

# St Philip and St James Parish Church Alderley Edge



## Annual Report of the Parochial Church Council for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024

*“Whatever you do, in word or deed, do  
everything in the name of the Lord Jesus,  
giving thanks to God through him.”*

*Colossians 4.17.*

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St Philip and St James Church, Church Lane, Alderley Edge SK9 7UZ  
Knutsford Deanery (Ref 1403), Diocese of Chester  
Registered Charity Number 1131416

## FROM THE VICAR REV'D ROBIN PYE

### REVIEW OF THE YEAR

*Ministry Team serving at St. Philip and St. James' during 2024*

Rev'd Robin Pye (Vicar)

Rev'd Canon Professor Loveday Alexander (Associate Priest)

Rev'd Linda Lonsdale (Retired Priest)

Rev'd Amy Ruston (Curate)

Mrs Susan Mills (Pastoral Worker)

Mrs Clare Wearne (Baptism Visitor)

Mrs Rachel Roberts (Reader)

Mr Peter Spooner (Organist)

Mrs Maria Byrom (Administrator)

Mr Stuart Rippon (Verger)

Mrs Diane Rippon and Miss Anais Shenton (Cleaners)

### Introduction

It is a great pleasure to report on an active and fruitful year in the life of our church.

As detailed later in the report, our congregation continues to grow and our ministry as a traditional parish church is fruitful with many people coming to us for baptisms, weddings and funerals, for support through our foodbank and engagement with Tuesday Tots, Voices Together and the After School Club. We remain the beating heart of this community.

Critical to much of this activity has been the contribution of our curate, Rev'd Amy Ruston who was priested this year and presided at holy communion for the first time in our church.

### **Meditation**

At the beginning of the year, we started regular meditation sessions in our church. We have a meditation session in church twice a week and I find it very helpful personally and it has drawn three new people to become part of our church community over the course of the year. The parish pilgrimage in July provided further impetus and I am very pleased that this neglected aspect of Christian spirituality has experienced a revival in our church in a way that I hope will continue to meet the spiritual needs of our community in the future.

### **Lectio Divina**

In addition to the meditation sessions, Amy has shared with us a method of Lectio Divina which we have also introduced into the life of the church which has formed the basis of the new Café Church initiative which we will report on in more detail next year and I am grateful to those members of the congregation who have supported these sessions.

### **After School Club**

Inspired in part by the Diocesan Vision, we began a regular after school club for years 1, 2 and 3 pupils who attend the county primary school. The after-school club is based on telling Bible stories to the children and supporting them in responding creatively to the story they have heard. We have had very

positive feedback from parents and we have built up a loyal group of after school club members so that we are working with older children whose families are currently not involved with our church.

### **Eco Committee and Building Strategy Sub Committee**

The eco church committee was set up this year and has done some really good work leading to us achieving a bronze eco-church award. I am especially grateful to Bev Hartland who has conducted a survey of our energy and heating needs which has highlighted a number of issues which we need to face in the relative short-term and her work has led to the establishment of a separate Building strategy sub-committee of the PCC which will focus on how we can keep our buildings warm using renewable energy sources.

### **Morality Tales**

We had a rather ambitious programme of Morality Tales events this year which got us thinking about a number of important topics which I report on in more detail later in this report.

### **Members of our Church Community who have died**

We lost five members of our congregation this year.

Michael Scaife has been a pillar of our church for several decades. A former churchwarden, Michael was writing the pew sheet and the parish newsletter when I arrived here in 2017 and was also an indispensable member of the PCC and chief assistant to the parish administrator. Although he gradually divested himself of his various duties since then, he was always available with encouragement, support and advice offered in an extremely humble way given that it came with the benefit of great understanding and intellect. I know he will be sorely missed by many.

Maggie Dutton joined one of my first Lenten study groups in 2018 and has been a good friend ever since. She was courageously open about her struggle with poor mental health, but not in a self-indulgent way, so that this became something we could always talk about and pray about in a way that many other people found very helpful. She caught covid at the end of 2020 and we really thought we might lose her then, but God had other plans. Visiting Maggie always put a smile on your face, and I shall miss her very much.

John Lever was, for a while, a very regular worshipper at our midweek service. He was a very firm believer in the efficacy of prayer and would want me to know what he was praying about so that I could lend a hand. Poor health meant he struggled to attend services in recent years, and I would sometimes visit him at home. However, it was only when I planned his funeral service that I fully appreciated the role that musical theatre played in his life and it made me think we should share more of ourselves while we are still alive.

Jessica Scott was another supporter of the midweek services and would often stay for lunch and Voices Together. Jessica was already suffering from mild dementia when she started to worship with us. She coped with her illness with extraordinary strength of character. She always had a smile on her face and would often boldly take the initiative in conversations contributing significantly to the warmth of our Wednesday gatherings.

Elisabeth Jackson lived just across the street from Jessica. I first met Elisabeth when I was out walking with Marian and we got caught in a sudden heavy shower of rain. Elisabeth must have seen us, and she opened her door and invited us in despite us being very wet and offered us a cup of tea. Elisabeth was

really a member of the congregation at St Mary's but I took her home communion during the pandemic lockdowns when visiting was allowed and later she started coming to our midweek services as she found getting to St Mary's increasingly difficult. She was well known to a number of members of our church. At her funeral I was asked to read out a letter to her from her daughter-in-law which was a great privilege. The words were very powerful.

As well as these five members of our congregation who have passed over to glory, I want to make mention of three people who died in 2024 who have close family members who have joined our congregation since the funeral service.

Ben Mandry lived in Alderley Edge for most of his life and was well known in the village. He sadly died at a relatively young age and his wife, Catherine, has since become a regular worshipper with us.

Richard Board lived in Macclesfield but had many friends in and around Alderley Edge. His wife, Vicky, has now moved to live closer to us and as well as worshipping with us, she has become a crucial member of the craft group.

Peter Twist lived in Chelford but went to school in Alderley Edge. He was a very talented young man and co-founded the Manchester Jazz Orchestra who came to play at what was an unforgettable and very emotional funeral service. If you worship at our 10am service then you may well have met his mother, Chris.

Finally, can I mention little Arthur, Amy's firstborn who came into the world in November. And also, little Orla, who was very seriously ill and made a miraculous recovery for which we are truly thankful.

### Normal Pattern of Worship

#### **Sundays**

8.00am	Holy Communion in the Lady Chapel using Common Worship Order One using traditional language.
10.00am	Choral Eucharist using Common Worship Order One and Seasonal Material
6.30pm	Evening Prayer, generally alternating every week between evensong or Taizé style service and online service using zoom.

#### **Wednesdays**

11.30am	Holy Communion in the Lady Chapel following the Book of Common Prayer.
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#### **Variations**

On the first Sunday of every month at 11.45am we hold an additional service for toddlers and their families which is known as 'Pipnjay'.

On the third Sunday of the month the main 10am service is a shorter 'Family Communion' service using a simpler liturgy.

On the fifth Sunday of the month the main 10am choral eucharist service follows the Book of Common Prayer.

### Morning and Evening Prayer

The vicar says Morning Prayer at 8.15 every weekday morning and is joined online by the ministry team on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

The vicar says evening prayer at 5.30pm every weekday evening and is joined online by members of the congregation. When other matters call the vicar away, these prayers are still said by the congregation in his absence.

### Occasional Services

We conducted 15 baptisms in 2024, of which 3 were adult baptisms. Figures for previous years are included here for comparison. 2024 was slightly below average, possibly reflecting fewer families coming to us from Wilmslow as the churches in Wilmslow revive.

2024	15
2023	19
2022	20
2021	25
2020	6
2019	13
2018	14
2017	16

We conducted 7 weddings in 2024, which feels like a normal year. 8 are booked in for 2025.

2024	7
2023	4
2022	6
2021	6
2020	1
2019	8
2018	7
2017	11

We held 13 funeral services in church this year and our ministry team conducted other funeral services elsewhere.

2024	13
2023	11
2022	17
2021	17
2020	3
2019	14
2018	22
2017	18

These services included the services for Ben Mandry, Michael Scaife, Jessica Scott, Richard Board, Maggie Dutton and Peter Twist. May they rest in peace and rise in glory.

### Thought for the Day

Loveday coordinated and sent out a Thought for the Day by email during Lent.

### Average Attendance at Services by Month

2024	<b>10am</b>	<b>8am</b>	<b>Evening</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>
January	<b>73</b>	10	16	<b>17</b>
February	<b>67</b>	9	17	<b>21</b>
March	<b>78</b>	9	18	17
April	<b>76</b>	8	<b>25</b>	<b>21</b>
May	60	<b>10</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
June	<b>69</b>	<b>9</b>	12	<b>17</b>
July	62	9	13	<b>18</b>
August	<b>63</b>	<b>9</b>	-	<b>15</b>
September	<b>67</b>	<b>9</b>	19	<b>17</b>
October	<b>68</b>	10	15	<b>17</b>
November	<b>68</b>	8	18	<b>18</b>
December	53	10	16	17

Special services have been excluded from these figures.

Figures in bold represent an increase on the equivalent figure for 2023.

These figures suggest that:

1. The sustained increase in attendance at the Wednesday Eucharistic services at 11.30am which we saw in 2023 has been sustained in 2024. Peter continues to play for this service which adds considerably to its spiritual impact, and I am very grateful for that.
2. The sustained increase in attendance at our main service at 10am on Sunday which we saw in 2023 has also been sustained in 2024.
3. Attendance at evening services declined in 2024.
4. Attendance at our 8am Sunday service continues to decline very slightly.

### Special Services and Events through the Year

#### **January**

We joined other churches in Alderley Edge for a special service of prayers for Christian Unity at St Pius RC Church.

## **February**

Lent began with our Ash Wednesday services, attended by 55 people.

## **March**

A service based on the World Day of Prayer was held at St Mary's Alderley on 1st March.

Our cleaner, Mrs Diane Rippon suffered a fall while cleaning the church and had to take several months off work. Fortunately, Anais Shenton was able to step in and clean for us while Diane recovered. During her phased return to work, Diane and Anais agreed to share the cleaning between them in future. We are therefore very lucky to have two conscientious cleaners who also worship in our church and understand intimately how we use our buildings. We see this clearly in the quality of their work.

Services during Holy Week were shared with the Methodist Church and St Catherine's Birtles.

We attended a joint service for Maundy Thursday with St Mary's Alderley led by Sam, Bishop of Stockport.

As usual we held a Walk of Witness service and Stations of the Cross on Good Friday and Easter Vigil service on Saturday and a Sunrise service at 6.30am on Easter Sunday. We had 142 people at the main 10am service which represented a significant increase on last year.

## **April**

Bishop Mark, Bishop of Chester came to lead us in worship. He commented afterwards that we seemed to be a very kind church.

## **May**

We held special services for Ascension Day and Corpus Christi with 20 and 19 people in attendance, respectively.

Journalist and activist, Andrew Graystone came to speak to us. Later in the year, he was to rise to national prominence as a journalist who had done a lot of work on the David Smyth case which led to the resignation of the Archbishop of Canterbury. He didn't talk to us about that though. He spoke instead about Christian activism and how to proclaim the Gospel through peaceful protest.

## **June**

Nationally respected professional storyteller Nick Hennessey came to tell us stories and answer questions about storytelling. Nick grew up in Alderley Edge. He is very talented and provided a wonderful evening of entertainment.

## **July**

We held a parish pilgrimage along St Cuthbert's way to Holy Island.

## **August**

We decided to suspend evening services for the month of August.

## **September**

Harvest festival took place on 15<sup>th</sup> September with 81 people in attendance. We had our first service with prayers for healing and wholeness since the pandemic.

Catherine Wilcox, author of a series of comic novels about the Church of England, came to speak to us about creative writing.

## **October**

Rev'd Amy Ruston left to begin her maternity leave.

David Drewery, former Director of the British Antarctic Survey came to talk to us about his scientific career and about the coming climate catastrophe. He left us in no doubt of what is already going to happen if we can't reduce global temperatures, and he reminded us that at present they are increasing and expected to continue increasing.

## **November**

The All Souls Requiem Service was held on 3<sup>rd</sup> November. The choir sang Faure's Requiem and 88 people came which represented a significant increase on last year.

On Remembrance Sunday, our 10am communion service ended at the cenotaph this year. There was an additional commemoration service at the cenotaph at 3pm, led this year by Rev'd Nick Thompson from the Methodist Church.

## **December**

We held our second Christmas Fair in two years with lots of community activities in the church and parish rooms, we had a wonderful time and raised a significant contribution to church funds.

Christmas services were held as follows:

- 5<sup>th</sup> December Christingle Service with folk musicians, uniformed youth groups and the primary school choir
- 9<sup>th</sup> December Girls School Carol Service
- 11<sup>th</sup> December Ryley's School Carol Service
- 17<sup>th</sup> December Mothers Union and Toddler Advent Service
- 18<sup>th</sup> December Girls School End of Term Services
- 19<sup>th</sup> December Primary School Nativity Play and Carol Service
- 22<sup>nd</sup> December Nine Lessons and Carols Service with 126 people in attendance
- 24<sup>th</sup> December 4pm Donkey service
- 24<sup>th</sup> December 6pm Nativity Play Service
- 24<sup>th</sup> December 11.15pm Midnight Mass
- 25<sup>th</sup> December 9am Holy Communion
- 25<sup>th</sup> December 11am Family Communion



Numbers attending Christmas services varied significantly compared to last year. The Donkey Service had far more people attending than in previous years. The Nativity Play Service had fewer people attending. Midnight Mass and the 11am service attendance were similar to last year. The 9am service had significantly higher attendance than last year.

## THANKS

I can't thank everybody but this year I want to make particular mention of:

- The Livestreaming Team. It is clear that some people who have joined our congregation this year have watched us online before coming in person. And I am always thanked by people who are housebound for making services available online.
- The After School Club has been a lot to take on and is a lot of work. Not every session has worked out the way we thought it would. So, I am especially grateful to Amy Ruston, Kate Downes, Liz Wilson and Gaynor Rea for their loyal help!
- I'd like to thank Bev Gutfreund and Rhona Dalziel for their help with the meditation sessions, especially when I have been away or have been ill.
- Tuesday Tots, the Wednesday lunches and Voices Together continue to deliver great sessions week in week out and this is only made possible by a large number of volunteers who help with that.
- Our pastoral ministry is in very good heart due to the active support of so many members of our congregation, but I especially want to thank Jen Pound for her work with the foodbank and Sue Mills for her support with the St Elizabeth Fund and associated pastoral work.
- Our Ministry Team who take so many services for me so I don't have to do them all. Without them, there really is no way we could offer so many different services and take services up the road at St Catherine's which means that 20% of our contribution to the diocese is covered by their congregation. I have clergy colleagues who feel very much on their own in everything they must do. And other colleagues who have large teams on paper but find that there are significant limitations on what they can ask their teams to do for them. Our ministry team is astonishingly hardworking and dedicated as well as extremely talented and supportive. We should all be grateful to Linda, Loveday, Rachel and Amy. Without their efforts there would be a lot less going on round here!

I'm sorry if I missed you out of the thanks this year. I hope I can rectify this next year. It would be less risky not to mention people and thank them by name. But we are truly a body of Christ, as I think this report demonstrates. Every part of the body knows it is needed, and it will communicate with the rest of the body soon enough when it needs to be especially loved.

My motivation to serve this church to the best of my ability and with all the energy I can muster remains as strong today as when I first arrived here, and I hope God will grant me a few more years yet to serve him here alongside all of you.

*Rev'd Robin Pye*

## ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Part of The Diocese of Chester (ref 1403) in Knutsford Deanery;  
The Parish Church of St Philip and St James Alderley Edge  
Church Lane, Alderley Edge SK9 7UZ

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is a Charity (No 1131416) within the authority of the Charity Commission.

*Bank Account held:* Barclays plc London Rd Alderley Edge

The Parish Room adjacent to the Church is also the responsibility of the PCC

## MEMBERS OF THE PCC 2024

<i>Clergy:</i>	Revd Robin Pye Revd Canon Loveday Alexander Revd Amy Ruston
<i>Reader:</i>	Mrs Rachel Roberts (approved at APCM 21 April 2024)
<i>Pastoral Worker:</i>	Mrs Sue Mills
<i>Churchwardens:</i>	Mrs Wendy Davies Mr Bob Tuffin (up to Archdeacon's Visitation June 2024) Mr Charles Rogers (from Archdeacon's Visitation June 2024)

<i>Deanery Synod Representatives:</i>	Mrs Mandy Parr Mr Martin Steiger Mrs Sandra Thompson
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<i>Members:</i> Mr Simon Caporn Mr Rupert Downes Mrs Jen Pound Mr Ian Standen Mrs Clare Wearne Mrs Amanda Brabban-Brown Mrs Maxine Drabble Mrs Heather Jobling Mr Charles Rogers	<b>Health &amp; Safety Officer</b> (up to APCM 21 April 2024)  <b>Treasurer</b>  <b>Safeguarding Officer</b>  (elected up to APCM 21 April 2024 & elected Churchwarden thereafter)
Mrs Margaret Seddon Mr Michael Scaife Mrs Gill Shone Miss Rhona Dalziel Mrs Kate Downes Mr Bob Tuffin Mrs Bethan Weston Mr Brian Thompson	 (deceased 30 March 2024) <b>Electoral Roll Officer</b> (up to APCM 21 April 2024) (co-opted until 21 April 2024 & elected thereafter)   (elected until APCM 21 April 2024 & co-opted thereafter)

*Non-members:*

Mr Simon Caporn	<b>Health &amp; Safety Officer</b> (continued from APCM 21 April 2024)
Mrs Gill Shone	<b>Electoral Roll Officer</b> (continued from APCM 21 April 2024)
Mr Martin Sinker	<b>Fabric Committee Chair</b> (appointed by PCC 21 April 2024)
Mr Peter Spooner	<b>Secretary</b> (appointed by PCC 21 April 2024)
Ms Gillian Swain	<b>Mothers Union Liaison</b>

The PCC met on 7 occasions with overall average attendance at 65% (67% if non-members excluded). Of the 7 meetings, 6 were ordinary and the other was to appoint officers following the APCM.

Delegated from the PCC were the Standing Committee, the Fabric Committee and the Eco Church Committee. The following 'Mission Groups' reported to the PCC: Training and Discipleship; Pastoral Care; Youth and Children; Music; Worship Space Group.

## **SIDESPEOPLE**

These are the people who served as sidespeople in 2024:

Amanda Brabban-Brown	Sheila Brown	Josie Dawes	Ann Estridge
Stuart Heaviside	David Hollas	Frankie Mulcahy	Anna Nicholson
Elaine Ockelton	Mandy Parr	Nick Parr	Sue Pawsey
Alan Robinson	Michael Scaife	Martin Sinker	Martin Steiger
Zoe Theofilopoulos	Brian Thompson	Sandra Thompson	Bob Tuffin
Wendy Walker	Ian Wilson		

## **ELECTORAL ROLL**

At the start of the year there were 138 names on the roll of whom 57 were non-resident. At the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on 21 April 2024, there were 139 members of whom 58 were non-resident. At the end of the year there were 140 names on the roll of whom 59 were non-resident.

A new roll will be prepared for 2025 as required by the Church Representation Rules 2025 Edition.

*Mrs Gill Shone, Electoral Roll Officer*

## WELCOME COMMITTEE

*Numbers 6 Verse 25: The Lord makes His face shine upon you and be gracious to you.*

The Welcome Team have continued to work hard to ensure anyone entering our church, whether a new or existing worshipper, can depend on a warm and inclusive welcome. Our team is there to ensure any act of worship or visit is an experience which reflects Gods love.

We have continued to grow the team and have 33 active Welcomers, and this year managed to recruit 5 new people to join us. The role involves being present at Sunday Services and Special events with the duty performed on a rota basis, with each of the team doing approximately 3 duties spread over the year.

Welcomers play a key role in offering Welcome Cards to new visitors, which they complete before leaving our service. Often, we can make the connection from a completed welcome card to someone subsequently completing the electoral role application.

The Welcome Team provides a crucial contribution to the ministry of St Philip and St James Church where we practice being friendly and not invasive.

*Sandra Thompson, Welcome Committee*

## CHURCHWARDENS' REPORT

2024 saw some changes in the churchwarden team. Bob Tuffin stood down after another 3 years of dedicated and valued work (having served for 6 years in the 20-teens) bringing his experience and wisdom from which we continue to benefit. We were pleased to welcome Charles Rogers who transitioned smoothly into the role and is bringing new ideas. A smooth transition was important for the first half of last year while Wendy took time out for medical treatment and then recovery through the Autumn. The support of Bob and Charles was greatly appreciated along with the constant commitment of Martin and Ian in ensuring the smooth running of the church building and finances and therefore enabling the ministry team and church family to focus on all the other important aspects of church life.

In what can only be observed as a turbulent year for the Church of England, immense thanks are due to our amazing Ministry team, Organist, Choir, the PCC, together with every unsung sub-committee member and dedicated individual. Regular attendance at St Philip and St James has slowly increased and it would appear that in 2024 we have successfully weathered the storm. Our shared and dedicated ministry with St Catherine, Birtles is very much appreciated too.

Led by Robin, Loveday, Amy, Linda and all our ministry team, the principals of equality and inclusivity and a welcome provision of worship for the very young, remain a bedrock of our church and is a beacon in the wider Anglican Community and our village. In addition, our strong links with both the Primary and Secondary schools in Alderley have formed a vital source of ministry and the principles of Safeguarding remain strongly adhered to and upheld at our church.

The English Choral Tradition continues to be extremely well supported at St Philips and the Choir under the direction of our Organist and Choirmaster Peter Spooner. Without exception it continues to lead our congregation in an extremely professional way; the quality and choice of music being outstanding. As a

result, choir members have become a dedicated family, leading worship through music, along with those who have freely taken ownership of many other church activities and in their support for each other. As individuals, many members of the choir also participate in PCC subcommittees and are members of the PCC. Success seems to breed success since we have been fortunate to be able to welcome new members to the choir this year.

Work has continued this year on plans to update and de-carbonise our heating and lighting and efforts are being made to reduce overall heat loss in our church buildings, both of the church itself and of our parish rooms.

Regarding church lighting, this year the outdated and inefficient Nave luminaries have been replaced by efficient LED units and similar plans remain in progress to highlight the area of the Nave crossing with new lighting, together with that of the Chancel and Sanctuary as funds become available. All new luminaries provide a much improved quality and level of lighting and are current with modern standards of energy efficiency. New Chancel lighting would not only be more efficient, but enhance worship in highlighting the Altar, Reredos, and Choir.

This year's designs for updated lighting in the Nave Crossing could provide an area which would extend the use of our building way beyond the scope of regular worship. Apart from its use in highlighting the Nave Altar, Weddings and Funerals, it could offer the opportunity to provide an exciting venue for music recitals, lectures, organ recitals, our seasonal school religious presentations and concerts, Donkey Service and the Alderley Edge Music Festival. It could broaden the scope of the building's use for years to come and we have been fortunate and grateful for the free help we have received during the year from Lighting Design Services in the planning of this possible venture.

Outreach at St Philips is very much a part of our ministry. This year we held Hustings at the time of the general election, four different evenings of talks by eminent speakers and an excellent summer Soiree by members of our church family. Our Food Bank continues to provide a vital and increasingly necessary lifeline in the community, whilst a new venture of an ad hoc Café Church held at a café in a small parade of nearby shops has become increasingly popular. So too, is our now regular and successful Christmas Fair, held in church.

Warm Wednesdays, offering Communion, a lunch followed by a 'sing along' have become an increasingly important weekly event for many, not only in the winter months, but each week throughout the year. Our other valued weekly event which is held all year round is our toddler group, 'Tuesday Tots' where anything between 5 and 18 toddlers come for play, stories, singing and fellowship.

The Neo Natal unit at Macclesfield General Hospital is delighted to have received regular donations of infant clothing and blankets, knitted especially by members of our Mothers Union, for which the hospital unit extends its grateful thanks.

Regular monthly evening services of Choral Evensong held at churches around the area by a combination of our own and nearby choir members, previously formed as the Knutsford Deanery Choir, have served as important outreach, especially in churches which no longer hold an adequate choir by which to hold these services themselves. They are a great advert of what is being achieved at St Philip and St James.

At every season of the year the church grounds are enhanced by the diligent work and guidance of Martin Steiger and there are so many unsung heroes like Martin, who give their time freely as ‘worship’. Martin’s expert attention to the grounds is always much appreciated and his Bug Hotel erected early in the year is an absolute work of art and of great fascination to young and old.

From those who provide flowers for the church, Colin Mills and Peter Pound looking after our energy bills and boilers, to Ian our Treasurer, Martin our Fabric guru, the Sidespeople and Welcomers, Servers, Readers and intercessors, our dedicated 8 o’Clock team, Coffee makers, Cake Bakers ... those individuals far too many to mention ... and our Parish Administrator Maria, the Wardens extend grateful thanks for their dedication and contribution to a happy and successful 2024.

*Charles Rogers and Wendy Davies, Churchwardens*

## **FABRIC REPORT**

As usual the annual clearing of gutters, downpipes and flat roof areas of the Church and the Rooms was completed early in the New Year by local roofer Danny Clifford. GBSG have maintained the roof cameras and alarm system, but not without intermittent error signals. Three other external problems came to light early in the year. Firstly, a gas leak, fortunately on the upstream side of the gas meter, so repaired by our supplier. Then all drainage from the Rooms became blocked. A major dig exposed the main outlet pipe and some very well-fed tree roots within it, rectified by further digging and encasing in concrete. Finally, the considerable outlet pressure from the air supply fan to the organ, located in the cellar, caused a “blowout” in the ducting, repaired by Sixsmiths. Still in the cellar, the long unnoticed sump pump failed, leading to several inches of water accumulating over the floor; a new pump was duly sourced and installed, thanks to Colin Mills’ intervention.

The external floodlights, operated automatically each evening, are in need of LED replacement so as to reduce energy consumption and expense. A costed scheme for this awaits funding. Internally some of the high-level spotlights over the Nave were replaced using LED units; a more sophisticated LED scheme for the Chancel and Crossing also requires funding. Wendy Davies worked hard to get new ‘phone and WiFi systems set up in the Church and Rooms, this enabling the installation of a new HIVE controller for the heating boilers. Following last year’s internal redecoration Bob Tuffin has been investigating sources of information and funding for inspection and possible cleaning and repair of the leaded glass windows throughout the Church.

Externally, two trees were made safe following a survey by Frankland Tree Services. Discussions are needed with the Girls’ School next door about responsibility for three substantial trees on the boundary behind the Rooms. The cost associated with the Marquee were agreed to now outweigh its usefulness, although it was invaluable during Covid. St Mary’s Alderley showed interest, and it was duly gifted to them. The bare earth of the Marquee site was taken on by volunteers, Rev Linda in particular, and has been planted with a considerable variety of flowers, in addition to snowdrops on the grassy banks nearby. Martin Steiger continued to plant out the large circular flower-bed, also the beds each side of the South Porch, producing splendid displays. There is a clear need for safety railings down the ramp from the North Porch. Thanks are due to Bev Hartland for developing a scheme for this; detailed design will be taken forward by our Architect, with a view to making a formal Faculty Application. Bev also devoted her considerable energy to identifying possible improvements to the Parish Rooms; in addition,

a professional Surveyor's Report was commissioned, to assist with "big picture" consideration of the Rooms' future.

Within the Tower/Spire the telecoms equipment still brings in very worthwhile rental income, but this is likely to reduce when a new lease agreement, negotiated nationally, comes into force. A Faculty application for the new lease has been with the DAC for much of the year; we are not chasing it. A second Faculty application has been put in by us, covering considerable upgrade work being planned by the telecoms operators.

Our biggest Fabric issue, which continues to cause deep concern and which needs a solution, is what to do about the two ageing gas boilers that supply the piped water heating system. These are over twenty years old, expensive to maintain and not in keeping with achieving carbon zero by 2030. We need to find a way forward during 2025.

Sincere gratitude is due to the many people who help with our Fabric matters in so many ways. To those named above, to several others such as Peter Pound, always available with sound help and advice, and in particular to Kate Downes, who has now taken on the role of managing Fabric activities as part of the wider issues relating to how we use and look after our wonderful buildings.

*Martin Sinker, Chair of the Fabric Committee*

## **HEALTH & SAFETY**

Health & Safety Officer Simon Caporn's role covers a wide variety of matters. The bread and butter work is to help with, review and write Risk Assessments for routine and one-off events. Sometimes these are events organised by outside bodies. Anyone planning a fresh activity is invited to talk to Simon about safety concerns. Other work in the year included working with external companies who we pay to look after various elements of safety and church maintenance. One other frequent task is to investigate and report on incidents in the church resulting in harm to people. During 2024, a few such incidents occurred, mainly of a relatively minor nature but some were more serious and have prompted follow-up work to do our best to minimise future risks.

*Simon Caporn, Health & Safety Officer*

## **SAFEGUARDING**

There have been no formal internal safeguarding issues arising from within our church community. There are no internal safeguarding cases to currently report.

A spreadsheet has been compiled of all members of the Church community who are required to undertake safeguarding training, and an assessment of the level of training required for each individual is being undertaken. This training will then be monitored to ensure that the correct training is undertaken in a timely manner.

This year Chester Diocese have introduced Parish Safeguarding Dashboards. The aim is to unify and simplify the way information around safeguarding is collected, monitored and stored. This covers all areas from policies and action plans, necessary training key roles and who holds them to learning and development. Their purpose is to provide a unified approach to safeguarding across all churches and to support the Safeguarding officer in understanding what actions are required and when these should take place.

*Amanda Brabban-Brown, Safeguarding Officer*

# MISSION GROUPS AND WORK OF THE CHURCH

A TRAINING PARISH: *TRAINING AND DISCIPLESHIP* in the life of our church

## Annual Report 2024: Loveday Alexander

Training and discipleship are integral to the life of our church, and all contribute to the overall aim of ‘making disciples’ (Matt 28.20, Acts 2.42). In this report I have tried to pull together all the information I have on training in different aspects of church life. Please let Loveday know if you are involved in any aspect of training to include!

### 1. Ministry training creates two-way links with Chester Diocese and with the wider church.

We continue to benefit from being known as a “Training parish”. During 2024 our Curate **Amy Ruston** has contributed an enormous amount to the life of our church. Amy’s ordination as priest on June 15<sup>th</sup> (alongside our previous ordinand Kate Pwaisiho) was an inspiring and moving occasion. Amy is currently on maternity leave since the birth of her son Arthur on November 4<sup>th</sup>.

**Robin** continues to run regular evenings of **Theological Reflection** for our own Ministry Team and other Readers.

**Rachel Roberts** is regularly involved in diocesan training events like **Called to Serve**. Rachel is completing the second year of the Master’s programme in Theology, Mission and Ministry at the **Luther King Centre** for Theological Education in Manchester.

**Rhona Dalziel** has completed the diocesan **Foundations for Ministry** course and is currently exploring pathways for future ministry.

**Sarah Williamson** embarked on the **Foundations for Ministry** course in September 2024 and is enjoying the challenge and stimulation of the course.

**Loveday** continues to be involved with continuing theological education in the cathedral, the diocese and the wider church, leading Lent Bible Talks at Chester Cathedral and Reader Training events at Foxhill.

### 2. Study groups and digital communications

- a. The **Bible Study Group** meets monthly (on the first Monday of the month) and welcomes around 20 people including friends from other local churches. In the first part of 2024 we completed a study series on the Prison Letters of St Paul (Philippians, Colossians and Philemon). In September 2024 we began a new series on The Ten Commandments led by a variety of speakers from the ministry team and other local churches.
- b. **Churches Together Lent Groups** in 2024 were led by the Revd Nick Thompson at AEMC. Robin, Rhona and Amy led a weekday series of meditations and Lectio Divina.
- c. **Thought for the Day (TFTD)** is sent out electronically during Lent 2024 to 200+ people on the database. The Lenten TFTD in 2024 was based on the Gospel of John. TFTD 2024 was co-ordinated and sent out by Amy, ably supported by a team of local clergy and Readers.
- d. For the 2024 parish pilgrimage to Holy Island (8-13 July), Robin led a team of intrepid pilgrims from Melrose in the Scottish borders to the island of Lindisfarne, where they were met by a group of “hospitallers” staying on the Island.

*Rev’d Canon Professor Loveday Alexander*



## PASTORAL CARE

Our main aim is to make sure that our congregation and local community can respond to those who need a bit of extra support. This could be support from one of the Care Group members, or that we ask among the congregation to provide a listening ear, or practical support. From being a listening ear, we are often able to signpost to more specialised service provision, such as Age UK, CAB, Social Services and GP practice.

### Home or Hospital and Care Home Visits

Services and visits to Nursing homes are now well established and shared out with other local Churches. This is always dependent upon individual homes policies. Home visits were carried out on an individual basis, taking into account vulnerability, government and Church of England Guidelines, and need. Care group visitors continued to use traditional and more innovative ways of keeping in touch: telephone calls, Zoom calls, e-mailing, coffee shop visits and walking.

### Transport and one off tasks

We have a WhatsApp “Transport and Pastoral Care” which has 27 volunteers, willing to take people to appointments for those who couldn’t drive a distance, and lifts to and from church. This also encompasses those who we support for one-off tasks, and using this system we continue with connections in the local community. Requests for transport to the 10.00 service have increased, as some members of the congregation give up driving, and we are always looking for new volunteers.

### Warm Wednesdays

This is a big part of our Pastoral Care Mission, and continues weekly, with a short break in August and over Christmas. The activities include an Art and Craft group, Mid-week Communion, Lunch, and “Voices Together”. All aspects of this day are well attended with numbers increasing.

*Sue Mills, Lay Pastoral Worker*

## FOODBANK

After a great deal of thought and deliberation, we regret that we have had to discontinue picking up and delivering Food from Tesco and Waitrose each morning as new legislation was put in place by Faresharego, the organisation which we were accountable to. This required volunteers to log food items and report to me for traceability reasons. As some mornings we could be collecting up to 12 large trays of food, we felt we could not expect our Volunteers to carry this out. We informed ROAR they would no longer receive food from us, they fully understood and thanked us as a church and the volunteers for all our donations and time spent picking up and delivering over the past years. We do however occasionally deliver to them if the Foodbank has a glut of some items, i.e baked beans and soup.

Letters of thanks were sent to all the volunteers for their time in helping over past years.

The Foodbank continues to support families, couples and single folk, some regularly, others occasionally and some one offs. Folk now make an appointment to visit via Robin, Maria or myself. This system is working successfully.

In October we received a very generous cash donation which enabled us to pack up 12 Christmas bags with some lovely Christmas items. These were very gratefully received and were much appreciated. A very big thank you to all who donate food, personal hygiene, and laundry products to the Foodbank, without these donations we would be unable to carry out this valuable ministry to the needy in the community.

In the future, would you please check sell by dates before putting in the yellow bin in the church porch, we have had a glut of outdated items recently, which could have slipped through the net if I had not checked.

*Jen Pound, Foodbank Coordinator*

## THE CHOIR, OPALS AND OUTREACH THROUGH MUSIC

The choir has continued to flourish throughout the year. Membership of the Choir includes those who ordinarily sing for Sunday morning services and those who join with our ordinary members to sing as part of the Deanery Choir. Ordinary membership rose by two during the year and the Deanery Choir gained two external members. By the year end the total membership was:

Ordinary Members		Deanery Choir
Soprano	11	13
Alto	5	9
Tenor	2	4
Bass	5	6
Total	23	32

Locally, the choir has been pleased to provide a strong choral input to our regular 10am Sunday services plus other occasional services. These included:

- Service of Thanksgiving and Remembrance
- Two weddings including one at St Mary's Alderley
- Six Funerals
- Requiem for All Souls
- Nine Lessons and Carols

The Deanery Choir has sung choral evensong at:

- St Luke Goostrey
- Holy Trinity Rainow
- St James Congleton
- St Bartholomew Wilmslow
- St Michael & all Angels Bramhall
- St Cross Knutsford
- St Mary Alderley
- Christ Church West Didsbury

Additionally, we provided a choir for the following services:

- Installation of our Vicar as Vicar of St Catherine Birtles
- Institution and Induction of Reverend Nathan Jarvis as Rector of St Mary Alderley
- Commissioning of Reverend Paul Deakin as Rural Dean of Knutsford

We are fortunate to have several members who are multi-talented, being able to conduct, accompany and sing more than one voice part. This has given us greater flexibility to achieve a well balanced choir.

OPALS have continued to sing for Taizé services once a month and have boosted choir numbers at weddings and funerals. There are four members. Several choir members have joined with OPALS to lead singing and provide cantor parts and harmony at the Taizé services.

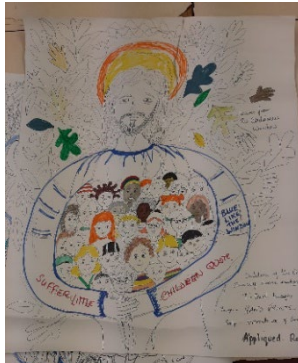
*Peter Spooner, Organist and Choirmaster*

## THE WORSHIP SPACE COMMITTEE

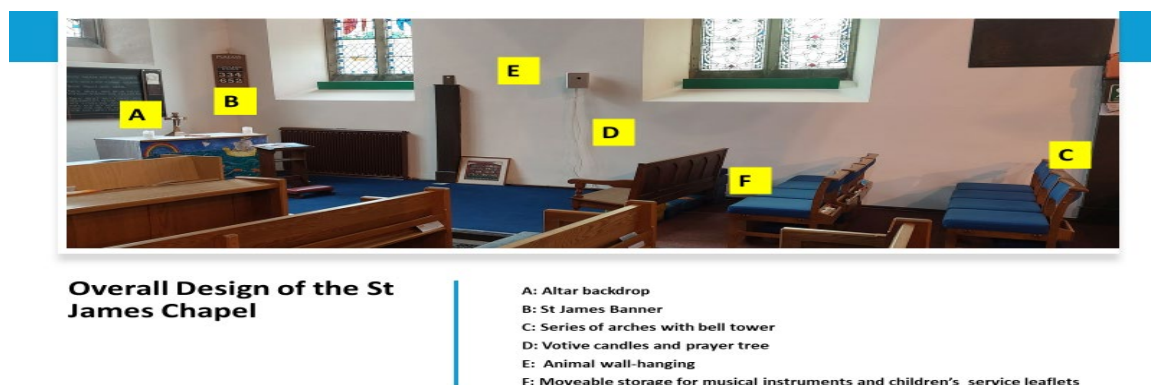
Our church is beautiful. Visitors often comment that they feel a strange sense of peace when they enter our building. The Worship Space Committee ensures our church remains a beautiful and peaceful place for worship. There is a balance to be struck between preserving our traditions and expressing the uniqueness of our own age. This is the challenge of the Worship Space Committee.

This year, our efforts have been directed towards ensuring that our building is a place of welcome for children and their families. For that purpose, members of our team have been involved:

- In designing Welcome Bags with activities for children who attend our services.
- In developing a sensory trail around our church for children on the autistic spectrum.
- In creating a new banner dedicated to St James and an animal wall-hanging.
- 



In September, we presented our second Parish Plan Proposal. The essence of the proposal is to create a dedicated space for worship space for young people in the St James' chapel in support of our church's ministry to them. The overall design presented to the PCC is as follows:



We are currently working on all the components of this proposal.

My thanks to all committee members for their dedication, hard work, creativity and common sense. They are Rhona Dalziel, Bob Tuffin, Amy Ruston, Sue Mills, Mandy Parr, Clare Wearne, and Rachel Roberts. Michael Scaife was also a member; we miss his knowledge, insight and wisdom. We have recently welcomed three new members: Heather Jobling, Bethan Weston and Sandra Woodall.

*Rachel Roberts, Worship Space Committee*

## MOTHERS' UNION

Another busy year!

Members enjoyed presentations by:-

Sue Mills/Sandra Woodall – Banner for St James' Chapel

Philip Alexander – Jewish Prayer

Amanda Parr – Old Alderley Shops & More

Rev'd Robin led our Lent Reflection. The Wave of Prayer was highlighted in our regular Sunday Service, with a Special Service compiled by Robin.

In September we were awarded a Bronze Certificate for our work in promoting and support of, the 16 days of activism – Rise Up Campaign.

Members prepared the posies for Mothering Sunday and later in the year prepared Christingles. An enjoyable Strawberry Tea was held in July. In November we hosted a Coffee Morning which included our deanery friends and prayer partners from St Luke, Holmes Chapel. Our Alternative Carol Service included our Tuesday Tots families and was enjoyed by all. It was a delight to see the wonder on the faces of the tots during Robin's Christmas Story.

To celebrate Mary Sumner Day, we joined the regular mid-week Communion Service. Rev'd Robin highlighted the work of Mary Sumner with additional prayers and readings.

We continued to support:

C.W.A. (Cheshire Without Abuse), providing 50 Easter Eggs and 50 Selection Boxes.  
The S.C.B.U. units at Wythenshawe and Macclesfield – tiny garments and blankets.

Macclesfield Hospital – 50 emergency toilet bags and 7 knee blankets.  
Ukraine – 20 Bags of Education.

In addition, we provided:

For the residents of ROAR 12 emergency toilet bags and assorted toiletries and Christmas Gift items.  
For Mums/Babies at HMP Styal 2 birthing bags and 5 welcome baby baskets.

Clare is our baptism visitor/contact and has been continuing to prepare prayer cubes/activity sheets and to welcome families to their special services for 25 years.

Linda has continued doing sterling work contacting members. She provides a listening ear for “fedupness”. Josie and Sandra have continued with their responsibilities for social concern, faith and policy.

A big “thank you” to everybody – clergy, church family and wider community for their support.  
The committee thanks everyone who has contributed in any way at all during the year.

*Mrs Sheila Rayner, Mothers’ Union*

## **CHURCHES TOGETHER IN ALDERLEY**

The Chair’s AGM report on the work of Churches Together in Alderley for 2024 emphasized the importance of “Keeping things going” and modelling an active and practical ecumenism in our regular activities. Father Matthew Thomas from St Pius Church moved to a new post in September, and we were pleased to welcome Fr Anthony McGrath, whose ministry now includes the Roman Catholic parishes of Wilmslow and Handforth. We continue to work closely with the Revd Nick Thompson of AEMC and the Revd Nathan Jarvis of St Mary’s Alderley.

- The annual service for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity was held at St Pius at 6.00 PM, preceded by the Churches Together AGM at 5 pm. The service was co-ordinated by Stephen Stewart of St Pius on the theme “You shall love the Lord your God... and your neighbour as yourself.”
- The World Day of Prayer service in March was held at St Mary’s Alderley. The service written by the women of Palestine was excellent and extremely relevant to current events in the Middle East. Prof Philip Alexander gave an introduction to put the service in context.
- Wednesday evening services in rural churches around the area in Lent were much appreciated, with many people particularly noting that they had never before been to the Methodist church at Mottram St Andrew.
- Holy Week services in all churches were well attended and appreciated. The Good Friday Walk of Witness had 70 to 80 walkers, more than last year. The Easter Vigil at St Mary’s was a very moving service. The Son Rise service on the Edge was well attended with 44, and was extra ecumenical as it was led by our URC student minister Tom.
- The Christian Aid week collection in May was ably co-ordinated by Ian Wilson and his team. Ian also organised a Christian Aid walk to St Catherine’s Birtles.
- The Christian Aid Quiz Night in October was successfully organised by Pam Thompson and Chris Wearne.

- Pam Thompson's regular Fairtrade stalls at CTIA events and at St Philip & St James were much appreciated.
- The Revd Nick Thompson led the annual service of remembrance at the War Memorial on Remembrance Sunday.
- The year closed with our annual candlelit service for Advent Sunday at St Mary's Alderley.
- Churches Together members have also become involved in a local network organising support for Ukrainian families, initiated by a member of St Pius Church.
- The St Elizabeth Fund is an ecumenical initiative for relieving local hardship. The fund is administered by St Philip & St James Church and is overseen by three trustees; Rev'd Nick Thompson, Minister at Alderley Edge Methodist Church, Sue Mills, licensed pastoral worker at St Philip & St James and Rev'd Robin Pye, Chair of CTIA and vicar of St Philip & St James and St Catherine's.
- Thanks are due to the Chair, Revd Robin Pye; the Secretary, Pam Thompson; and to the St Philip & St James reps, Rhona Dalziel, Pam Higham and Sandra Thompson.

*Rev'd Cannon Professor Loveday Alexander*

## **KNUTSFORD DEANERY SYNOD ANNUAL REPORT**

Report of Deanery Synod Representatives to Church AGM 30 March 2025

1. Since the church's last AGM on 21 April 2024 there have been two meetings of the Knutsford Deanery Synod (KDS) to which we belong; 18 June and 26 November. The next meeting is 2 April, three days after this AGM giving us the opportunity to pursue points raised by you, the congregation.
2. The routine agenda for KDS meetings is: a specialist talk on church and diocesan activities here and abroad; General Synod (GS) issues; finance; clergy and ordinands and notable activities amongst the deanery's sixteen parishes.
3. The specialist talk in June was by Graham Buttonshaw on two Anglican dioceses in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC but previously known as Zaire). Bishop Tanner had previously visited the area and a Congolese bishop was due to make a reciprocal visit to Knutsford in November. This part of Africa has a long and bloody history both under Belgian colonial rule and since independence in 1960 and for those of a literary bent Joseph Conrad's novel "Heart of Darkness" is a powerful insight into its history. We were all exhorted to pray and offer friendship and fellowship to those living in this benighted part of Africa. Details can be found on the diocesan web- site.
4. The November talk was by Bishop Corley, suffragan of Stockport who explained his recent visits to schools where he was struck by the thoughtful insight so many children demonstrated. On a darker note, he explored safeguarding the vulnerable from predatory behaviour by those connected to the church: he accepted that more could have been done and sooner, particularly in the light of the then recent resignation of Archbishop Welby. In what was a lively exchange he

encouraged members of KDS to challenge the bishops if it seemed they were not taking the requisite steps to discipline the guilty, Christian forgiveness notwithstanding.

5. The General Synod report was a lengthy one and dwelt mainly with “Living in Love and Faith” (LLF) - a clerical euphemism for same sex marriage made lawful by the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013. The session being reported on was that at York in July although there was a more recent at Church House, Westminster from 10 to 14 February. In addition, church finances and safeguarding were addressed as summarised below.
6. We are probably all aware of the long-standing controversy about gay marriage which, to many, has generated far more heat than light. Since the Church of England is the only religious organisation to have legal authority to marry people one simple view might be that it ought to follow the law of the land as with discrimination against women priests and bishops, controversies now resolved but not without exhausting intensity in their day. And marriage is not nor ever has been “owned” by the church - in times past it was a financial bargain between the wealthy with poorer folk merely publicly plighting their troth. We shall see how the LLF debate works out but as humble parishioners trying to live the Christian life locally the continuing LLF debate is a tiresome distraction and a waste of resources supposedly in short supply.
7. On finance, the Archbishops’ Finance Chair (Carl Hughes) had reported to the GS that the Church of England’s finances overall were in a poor state and “barely sustainable on the present basis”. He drew attention to the massive duplication of administrative functions as between the forty two dioceses which suggests that ruthless pruning is called for. Congregants may be familiar with “Save the Parish”, a group set up several years ago by the Rector of St Bartholomew the Great in London which has attracted a lot of grass roots support and who have analysed diocesan finances with some disturbing discoveries. Not the least of their complaints is the proposal to pay £100 million to compensate the descendants of slavery, abolished by the UK and before anywhere else some two hundred years ago.
8. On safeguarding, a topic which has seen the demise of one former and one serving Archbishop of Canterbury, there is a continuing debate in the GS on how to manage an independent vetting service following the report of Prof Alexis Jay. At local level those of us with a public facing role in St Phillip’s are required to undergo DAB vetting as well as regular training and updates but the difficulties arise with how complaints are dealt with further up the hierarchy. One suspects that this topic is complicated by the priestly role in absolution for sins confessed but we must all be clear that spiritual forgiveness is separate from temporal punishment for crimes which is the province of the police and the courts.
9. If members of the congregation have points they would like raised at the next or indeed any KDS will they please feel free to get in touch - just as they would by contacting their MP to raise the matter in Parliament or with a Government Minister.

*Martin Steiger, Sandra Thompson & Mandy Parr, Deanery Synod Representatives*

## **THE ALDERLEY HISTORY GROUP BASED AT ST PHILIP & ST JAMES**

2024 was another historic year as we helped the Parish Council commemorate the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of D Day. A tea dance was held at the Festival Hall, and our group provided visual and audio recordings of memories from Alderley villagers.

We continue to meet every Wednesday, as part of the Warm Wednesday initiative. People regularly come down to pursue, research and catalogue our archives - several of our group have joined the singing group. We have 10/12 people regularly meeting.

We held three meetings in the Westend this year.

17<sup>th</sup> June – George Hill former scientist at AZ, talked to us about his 2019 book about the History & Life at Alderley Park, which encouraged us to do a field trip to Alderley Park in July,

22<sup>nd</sup> July – we held our annual summer social with Pimm's and a chance for visitors to look through our archives.

9<sup>th</sup> September- Ellen Brabban-Brown talked to us about Jodrell Bank, a history of scientific advancement spanning 8 decades.

Michael Scaife, our founder member sadly died in April. Michael was an integral part of our group; a true gentleman and great friend and is sadly missed by us all. We are proud and thankful for his legacy of historic booklets, on WW1 soldiers, History of St Philip & St James Church, and his last one, about the stain glass windows of the church. Michael had been deputy Headmaster of CHS, and a history scholar.

The Alderley History Group wish to thank the church for its continued support.

Visitors to the church can use a map which the group helped to produce, with notes of interesting and historic facts about the Church.

*Mandy Parr, Secretary AHG*

## **TREASURER'S REPORT**

**The PCC of St Philip and St James, Alderley Edge**

### **FINANCIAL REVIEW FOR 2024**

- In 2024 we had a deficit of £9,757.92. This compares to a surplus of £30,075.93 in 2023. In 2022 the surplus was £13,051.43.



- Planned Giving was £85,551.10 and we also received £651.00 in Gift Aid envelopes, giving a total of £86,202.10. In 2023 we received £78,213.00 and £3,346.50 in Gift Aid envelopes. This gives a total (both subject to Gift Aid) of £81,559.50. In 2022 we received a total of £80,486.02.
- In 2024 we received legacies of £2,000.00, compared to £15,189.75 in 2023 and nil in 2022.
- During 2024 we donated £3,091.54 from the St Elizabeth Fund and were left with a balance of £6,045.00. In 2023 we donated £3,514.93 and the year-end balance was £1,054.95.
- In 2023 we set up the Conservation Fund, where, for a donation of £5 per month (or £60 p.a.) participants are entered into a monthly draw and the surplus at the end of 12 months will be put towards the church fabric. At the end of 2024 there were 63 members. £658.75 was paid out in prize money and at the end of the first 12 months £2,868.75 had accrued to the church.
- Via Christingle we donated £258.78 to The Children's Society and £172.97 to St Francis House (Primary School Nativity Play collection). We gave £359.35 from Votive Candle donations and £156.30 from the Christian Unity service to Christians Aid. We donated £311.13 to Christian Aid, £380.41 to ROAR and the same to Hope Central, from the St Elizabeth Fund. We continued to make distributions through the Food Bank.
- A usual, our largest item of expenditure was the Parish Share (which funds our vicar and the vicarage). In 2022 because we created a benefice with St Catherine's, Over Alderley our Parish Share was reduced. The savings have been used to fund a part-time administrator. Our Parish Share was £83,237.64 in 2024, compared to £80,400.05 in 2023. The next largest items were General PCC Expenditure at £19,595.92 (including rent for the curate's house, replacement pew runners and voice coaching), Utilities (including a boiler rebuild) at £16,932.58, Repairs at £7,816.13 and Insurance at £6,944.36.
- Gift Aid payments received from HMRC, based on Pledged Giving and Gift Aided donations in 2024 were £22,590.26, compared to £22,518.07. In 2022 they were £25,526.13.
- Apart from Regular Donations and the associated Gift Aid, the largest income category this year was the Everything Everywhere Transmitter at £14,687.92 (compared to £15,863.64 in 2023). However, income will reduce sharply when the new contract is implemented. The second largest category was Church Collections. We received £8,434.29 which is somewhat higher than the £4,572.36 received in 2023. The amount was boosted by the Sum-Up card readers.
- £7,202.44 of Endowment Income was received (compared to £7,092.25 in 2023) and is 'Unrestricted'. Our book value of the relevant Endowments is £6,975.00. Accounting regulations do not require us to obtain a current valuation. However, the two components appreciated by 2.3% compared to 9.5% in the previous year. At the end of 2024, the main Endowment Fund was valued at £192,010.90 (£187,714.41 at end of 2023) and the McElpatrick Fund was valued at £73,391.45 (£71,749.22 at the end of 2023). The former cannot be accessed since it arose from investments to pay the stipend before the Diocese assumed responsibility, but the latter can be spent as the PCC sees fit (but it does provide an extremely useful income).
- We hold two accounts with Church Board of Finance Deposit Fund (CCLA). The balances at the end of 2024 were £47,320.89 and £38,228.71. Interest is paid quarterly.

*Ian Standen, Treasurer*

## ***HOW TO GIVE TO THE CHURCH***

We are always very grateful for donations to our Church which help us continue our work and enable us to maintain our building. Below there are details of how to donate which can also be found on our website [www.stphilipandstjames.co.uk](http://www.stphilipandstjames.co.uk)

By Bank Transfer to our main church account

Barclays Bank

The Parochial Church Council of St Philip & St James

Account Number: 40696668

Sort Code: 20-53-77

By Bank Transfer to the St Elizabeth Fund

Barclays Bank

The Parochial Church Council of St Philip & St James

Account Number: 33999939

Sort Code: 20-53-77

Or via this QR code

