service.

It was decided last summer that Gillian Walker and I would be events coordinators, so

Please speak to us if you have any events queries.

Elaine Lawson.

FRIENDSHIP GROUP

The Group continued to meet on the first Tuesday of each month, as well as a few extra sessions. During the colder months we arranged to meet together at the Glass Centre and the Barnes Hotel. In May we organised a Coronation Tea at the Minster. After a number of coffee mornings in church we enjoyed a summer evening at Bellini’s restaurant, before our summer break.

Mike Kelly entertained us at our September meeting, with a further talk on the history of glass in Sunderland. At our October get together we decided to meet regularly for craft sessions on Tuesday mornings leading up to Christmas. Our December meeting was as usual, a Christmas meal together. On this occasion we met at the Rosedene.

We are always delighted to welcome new members.

Gillian Walker

MOTHERS' UNION

The Sunderland Minster branch of the Mothers' Union may be small in number but the members are very committed to supporting families since Mary Sumner founded the M.U. in 1876. We always begin our meetings with a bible reading and prayers. Our members are always willing to help at the fundraising events.

In February we celebrated our 25th birthday with a special birthday cake. (Our name changed when the church became a minster in 1998).

The topics we have discussed at our monthly meetings have included: grandmothers and how their role has changed over the years, our local project which provides emergency toilet bags to the children's ward at Sunderland General Hospital (we did provide enough toiletries for 50 bags) and a reading from Luke ch14 v 15-24, an invitation to a banquet, which led to a lively discussion of the various excuses people make not to attend church services and meetings.

King Charles III Coronation Tea and our Summer Tea were held in the flat of one of our members, where we enjoyed lots of cake.

We attended the annual Lady Day Service (it was our turn to be hosts), Wearmouth World Day of Prayer service, Holy Trinity Southwick 100th Birthday tea and a Christmas Carol Service.

Ann Craig (Branch Leader)

MINSTER FAIRS

We held two fairs in 2023, the summer fair raised £852 and the autumn fair £1553.30 making a total of £2405.30.

Ann Craig

OPEN TABLE AND INCLUSIVE CHURCH

Open Table celebrated its second anniversary this year. Along with the celebrations we considered the possibilities of what might be next in terms of growing and consolidating the Open Table community. We look forward to further discussion & exciting times. Sunderland Minster again had a stall at Pride in June 2023 expressing God's inclusive love for all of God's children. Our presence was much appreciated as were the knitted rainbow sheep, sweets, stickers, & the opportunity to leave prayer requests. We hope to be there again this year.

Jacqui Tyson

FODI (Friends of the Drop In)

FODI provide practical support to refugees and asylum seekers, many donated items such as clothing, household items, toys, as well as support with housing advice, vouchers for activities such as swimming, bus fares etc. Attendees are also offered an assortment of fresh, dried and canned food. Sunderland Minster hosts a fortnightly session and provides a welcoming environment for people to meet up with others in similar situations and enjoy a cuppa and a chat. FODI pay a nominal charge for room hire and refreshments. The volunteer who serves the refreshments has built a good rapport with many of the attendees, overcoming language and cultural barriers, and has become "coffee mama" or "coffee lady" to many, especially the younger people who are missing their own families. This is proof that this partnership encompasses our mission statement of "Open to God, open to all".

Heather Crawford

CRAFT FAIRS

The monthly craft fairs have continued to provide much needed regular income for the Minster, from the stall holder fees (which were increased this year), visitor door charge and the café. Timings have changed slightly recently, the fair now finishes an hour earlier at 2pm, reflecting the pattern of customer attendance and stall holder needs. Thank you to all the hardworking volunteers without which the fairs could not take place.

Heather Crawford

FEAST

FEAST numbers have been steadily increasing over the last year, (30-45 weekly, 8-12 children) partially due to a steady increase in numbers of Iranian Christians and Nigerian Students living in Sunderland. We are preparing for a sudden change in these circumstances with the announcement that Sunderland's only hotel for Asylum Seekers is to close at the end of June, and those housed there currently will be dispersed throughout the Northern region. Over the last year we have also been blessed with a rise in African students mostly from Nigeria. Again, these numbers are due to drop due to changes in government policy, making it harder for students to come with their families. At Feast, we simply welcome all and try to provide a taste of the kingdom whilst people are with us. Izzy has continued to provide great support with the crafts, and Ray on placement has offered steady support to Chris and Jacqui over the year. We are delighted to welcome Clare to the clergy team, and she has already led FEAST in an exciting and joyful way. Looking forward to the year ahead!

Revd. Chris Howson

SANCTUARY

This year we have provided many letters of support for our Iranian Christians, for courts, for housing and other needs. We have provided 2 12-week courses for those seeking baptism from Iran, which are carefully constructed and very spirit filled, huge thanks to Melika for providing excellent translation. We have offered English Conversation classes for free every Friday in the Yurt, and these have been well used by Ukrainian and other refugees. FODI has continued to use the Minster on a fortnightly basis, and we are grateful to Heather for supporting this work. We are looking into reconvening Bible studies online with Farsi interpreters in the coming future months. There is a new category of 'Sanctuary Churches' offered by the City of Sanctuary movement, and we may well apply for this status in the coming year.

Revd Chris Howson

Sunderland Minster

Financial Statements for the Year ended 31st December 2023

Statement of Assets and Liabilities

	£		£
Brought forward 01.01.2023	22,914.64	Resources used (2)	60,585.42
Incoming resources (1)	<u>70,827.47</u>	Balance carried forward 31.12.2023 (3)	<u>33,156.69</u>
Total	<u>93,742.11</u>	Total	<u>93,742.11</u>

Notes 1 See Analysis of Income and Expenditure

2 See Analysis of Income and Expenditure

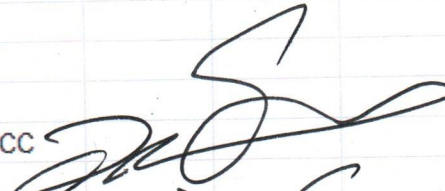
3 Represented by	Current Account	Note 4	27,512.54
	Petty Cash		14.71
	Petty Cash Flower Fund		471.06
	Barclays Deposit Account		45.27
	Co-operative Deposit Account		5,000.00
	CBF Deposit Account		<u>113.11</u>
			<u>33,156.69</u>

4 Bank current account reconciliation at 31.12.2023

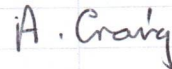
Balance at Barclays Bank	9,553.86
Balance at Co-operative Bank	8,787.37
Plus: Income due but not received	15,446.65
Less: Payments not cleared	6,275.34
	<u>27,512.54</u>
Balance at 31.12.2023	<u>27,512.54</u>

Approved by the Parochial Church Council and signed on its behalf by:

Chairman of PCC


 Canon David Tolhurst

Churchwarden



Sunderland Minster

Financial Statements for the Year ended 31st December 2023

Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2023

		2023	2022
		£	£
Current Assets	Current Account Barclays	9,553.86	4,967
	Current Account Co-operative	8,787.37	0
	Petty Cash	14.71	90
	Petty Cash Flower Fund	471.06	467
	Barclays Deposit Account	45.27	17,281
	Co-operative Deposit Account	5,000.00	0
	CCLA CBF Deposit Account	113.11	110
	Year end amounts due to us	15,446.65	0
TOTAL ASSETS		39,432.03	22,915
LIABILITIES	Accounts payable	6,275.34	0
NET ASSETS	(Total Assets – Liabilities)	33,156.69	22,915
BALANCE	Starting Balance	22,914.64	23,670
	Income less Expenditure	10,242.05	-755
	Closing balance	33,156.69	22,915

Movement in Funds during 2023

Fund	01/01/2023	Income	Expenditure	31/12/2023
	£	£	£	£
Flower Fund	467.19	552.60	548.73	471.06
Interfaith forum	1,889.00		498.55	1,390.45
Asylum Seeker Support	406.25			406.25
Total Restricted and Endowment	2,762.44	552.60	1,047.28	2,267.76
Unrestricted Funds	20,152.20	70,274.87	59,538.14	30,888.93
TOTAL ALL FUNDS	22,914.64	70,827.47	60,585.42	33,156.69

Movement in Funds during 2022 - Prior Year for Comparison

Fund	01/01/2022	Income	Expenditure	31/12/2022
	£	£	£	£
Flower Fund*	1,021.15	200.00	753.96	467.19
Interfaith forum	1,889.00			1,889.00
Summer Special Funding		475.00	475.00	0
Asylum Seeker Support**	750.00		343.75	406.25
Organ repair		4,000.00	4,000.00	0
TOTAL RESTRICTED AND ENDOWMENT	3,660.15	4,675.00	5,572.71	2,762.44
Unrestricted Funds*	20,009.48	47,294.54	47,151.82	20,152.20
TOTAL ALL FUNDS	23,669.63	51,969.54	52,724.53	22,914.64

*01/01/2022 restated **01/01/2022 restated (amount not shown as restricted in 2021 accounts)

Sunderland Minster

Analysis of Income and Expenditure for the Period 1st January to 31st December 2023

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL 2023 £	TOTAL 2022 £
INCOME and ENDOWMENTS				
Donations and legacies	43,023.01		43,023.01	30,472
Income from Charitable Activities	26,683.91		26,683.91	16,791
Other trading activities		552.60	552.60	
Income from Investments	190.15		190.15	6
Other income	377.80		377.80	4,701
Total Income and Endowments	70,274.87	552.60	70,827.47	51,970
EXPENDITURE				
Costs of generating funds	694.90		694.90	145
Expenditure on charitable activities	5,221.96		5,221.96	7,721
Other expenditure	53,621.28	1,047.28	54,668.56	44,858
Total Expenditure	59,538.14	1,047.28	60,585.42	52,725
INCOME less EXPENDITURE	10,736.73	-494.68	10,242.05	-755
BALANCE b/f AT 1st JANUARY 2023	20,152.20	2,762.44	22,914.64	
BALANCE c/f AT 31st DECEMBER 2023	30,888.93	2,267.76	33,156.69	

The notes on subsequent pages form part of the accounts

Sunderland Minster

Analysis of Income and Endowments

	Unrestricted Fund £	Restricted Fund £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Donations and Legacies				
Planned Giving:	15,495.03		15,495.03	15,357
Non-recurring donations	4,908.53		4,908.53	9,085
Collections at Services	3,643.23		3,643.23	4,564)
Card reader and donations boxes	2,815.96		2,815.96)
Income Tax recovered	16,160.26		16,160.26	1,467
Legacies received	0		0	0
Total	43,023.01		43,023.01	30,472
Income from Charitable Activities				
Fund raising	5,266.97		5,266.97	7,269
Craft Fairs	4,141.24		4,141.24	
Heating charges	1,800.20		1,800.20	
Room Hire	15,001.50		15,001.50	8,210
Statutory Fees:	474.00		474.00	1,312
Total	26,683.91		26,683.91	16,791
Income from Investments				
Interest and bank payments	190.15		190.15	32
Total	190.15		190.15	32
Other Income				
Grants received (one-off)	377.80		377.80	4,475
Flower Fund	0	552.60	552.60	200
Total	377.80	552.60	930.40	4,675
TOTAL INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS	70,274.87	552.60	70,827.47	51,970

Sunderland Minster

Financial Statements for the Year ended 31st December 2023

Analysis of Expenditure

	Unrestricted Fund £	Restricted Fund £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Costs of Generating Funds				
Fund raising	694.90		694.90	145
	<u>694.90</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>694.90</u>	<u>145</u>
Expenditure on Charitable Activities				
Mission Giving to charity	0		0	120
Parish Share	200.00		200.00	5,500
Clergy and Staffing Costs	3,607.73		3,607.73	270
Services: expenses	1,199.44		1,199.44	537
Hospitality	214.79		214.79	1,294
	<u>5,221.96</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>5,221.96</u>	<u>7,721</u>
Other Expenditure				
Utility Costs	33,002.97		33,002.97	13,761
Church Insurance	11,776.96		11,776.96	10,805
Maintenance / repairs	4,490.77		4,490.77	13,856
Organ	1,030.48		1,030.48	
Church cleaning	91.95		91.95	464
Printing and office costs	1,399.96		1,399.96	2,753
Telephone /computing	1,388.72		1,388.72	1,812
Governance	0		0	117
Banking costs	334.67		334.67	357
Flower Fund	0	548.73	548.73	754
Other costs	104.80	498.55	603.35	178
	<u>53,621.28</u>	<u>1,047.28</u>	<u>54,668.56</u>	<u>44,858</u>
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	59,538.14	1,047.28	60,585.42	52,725

Sunderland Minster Parochial Church Council - Registered Charity 1203743

Sunderland Minster Parochial Church Council (the "Minster")

Sunderland Minster Parochial Church Council (the "Minster")

Registered Charity 1203743

Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2023

Independent Examiner's Report

I report to the members on my examination of the accounts of the Minster for the year ended 31 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; or
3. the accounts do 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.

Signed:



Name: Lewis Ayers

Address: 2 The Green, Long Newton, Stockton on Tees, TS21 1DL

Date: 20 March 2024

Sunderland Minster - Notes on the Financial Statements 2023

1. Basis of Financial Statements. These have been prepared under The Charities Act 2011 and in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 governing the individual accounts of PCCs, together with applicable accounting standards and the Statement of Recommended Practice for charities (SORP) FRS102.

The Financial Statements have been prepared using the accruals and prepayment method (2022: Receipts and Payments). The change in method is to ensure that the accounts give a clear and meaningful view of the state of finances, as there were significant 2023 transactions not completed until 2024.

The accounts were subject to an independent examination. The Independent Examiner's Report is attached to the Financial Statements.

2. Bankers. In common with many other charities, the PCC encountered repeated problems with Barclays Bank during 2023. The PCC has therefore opened a current and deposit account with the Co-operative Bank. The Barclays current and deposit accounts will be closed in 2024.
3. Petty Cash. The Flower Fund is held as two amounts of petty cash, with its income and expenditure transacted through the petty cash. Petty cash is also held to be used as a float at events.
4. Policy for Reserves. The PCC aims to hold sufficient funds to meet short term cash flow.
5. Pay, Employees and Pensions. The PCC employs a part-time caretaker (4 hours per week). He is paid the statutory minimum wage. The caretaker did not qualify for Automatic Enrolment pension contributions.
6. PCC remuneration. PCC members receive no remuneration.
7. Payments to Connected Persons. None.
8. Contracts with Central and Local Government. The PCC has no contracts with Central or Local Government other than for routine services (alarm monitoring, waste collection, pest control)
9. Grants from Central and Local Government. £377.80 was claimed from the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme. This Scheme makes grants equal to the amount of VAT paid on certain specific works relating to the maintenance of the Minster.
10. Other Grants received. None.
11. Legacies. None.
12. Parish Share. The Parish Share paid to the Diocese in 2022 was £200.00. A further payment of £5,000.00 was paid but returned to the PCC in early 2023 to provide cash for everyday expenditure commitments.
13. Major Expenditure 2023. None.
14. 2022 Invoices. The income for 2023 includes £840.00 due, but not previously invoiced, in respect of 2022 (Mayor's Carol Service refreshments: £240, Sunderland University Carol Service: £600.00).
15. Utility Costs: Expenditure of £33,002.97 during the year was in respect of Gas (£17,353.65), Electricity (£14,437.81), Water (£122.01) and Waste Disposal (£1,089.50). Electricity is purchased via the Church of England's Parish Buying Energy Basket. Gas is on a two year contract directly with the supplier, Total Energies, expiring on 31st October 2024.
16. Photocopier. The PCC leases a printer /photocopier from Siemens.
17. Governance Fees. No costs have been incurred in the Independent Examination of the Accounts. The amounts shown in the accounts are in respect of the cost of obtaining DBS safeguarding checks.

18. Gift Aid. Gift Aid is in respect of donations received in both 2022 and 2023. Small Gift Aid is in respect of donations since 6th April 2022. Gift Aid is also included in the Accounts in respect of indirect giving by direct debit via the Parish Giving Scheme. A further amount of approximately £2,400 under the Small Gift Aid Donations Scheme in respect of the period 6th April 2020 to 5th April 2022 was unclaimable, as claims had not been submitted by the cut-off dates for relevant tax years (5th April 2022 and 5th April 2023). In future Gift Aid and Small Gift Aid will be accounted for in the year in which the eligible donations were made.

19. Amounts due and Owing at 31st December 2023.

Amounts due to PCC but not received (all subsequently received)	
	£
Bishopwearmouth Choral Society	2,405.00
Sunderland University	1,400.00
Sunderland City Council	595.00
Friends of the Drop-in (FODI)	350.00
HMRC Gift Aid and Small Gift Aid	7,485.71
Fever Concerts	1,660.00
Boundaries Concert	830.00
Others	720.94
Total	15,446.65

Amounts due by PCC but not paid (all subsequently paid)	
	£
Total Energies (failure by Total to collect Direct Debits)	5,315.02
Others	960.32
Total	6,275.34

20. Anticipated Future Expenditure.

- The Quinquennial Inspection of the Minster by the Architect is overdue.
- There are issues with the gas central heating boilers, which will require significant expenditure.

No provision has been made for these or any other non-routine expenditure.

21. Agency Monies. The PCC acts as collecting agents for certain connected parties and also where monies are raised for a specific charity at a service or event. These transactions are not included in the financial statements. The amounts are set out in the table below:

Agency	Amount received £	Expenses deducted £	Amount paid out £
Diocesan Fees for weddings and funerals	1,319.00		1,319.00
Organist fees for playing at funerals	140.00		140.00
Sunderland Mayor's Charity	166.29		166.29
Children's Society	63.46		63.46
Verger fees for verging at funerals	80.00		80.00

22. Accounting records. Accounting records are maintained on Data Developments' MyFundAccounting software.

23. Review of Financial Controls. The PCC updated its financial controls during 2023.

Sunderland Minster Parochial Church Council (the "Minster")

Registered Charity 1203743

Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2023

Independent Examiner's Report

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Independent examiner's statement

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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: Lewis Ayers

Address: 2 The Green, Long Newton, Stockton on Tees, TS21 1DL

Date: 20 March 2024