

# St. Peter's Church Forsbrook Trustees' Annual Report 2024



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## **1. St Peter's PCC:** *The Proceedings of the PCC and activities of the parish*

**Aims and Purposes:** St Peter's Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of cooperating with the Rector, in promoting in the parish the whole mission of the church and specifically fulfilling the PCC's Mission Statement – '*Knowing Jesus & Making Jesus Known*'. This is undertaken in various ways and in co-operation with St Margaret's Draycott, who share the same Ministry Leadership Team (as an independent legal parish, St Margaret's is not covered by this report). The PCC is specifically responsible for the maintenance of the parish church of St Peter's.

**Administrative Details:** St Peter's Parish Church is in the ecclesiastical parish of Forsbrook, covering the communities of Forsbrook and Blythe Bridge.

**Location:** Cheadle Road, Blythe Bridge, Stoke on Trent, Staffordshire ST11 9PW

**Postal Address is c/o:** The Revd. Jonathan Roberts, The Rectory, 7 Cheadle Road, Blythe Bridge, Staffs ST11 9PW

**Tel:** 01782 437600

**Email:** admin@stpetersforsbrook.org

**Website:** www.stpetersforsbrook.org

**Facebook:** St Peter's Church Forsbrook

**Bank:** Santander, Bride Road, Bootle L30 4EB

**Ministry Leadership Team:** (The MLT also includes Church Wardens from St Margaret's Church)

**Rector:** Revd Jonathan Roberts (Chair of PCC; Rural Dean of Cheadle; on Diocesan Synod)

**Church Wardens:** Alison Fuller & Dawn Williams

**Readers:** Clive Lilley & Philip Smith

**Children's and Youth Ministry Leader:** Sophie Roberts

**Assistants to the Churchwardens:** Howard Salt, Brian Sammons, Margaret Dale, Glennis Grainger\*

**Verger:** Howard Salt

**Assistant Vergers** (funerals): Neil Archibald & Walter Bridge

**PCC Secretary:** Anita Archibald (until Sept 2024) and Sylvia Bainbridge (elected Nov 2024)

**PCC Treasurer:** David Bray (until June 2024) and Brenda Ford (elected June 2024 and took over Autumn 2024)

**Gift Aid coordinator:** David Bray

**PCC Membership: Elected members (each serves a 3-year term) St Peter's can have 12 elected members.**

**2022 – 2025:** Clive Lilley, Thomas Jamieson, Dawn Williams

**2023 – 2026:** Joan Pritchard, Andy Berry, David Bray, Geoff Price

**2024 – 2027:** Brian Sammons, Graham Stokes Andrea Webster, Brenda Ford; Sylvia Bainbridge was elected (and appointed Secretary) by the PCC in November 2024 (casual vacancy)

**Elected Members of the Deanery Synod (2023-2026) (Ex-officio on the PCC):** Neil Archibald (also on Diocesan Synod), Laura Hulse (appointed Lay Chair 17<sup>th</sup> July 2024), Mick Smith

*Members of the PCC are elected in accordance with Canon Law at the APCM.*

*\*March 2025: The PCC gratefully acknowledge Glennis' contributions to the life of St. Peters*

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**PCC Constitution:** The Parochial Church Council is a corporate body established by the Church of England and the PCC operates under the Parochial Church Council Measure. The PCC is excepted by order from registering with the Charity Commission.

**Objectives and Activities:** The PCC has spiritual and practical oversight of our worship, the care of the church building and mission. The PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship in our parish church and to belong to the community of St Peter's. This is undertaken according to the doctrines and structures of the Church of England. The PCC complies with the duty to show due regard to the House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults (Section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016).

**2. Proceedings of the PCC:** Significant discussion & decision areas during 2024 include (no particular order):

- ✚ Discussion around LLF (Living in Love and Faith) and PLF (Prayers of Love and Faith)
- ✚ Enrich application for 'Spread the Word' project supplying bibles to local schools and our groups serving children and young people
- ✚ Missionary Giving to Grace Roberts – internship at Hope Church Lancaster
- ✚ Renewal of Reader PTO for Clive Lilley and Phil Smith
- ✚ Beginning of our music group for Sunday morning worship
- ✚ Consideration of the new Diocesan Strategy
- ✚ Lots of time spent on the lighting and AV projects!
- ✚ Appointment of a new Rector's Administrator
- ✚ Renewal of Safeguarding & Positive Behaviour Policies
- ✚ Dementia Friendly Church Award
- ✚ Contactless donation machine
- ✚ Presentation of the 2024 TAR

### **3. St Peter's Parochial Church Council Financial Report and Statements**

**The report shows the financial statements for St Peter's Forsbrook for the period Jan 2024 to 31 December 2024.**

#### **Update from the Treasurer**

The income and expenditure is detailed in Appendix 3.

The unrestricted income has increased from £55,388 to £62,428.

The unrestricted expenditure has increased from £58,774 to £66,117, the biggest increase being our contribution to the common fund £35,068 (2023 £30,410), a small increase in utility costs and the purchase of a Donation Station, which was mostly funded by a generous donation.

The monies received in 2024 were from a variety of sources including tithes and offerings from the church family at St Peter's, various grants for help with heating and warm spaces and youth ministry, and our Autumn fayre which raised over £1,900.

At the start of 2024 we were awarded the second year of the grant from the Henry Smith Charity for the Youth and Children's Ministry Leader role which covers the salary and on costs of supporting this role. This work continues to enable many children and young people in their faith development and continues to strengthen our partnerships within the community. The other allocated funding for the Youth and Children's ministry has been used to offer more opportunities to explore their faith.

The funding for the post of Rector's administrator has been funded through donations from St Peter's and St Margarets.

Some projects including replacing the lights and a new screen system for live streaming which is also available in the welcome room have been made possible with the legacy from Roy Harvey.

As the income for St Peter's has exceeded £100,000, we will need to register as a charity with the Charity Commission.

Thank you to those who give through the Gift Aid scheme, from which the church can claim back an additional 25% tax rebate on members' donations. During the accounting period the tax rebate received was over £8,000. If you are a regular taxpayer and have not signed up for the Gift Aid scheme, please give this your prayerful consideration. A gift aid declaration form is available in the welcome room. I would like to thank Dave Bray for his help during the time of transition, also, all the volunteers who count and record the offerings after each service.

Finally, a thank you to everyone who contributes to the church in any way, including your gifts of time, prayer, caring and encouragement as well as your financial gifts.

Every blessing,

**Brenda Ford, Treasurer**

## Auditors Report information:

### AUDITORS REPORT

#### Independent Examiner's Report to the PCC of St Peter's Church, Forsbrook

This report on the financial statements of the PCC for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024, which are set out on pages 1 and 2, is in respect of an examination carried out in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulation 2016 (the "Regulations") and s.43 of the Charities Act 1993 (the "Act").

#### Respective Responsibilities of the PCC and the Examiner

As members of the PCC you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements; you consider that the audit requirements of the Regulations and section 43(2) of the Act do not apply. It is my responsibility to issue this report on those financial statement in accordance with the terms of the Regulations.

#### Basis of this Report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 43(7)(b) of the Act and to be found in the Church guidance, 2006 edition. That examinations includes a review of the accounting records kept by the PCC and a comparison of the accounts with those records. It also includes considering any unusual items or disclosures in the financial statements and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently, I do not expression an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

#### Independent Examiner's Statement

In accordance with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- (1) Which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements to keep accounting records in accordance with the accounting records and comply with the requirements of the Act and the Regulations have not been met.

OR

- (2) To Which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable proper understanding of the accounts to be reached

Signed: 

Date: 17 April 2025

Name: Karen Hays F.C.C.A

Address: The Accounts with  
8 The Westbury Centre  
Westbury Park  
Newcastle Under Lyme  
ST5 4LY

## Appendix 1

St Peters Forsbrook PCC  
Statement of Financial Activities  
For the period from 01 January 2024 to 31 December 2024

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted	Total Funds	Prior year total funds
<b>Receipts</b>				
Planned giving	34,396	12,944	47,340	40,004
Collections and other giving	7,530	0	7,530	7,446
Other voluntary	0	0	0	0
Gift Aid recovered	6,706	2,031	8,737	17,046
Other receipts	0	27,425	27,425	23,886
Activities for generating funds	6,943	0	6,943	4,003
Investment Income	0	733	733	462
Receipts from church activities	6,853	0	6,853	6,526
<b>Total income</b>	<b>62,428</b>	<b>43,133</b>	<b>105,561</b>	<b>99,373</b>
<b>Payments</b>				
Cost of generating funds	4,727	0	4,727	2,537
Missionary and Charitable giving	4,820	11,880	16,700	9,280
Common Fund	35,068	0	35,068	30,410
Clergy and Staffing Costs	4,704	23,260	27,964	30,966
Church running Expenses	13,788	0	13,788	17,722
Church Repairs and Maintenance	0	44,060	44,060	12,665
Governance Costs	1,216	0	1,216	1,117
Donation Station	1,794	0	1,794	-
	<b>66,117</b>	<b>79,200</b>	<b>145,317</b>	<b>104,697</b>
<b>Net income / (expenditure resources before transfer)</b>	<b>(3,689)</b>	<b>(36,067)</b>	<b>(39,756)</b>	<b>(5,324)</b>
<b>Transfers</b>				
Gross transfers between funds - In			-	1039
Gross transfers between funds - Out				
<b>Other recognised gains/losses</b>				
Gain/losses on investment assets				
Gains on revaluation, Fixed assets charity's own use				
<b>Net Movement in funds</b>			-	-
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>				
Total Funds Brought Forward	8,512	211,327	219,839	227,533
Total Funds Carried Forward	4,823	175,260	180,083	219,839

**Appendix 2****St Peters Forsbrook****2024 Balance Sheet (Summary)**

	As at 31/12/2024	As at 31/12/2023
<b><u>Current assets</u></b>		
Cash at Bank and in hand	187,263	219,839
<b>Total net Current Assets</b>	<b>187,263</b>	<b>219,839</b>
<b><u>Less: Current liabilities</u></b>		
Creditors: Amounts falling due in one year	7,180	0
<b>Net current assets less current liabilities</b>	<b>180,083</b>	<b>219,839</b>
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>	<b>180,083</b>	<b>219,839</b>
<b>Less: Long term Liabilities</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total net assets less liabilities</b>	<b>180,083</b>	<b>219,839</b>
<b>Represented by:</b>		
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>	<b>4,823</b>	<b>8,512</b>
<b>Designated funds:</b>		
- Poverty Relief	1,023	663
- Friendship group/messy	260	260
- Support Wages	4,507	2,250
- Tiddlers group	89	89
- Service Book Fund	246	246
-Parish Magazine	0	0
<b>Designated Sub-Total</b>	<b>6,125</b>	<b>3,508</b>
<b>Restricted Funds:</b>		
-Henry Smith Grant	0	0
-Youth Account	24,229	19,368
- Choir Robes	1,103	1,061
-general contingency	698	672
- Organ Fund	0	538
- Illuminated Cross Appeal	0	0
- Roy Harvey Fund	136,946	175,546
-Building Fund	6,159	10,634
<b>Restricted Sub-Total</b>	<b>169,135</b>	<b>207,819</b>
<b>Restricted plus Designated Sub-Total</b>	<b>175,260</b>	<b>211,327</b>
<b>Funds of the church</b>	<b>180,083</b>	<b>219,839</b>



**Analysis of Income and expenditure**  
**Selected period: 01 January 2024 to 31 December 2024**

	Total				
	General	Designated	Restricted	This year	Last year
<b>Income and endowments from:</b>					
<b>Donations and legacies</b>					
0101 - Gift Aid Collections	32344	3074	8440	43858	37142
0110 - Non Gift Aid Collections Direct					
Debit/Standing Order	1452	460	950	2862	2862
0301 - Loose Plate Collections	7529	0	0	7529	7079
0550 - Donations over £20	600	0	0	600	429
0701 - Legacies	0	0	0	0	300
Donations and legacies Totals	41925	3534	9390	54849	47812
<b>Income from charitable activities</b>					
1111 - Messy Church Income	0	0	0	0	610
1113 - Youth Activities - Residential and					
Others	0	0	2,300	2300	535
1556 - Tiddlers Group	0	0	0	0	0
1557 - Poverty Relief	0	360	0	360	360
Income from charitable activities Totals	0	360	2,300	2,660	1,505
<b>Investments</b>					
1020 - Bank and Building Society Interest	0	0	733	733	362
1030 - Rent - Lands and Buildings	0	0	0	0	100
Investments Totals	0	0	733	733	462
<b>Other Income</b>					
0601 - Gift Aid Recovered	6,706	283	1,768	8,757	17,046
0801 - Henry Smith Charity - Youth Worker					
salary	0	0	21,700	21,700	21,000
08A1 - Non-Recurring one-off grants	0	0	3,065	3,065	2,524
0901 - Other Funds Generated	6,943	0	0	6,943	4,003
1101 - Fees Weddings and Funerals	6,293	0	0	6,293	5,021
1234 - Worship Resources	560	0	0	560	0
Other Income Totals	20,503	283	26,533	47,319	49,594
Income and endowments Grand totals	62,428	4,177	38,956	105,561	99,373
<b>Expenditure on:</b>					
<b>Raising funds</b>					
1730 - Costs of Fetes and other Events	461	0	0	461	0
2501 - Magazine Expenses	0	0	0	0	0
Raising funds Totals	461	0	0	461	0
<b>Expenditure on charitable activities</b>					
1112 - Messy Church Resources	0	0	0	0	0
1115 - Youth Activities	0	0	11880	11880	6433
1801 - Giving to Missionary Societies	1496	0	0	1496	430
2340 - Worship Resources Literature	659	0	0	659	1586
2556 - Tiddlers Resources	124	0	0	124	164
2557 - Poverty Relief	0	0	0	0	151
Expenditure on charitable activities Totals	2280	0	11880	14160	8764
<b>Other expenditure</b>					
1114 - Discipleship Hosting	0	0	0	0	90
1910 - Ministry Common Fund etc..	35,068	0	0	35,068	30,410
2050 - Youth Worker	0	0	21,700	21,700	21,000
2051 - Salaries - Other	5,244	1,560	0	6,804	9,966
2101 - Clergy Expenses	950	0	0	950	847
2130 - Vicarage expenses	178	0	0	178	0
2201 - Parish Training and Mission	133	0	0	133	426
2301 - Church Running - Insurance	2,670	0	0	2,670	2,696
2310 - Church Office Expenses Paper, Post,					
Printer	678	0	0	678	1,301
2320 - Organ/Piano Tuning	0	0	802	802	1,827
2340 - Worship Resources Literature	707	0	0	707	0
2330 - Church Maintenance	0	0	43,258	43,258	10,838
2341 - Worship Resources - Communion	199	0	0	199	356
2342 - Worship Resources - Licences	560	0	0	560	1,117
2370 - IT Expenses	740	0	0	740	2,356
2401 - Church Running - Electricity	1,783	0	0	1,783	1,984
2410 - Church Running - Gas	8,406	0	0	8,406	8,182
2720 - Donation Station	1,794	0	0	1,794	0
2721 - Fees for Weddings and Funerals	4,266	0	0	4,266	2,537
Other expenditure Totals	63,377	1,560	65,760	130,696	95,933
Expenditure Grand totals	66,117	1,560	77,640	145,317	104,697

St Peters Forsbrook PCC  
Statement of Assets and Liabilities at 31st Dec 2024

Cash at bank and in hand				
001D: CCLA 620161001D - Asset	Type	Balance	Previous Balance	
General Savings	Restricted	699	672	
002D: CCLA 620161002D - Asset				
Choir Robes	Restricted	1103	1,061	
003D: CCLA 620161003D - Asset				
Building Fund	Restricted	6159	10,634	
004D: CCLA 620161004D - Asset				
General Savings	Restricted	0	1,039	
006D: CCLA 620161006D - Asset				
Youth Worker	Restricted	4657	4,478	
007D: CCLA 620161007D - Asset				
Organ Fund	Restricted	0	538	
61468702: Bank account - Asset				
General Fund	General	4,823	7,473	
Designated Funds	Designated	6,125	3,508	
Restricted Funds	Restricted	156,517	190,436	
Cash at bank and in hand			180,083	219,839



#### 4. Proceedings of the Parish, including:

##### (a) Rector's Report

This year we have continued to emphasize that our **mission** is centered on ***Knowing Jesus and Making Jesus known***. We want to grow as disciples of Jesus and make the most of the opportunities we have in sharing him with others.

We have also continued to keep in step with our **vision** of **Desiring God's Renewal** (Isaiah 43:19). In particular, we are praying that God will use us to **renew our building for mission**, through a programme of improvements to our church building that will make it more fit for purpose. And, that he will **renew his body (us!) for ministry**, especially as we focus on:

- ✝ Making missionary disciples of Jesus
- ✝ Releasing God's gifts in everyone
- ✝ Reliance on the Holy Spirit
- ✝ Growing Christ-like leaders

As you read the various reports in this TAR, you will see some of the ways in which God is at work in this place. Praise him for his faithfulness! I don't want to reduplicate what others have shared but highlights for me this year include:

**(i) People of all ages taking steps of faith in Jesus:** This is seen in so many ways and reflects the importance of the many events, groups and ministries with which we are involved. Tiddlers is a special place of welcome to local families including parents who were brought themselves as toddlers; grandparents who brought their children, now bringing grandchildren. We have seen some of our Tiddlers families joining us for worship on Sundays and Saturdays (Messy Church) and bringing children for baptism.

How wonderful it has been to see both a group of adults and some of our young people exploring faith through the Alpha course. And what a joy and privilege to be able to rejoice in the baptism (full immersion)/confirmation of three of our young people. It was truly special to welcome friends from the Methodist church for that joint service.

It is inspiring to see children in our x:cite group being willing to pray for the adults at the front on a Sunday morning before they leave to learn and have fun together. Adults – let's follow their example in our willingness to offer to pray for them.

Hearing stories of faith development and seeing the impact our work with children and young people in our other groups, events and schools is an utter joy. It is such a privilege to see children and young people growing in their faith and experiencing worship either in school, church or wider Christian events like Blaze and Limitless.

God is at work in people's lives, and we are called to work with him to nurture these precious signs of faith.

**(ii) Our building becoming more fit for purpose:** At the end of 2024, we saw our long-awaited lighting and AV projects getting underway. Whilst there are some continued aspects to sort out, it is wonderful to have a brighter and more flexible lighting arrangement – and also important that we are reducing our carbon footprint at the same time. The improvements to our AV system have also improved the quality of our projection and capacity to use both the main church and welcome room in more flexible and contemporary ways. The final element of a properly constructed sound desk/booth is yet to come. We are also glad to be able to stream our morning worship which means that we can connect with those who cannot attend worship 'in person' or who are exploring.

**(iii) Stronger links within our community:** The Welcome Hub is now fully embedded into our church's life and continues to provide a place of welcome and friendship to all in our community. Many members come every week, and we also see occasional friends dropping in. It's been good to see some folks attend Sunday worship through their connection with this group.

Our relationships with all 3 of our local primary schools and our High School across the road continue to flourish. Sophie and her various teams have provided regular acts of collective worship in all 3 primary schools, and we've had class visits and/or services from all our schools over the last year. The Open House course in BBHS has been a success again with encouraging outcomes and three of our church members continue to serve as foundation governors at Forsbrook Primary. It's also lovely to have such strong links with Forsbrook Primary through many of its teaching staff who belong or serve in some way at St Peter's or St Margaret's.

This year we also saw our online presence continue to grow and we reached 1000 Facebook followers! Our weekly Bulletin also continues to be an important way of communicating and celebrating what God is doing. It's great that we are able to use newer ways of communicating with people inside and outside the church.

**(iv) New members:** We love to welcome new members into our church family, and we thank God for sending us new people at various points over the year. We must make sure that we enable everyone, including our new friends, to be able to use their gifts in serving in this place. Many of our teams, for which we thank God, still need more people to step up to share in their ministry. Please don't ever think there isn't room to serve because the 'team is complete'... the reality is that we are over stretched – so please be praying and asking God to show you where you can serve; and then ask someone how you can get involved.

Within our churches, there are often people stepping down from roles after a season of service and we try to mark these in an appropriate way in each of our churches. In the last 12 months there have been a few changes in our team which serves *both* churches within our benefice. Two of our longstanding Readers have stopped serving in that formal role. After many years of fruitful ministry, Graham Stokes has made the decision to step back from being a Reader and Kate Bradshaw has begun a new chapter of her continuing Reader ministry at St Andrew's Weston Coyney where she and Paul now worship. Ruth Silcock stepped down from the Rector's Administrator role after more than 5 years of diligent service and we are grateful to Graham, Kate and Ruth for the part they have played in our church's work over the years. In 2024, we also welcomed Phil Smith to the benefice team as a Reader and Andrea Webster as Rector's Administrator.

There are countless people who I would like to thank for their active contribution to our church's life over the last year, whatever it has been, but this report would be very long indeed if I were to name them all. So 'thank you' to everyone at St Peter's who plays their part in enabling us to Know Jesus and Make Jesus Known.

*Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.*  
(Ephesians 3: 20-21)

**Jonathan Roberts, Rector**

**(b) Electoral Roll Report:** Since my last report, four new people have added their name to the Electoral Roll of St Peter's. Two members of our congregation have sadly died. The revised numbers are recorded in this table:

In 2025 a new Electoral Roll will be prepared, and everyone will need to complete a form if they would still like to be included. If you have any questions about the Electoral Roll, or this is a role you feel you would be happy to shadow me on with a view to taking it on, please speak to me!

**Laura Hulse, Electoral Roll Officer**

ERO Report	2024
<b>Non-Resident</b>	28
<b>Resident</b>	93
<b>Deceased</b>	2
<b>Moved off</b>	0
<b>Removed</b>	0
<b>Total</b>	121

### **(c) Churchwardens' Report**

This year has been one of disruption, as modernising work has been taking place in the church. The lighting has all been renewed with low power usage LED lights involving a huge amount of replacement wiring. We have a new large electronic projector and screen in church. In the Welcome room we have a smaller screen which displays information about the church and future events but is also useful for packed services like Carol Service or Remembrance mirroring the large screen. It can also be used for videos for small groups like the Alpha course.

We would like to thank people for their understanding while daytime events have had to be cancelled, and Sunday services have not been able to be streamed. It is only due to the help of a group of volunteers faithfully turning up each week to set out the chairs and later clear them away, that we have been able to use the church for worship on Sunday. We are very grateful for their help and for all the volunteers who use their skills to carry out a vast number of jobs within the church, many behind the scenes and help us to offer a large variety of activities to our local community.

We have been gifted some beautiful little embroideries by Sue Smith which are displayed to show the changing seasons throughout the church calendar.

Both of us are completing our period as churchwardens in May 2025. It has been a privilege and a rewarding job supporting Jonathan and helping the church to run smoothly. We would like to thank people for their encouragement over the years and to challenge everyone to consider what talents they have that they can use to support the church and the wider community.

**Dawn Williams and Alison Fuller, Churchwardens**

**(d) Youth and Ministry Leader Report**

*"Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this; I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Matthew 28:19-20*

What an exciting year it has been for proclaiming the gospel to the young people of Forsbrook and Blythe Bridge and seeing them respond in such a powerful way. We thank God for our incredible volunteers who have helped drive and shape this ministry using their love of Jesus, their time and their incredible creativity to create so many opportunities for our young people to grow.



On Friday evenings in Friday Club and Youth Fellowship we have strived to not only create two fun and welcoming youth groups which young people can bring their friends along to, but also for it to be a place for the young people to read God's word, reflect on how it can change their lives, and respond to him. There have been so many exciting conversations with young people who want to know his peace for themselves, who want to hear how they can hear the voice of God for themselves, and young people asking for copies of prayers and bibles for their own personal study. Big thanks to Brenda and Howard Ford, who volunteer for Good News for Everyone, who helped make this possible.



We have 33 children who have joined us in Friday Club and 42 in Youth Fellowship – that's 75 young people choosing to spend their Friday evenings making friends, playing games, doing crafts, and hearing the Good News.

This year we took 11 of the Friday Club Children on a residential with Scripture Union. The children loved hearing about the identity of Jesus, and many of our young people responded that they would like to know Jesus as their friend. It was wonderful to watch them grow in friendship with other believers as they toasted marshmallows, played silly games, and read scripture together.

Youth fellowship has enjoyed going along to BLAZE a gathering of local Christians and their friends in Stoke on Trent. The young people worship together, learn from God's word, and it was wonderful seeing Youth Fellowship leading the recent prayer stations. Some of these young people are now leading in Friday Club too.

We took 16 of the Youth away for the week to Limitless Festival which saw them praying for their leaders and other young people, worshipping with their arms flung wide, and responding to Jesus as their personal Saviour. These are mainly young people who, before they came to Youth club, had not stepped foot in a church – praise Jesus. Following on from this we welcomed 12 young people onto our Youth Alpha course, and baptised/confirmed three of them, with more wanting to be baptised this year. The young people have asked if they can continue to meet so we are looking at starting a growth group for 12-14year olds soon.



Ignite, our growth group for 14-16year olds, continued to meet every three weeks in The Rectory where we have studied the bible together as well as following the Christian Health and Wellbeing course, helping the young people to grow in their faith whilst reflecting on how they can look after their physical and emotional wellbeing, and made space to minister to one another in prayer.



Messy Church has been a blessed time of gathering with local families to grow closer to God in a fun and interactive way. With just under 400 people joining us for Light Night, we enjoyed eating hotdogs, spotting our team of volunteers in fancy dress around the village giving out sweets, creating crafts based on Jesus our Light, and dancing the night away. This night is a highlight for the whole village

and a real testimony to how God's light shines in the darkness, and the darkness cannot overcome it. It was wonderful to welcome back Farm on the Wheels to our 'Step into Bethlehem' Christmas Messy as we reflected on the birth of Jesus. This year we have seen our 'smaller' Messy Church gatherings grow not only in number, but in the depth of conversations and ministering to these families. We are excited to see where God is leading us with Messy in 2025.



X:Cite is a place of fun and growing in the Spirit for our children and our leaders on a Sunday morning. It truly is a place we are excited to meet. Due to an increase in numbers, and some of our older members joining High School, we now have two Xcite groups – Xcite big and Xcite littles running fortnightly. On the days that there is only one group it is wonderful seeing the older children using their gifts to help lead the sessions. We've seen the children grow in their prayer ministry, and their reflections on God's word weekly speak to us as leaders. We have also bought some children's bibles, bible studies and prayer reflection books for the young people to run a lending library in church encouraging the young people to delight in God's word.

Forsbrook C of E Primary School, William Amory and Springcroft Primary School continue to welcome us in fortnightly to lead assemblies. Whether watching the bible stories come to life through Open the Book or being led in interactive thoughts on God's word from our assembly team – the children absolutely love it! As a result of the children's enthusiasm to hear God's word we have bought Lion Storyteller Bibles to gift each school.

Aswell as leading a Spiritual Development Day at Forsbrook Church of England Primary School which gave children and staff an opportunity to reflect and interact in different stations helping us to grow in our spirituality, we also ran our first 'St Peter's Day'. Children were invited to St Peter's where we heard more about the faith of St Peter, and reflected on how God knows each one of us by name. Rev Jonathan and I continue to go into Forsbrook school for Time4Prayer which is a precious afternoon of praying for any children or staff who choose to pray with us. We've also enjoyed welcoming various classes from all three of our schools to look around church and hear more about Christianity.

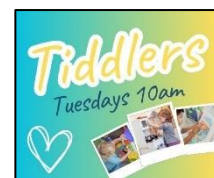
We have really valued our growing relationship with Blythe Bridge High School, and it was great to welcome Year 7's in for their annual Christmas service as they shared the meaning of Christmas. We ran Open House cookery course again this year in the High School, and it was wonderful to see how this course helped the young people not only grow in confidence in cooking for them and their families, but also grow in confidence in making new friends, being a good friend to others and understanding more about the importance of growing strong and healthy relationships.

Our team of volunteers continue to grow in our Children's and Youth Ministry, but if you would like to be blessed by joining the team, please do speak to Sophie. We know God has got a very exciting year ahead of us.

**Sophie Roberts, Youth and Children's Ministry Leader**

#### **(e) Tiddlers Report**

The Tiddlers team consists of a dedicated group of volunteers, both from within our Church community and the wider public. These volunteers help provide a welcoming and enriching environment for young children and their caregivers. Our current team includes Church members: Louise, Christine, Archie, Sandra, Jean, Annette, and Jen. Additionally, we have non-Church members such as Joan, who has been a long-standing volunteer, and Sarah, who will soon be joining the team. Together, we create a warm, fun, and safe environment for the children who attend.



#### **Volunteer Team Update:**

- ✝ Jen joined the team after retiring from her job in the local pharmacy. She primarily helps in the kitchen area, whenever she is available to come along.
- ✝ Jean has taken on a more active role by welcoming Tiddlers and their caregivers, engaging in conversations, and helping with setup and cleanup. Jean has created a stock of puppets which are kept at Church, and was recently used for a puppet show of the parable Jesus Calms the Storm, much to the delight of the children.
- ✝ Annette joined to assist when we were short of volunteers in the kitchen, particularly while Joan was recovering from knee surgery. Unfortunately, Annette has left the team due to a part-time job commitment.
- ✝ Joan, the longest-standing volunteer, has fully recovered from her knee surgery and is fully back in action. She continues to be an essential part of the team.
- ✝ Sarah, a new volunteer, is in the process of joining the team. Sarah, who previously attended with her children, will assist with setup, engaging with Tiddlers and caregivers, and tidying up.



**Child and Adult Attendance:** Our current registered number of children is 57, with an average age of 2.22 years, with an average of 25 children attending each session. The caregivers (parents, grandparents, aunts, and more recently, dads or granddads) also attend, with an average of 27 adults each week. It's worth noting that several families from the Tiddlers group have started attending the Sunday morning services regularly, and some are in discussions regarding having their children Christened.

**Session Structure:** The session begins on Tuesday mornings at 10 AM, after setting up the environment. The children enjoy 55 minutes of free play, with access to most of the downstairs Church area. To ensure safety, we have a cordoned off the baby area with a line of chairs to prevent older children from running through this space and to prevent children touching any potentially hot radiators.



When the "tidy up" song plays, all the children help tidy the area, with one mother recently sharing that her toddler happily tidies up at home after hearing the same song. Following the tidy-up, the children gather on three picnic blankets where they have access to fruit squash and toast. Caregivers also receive toast and hot drinks (in lidded cups).

After snack time, we engage the children in Bible-themed activities, such as reading stories or participating in activities based on the stories. One of the children's favourites was the Psalm 23 activity, The Lord is my Shepherd, where we created a sensory trail representing the green pastures, the waters, and the "Valley of the Shadow of Death." The children walked through the tunnel, where a toy snake symbolised the valley, and the session concluded with a chest of chocolate coins, ensuring there was a vegan option for one child. The sessions end with bubbles and the "bubble song," which the children love as they pop and jump around the bubbles. We have also decided to reintroduce nursery rhymes after story time. The caregivers enjoy joining in, particularly with classics like Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star and Old MacDonald Had a Farm.

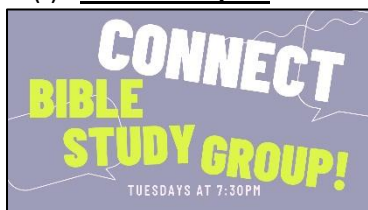
**The impact of our Church Renovations:** During the October 2024 half term, the Tiddlers sessions were closed due to necessary light refurbishments in the Church. While caregivers expressed missing the sessions, they understood the need for the work. Since reopening, our numbers have remained steady, and families were excited to return.

**Donations and Financial Update:** We continue to offer Tiddlers sessions free of charge. A donation plate is placed near the kitchen for anyone who wishes to contribute. Donations typically range from £6 to £25 per week, which helps us fund various needs, such as providing fair-trade Easter eggs for the children and replenishing our stock of Bibles for children leaving the group.

**Conclusion:** The Tiddlers team continues to thrive, providing a welcoming and nurturing environment for young children and their caregivers. The dedication of our volunteers, the enthusiasm of the children, and the support of the caregivers are key to making this group a success.

**Louise, Archie, and Christine, Main Leaders, Tiddlers**

#### (f) Connect Report



It is deeply encouraging to see how the Connect Groups remain a significant part of the spiritual journey for many within our church community. The groups meet weekly Tuesday mornings at St Margaret's and Tuesday evenings at St Peter's; combined regular attendance of up to 22 committed individuals highlights the value placed on studying God's Word together. Participants consistently share how these gatherings nurture their growth as followers of Christ and deepen their faith.

While efforts have been made to invite and involve more members of the church in these groups, the response has been limited. As a congregation, we need to consider fresh and creative ways to encourage wider participation. Strengthening our collective understanding of scripture is essential for developing mature Christian discipleship and fostering a vibrant faith community. Additionally, new voices bring a richness of perspective and can invigorate the group's discussions and shared learning.



An ongoing challenge is finding more leaders to help facilitate these sessions. This is a key area for prayer and discernment, as equipping leaders is crucial for sustaining and expanding the ministry of the group. We primarily use Bible study materials from the trusted Good Book Company, which provides excellent guidance for both participants and leaders. The leader's notes are especially helpful, offering clarity and confidence to those facilitating the studies. Over the past year, we have explored the following books of the Bible: Nehemiah; John 12-end; James; Micah; Psalms; 1 Corinthians 10-16, Hebrews.

We thank God for the blessing this group has been to its members and pray for His guidance in enabling it to grow and flourish in the year ahead.

**Clive Lilley, Reader**

**(g) Choir Report**

St Peter's choir has predominantly met on the first Sunday of each month, either before or after the weekly evening service. This is to run through the set psalm for Evening Prayer on the following Sunday, and hymns generally. The choir remains embedded in the nave to support the congregational singing at evening services. We recognise the value traditional worship has for many. Our continuing hope is to welcome new members to support our aim to carry on bringing well known hymns to life in St Peter's every Sunday evening.

**Laura Hulse, Chorister on behalf of Choir**

**(h) Warm Space Report**

The Welcome Hub has gone from strength to strength during 2024. Numbers have increased during 2024, and we regularly have about 18 attendees, but we have had as many as 24. It is still open from 10am to 2 pm every Monday for anyone in the local community who wishes to join us, attracting young and old alike. Old friendships have been rekindled and new friendships made. One group of ladies now regularly go out on coach trips together.



We continue to offer good company, games, hot food, hot and cold drinks, and particularly a warm welcoming environment. The attendees still like to play Bingo, and they donate the prizes themselves. We continue to have a raffle each week with several prizes, which is still very popular.



Again, we had a visit from Forsbrook Primary School who sang beautifully for us. We also had visits from a local councillor from Staffordshire Moorlands Council and a local M.P. We have started regular "bring and buy" sales, which have proven to be very popular, this also generates some cash for the running costs. For the second year running, one of the highlights was the Christmas Party in December. Santa and his elf were of course present, giving out gifts of chocolate. As well as a Christmas themed music quiz, we also had a Christmassy buffet.

The Welcome Hub would not function without the able assistance of all the volunteers, who take it in turns to join in and ensure everything runs smoothly. Again, we treated ourselves to Christmas Lunch together at Heath House Farm in December, and on this occasion, we were joined by Sophie and Jonathan. The Welcome Hub continues to grow and evolve and is now a well-established regular date in the Church weekly calendar.

**Walter Bridge, on behalf of The Welcome Hub volunteers.**

**(i) Safeguarding Report**

St Peter's Church PCC is committed to caring for all the children, young people and vulnerable adults who participate in any aspect of our church life. The safety and security of children, young people and vulnerable adults is of the utmost importance and the Church of England guidelines and policies underpin this. As reported in previous years Safeguarding is a standing item on the PCC Agenda, thus ensuring through the Rector and the Parish Safeguarding Officer, members are regularly informed and updated to ensure the PCC complies with its responsibilities.

The Safeguarding Policy for Children and Young People was reviewed and updated on the 13 September 2024 and Vulnerable Adults Policy reviewed and updated on 2 September 2024. Both Policies were approved by the PCC on the 18 September 2024 and can be viewed on St Peter's Church website at [www.stpetersforsbrook.org](http://www.stpetersforsbrook.org). There have been 4 safeguarding concerns reported to me during 2024.



**Disclosure and Barring Service Checks:** The Church of England Safer Recruitment procedures outline the necessary requirements for a DBS Check to be carried out, this is dependent upon the specific role being undertaken. 10 Enhanced DBS checks have been carried out during the year for various roles, 3 of these were renewals (3-year renewal cycle on all certificates).

**Training Requirements:** The majority of the Safeguarding Training is completed using the Church of England online training portal. The core pathway training to be carried out is determined by the role being undertaken; 16 people have completed the necessary courses, 3 of which were renewals (3-year renewal cycle required). Renewals are undertaken at the highest level for core pathways. In addition, 13 PCC Trustees have completed the Raising awareness of Domestic Abuse Training.

This year has also seen the introduction of the Parish Dashboard which centralises all the safeguarding administrative tasks which need to be undertaken. All the information is all in one place and shows the progress being made. It helps the Parish to comply with mandatory safeguarding requirements and evaluate progress towards the National Safeguarding Standards. This tool also supports the Parish Safeguarding Officer in generating regular reports to the PCC, as well as an Action Plan indicating how things are going and what needs to be done.

Thank you to everyone who completed the online DBS Applications and training or attended the training courses, for giving their valuable time and commitment, ensuring we meet our obligation to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults within our church community.

**Joan Pritchard, Parish Safeguarding Officer**

**(j) Fabric Report – Buildings Committee**

The lighting and electrics project finally happened, but not until November. Most work was completed by Christmas, but there were still a few pieces of work which had to be left for 2025. The diocese had agreed in 2022 that the application for their approval could be under the list B process; and an application was made in this way in December 2023. Unfortunately, in January 2024, they decided it required a faculty due to the scope of the work. This lengthier process is a delay in itself; but the bigger problem was the need for formal approval from the diocesan lighting adviser who was ill. He never returned to his post. Then in September the diocese decided it could return to being a List B application and approval was given.

A new backlit screen with a projector above and a television in the Welcome Room were fitted, after diocesan approval.

Some pointing was done to the west and east end of the side aisle. This was undertaken by a church member with building skills, thus reducing the cost, which was just the scaffolding.

There was also the regular maintenance of the grounds, mainly weeding and pruning around the car park. Group members: Anita Archibald; Hollie Archibald; Louise Purnell; Alison Fuller; and Brian Sammons.

This year the church re-commenced maintaining the land which used to be known as the Donkey Field. The land is now a woodland with clearings and is being managed as such for the benefit of nature and the local community. Bramble and coarse vegetation have been cut back and small trees removed from areas to be meadows. Group members: Louise Purnell; Daniel Bainbridge; Graham Borsley; Nigel Thomson and Brian Sammons.

**Brian Sammons, Building and Grounds Co-ordinator**



**(k) Deanery Synod Report:**



On 17<sup>th</sup> July 2024 Revd Jonathan Roberts was commissioned as the new Rural Dean of Cheadle, and Laura Hulse (also of St Peter's Forsbrook) was welcomed as the new Lay Chair of the Deanery of Cheadle in a service led by Bishop Matthew Parker. Deanery Synod met in November 2024 via Zoom. The new Shaping for Mission Strategic Framework was explored, with churches sharing their hopes and concerns for each area. The dates for 2025 Deanery Synods will be published on the Bulletin. The meetings will be planned around the various aspects of the Strategic Framework, starting with a demonstration and Q&A session on Open the Book, led by Sophie Roberts and the team on 17<sup>th</sup> March. All are welcome to attend Deanery Synod meetings.

**Laura Hulse, Mick Smith and Neil (Archie) Archibald, Deanery Synod Representatives**

*Thanks to all who contributed to the 2024 Trustees Annual Report, approved by PCC on 8<sup>th</sup> May 2025.*