

THE PARISH OF BLACKWELL, ALL SAINTS' AND SALUTATION



THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE
PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL,
CHURCH GROUPS,
& RELATED ORGANISATIONS
FOR THE CHURCH YEAR
April 2022 – April 2023

The Parish of All Saints and Salutation Blackwell

Table of Contents

	Page No:
1. Introduction	
• Vicar's Report	3
• Church Warden's Report	8
• Secretary's Report	9
• Electoral Roll Report	10
• Parish Office Report	10
2. Worship and Faith Development Reports	
• Parish Readers	11
• Vergers Report	11
• Safeguarding Officer Report	12
• Readers and Sidespersons	12
• Music Director Report	12
• Music Group	13
• Flower Arrangers	14
3. Stewardship: Finances & Buildings & Grounds Reports.	
• PCC Treasurer's Report	15
• Abridged Accounts	36-41
• Planned Giving	16
• Buildings and Grounds	18
• Salutation Hall	19
4. Church Communities Groups & Activities Reports	
• Social Committee	20
• Green Action Group	21

• All Saint's and Salutation Ladies Fellowship	21
• All Saint's and Salutation Men's Group	22
• Parish Lunch	22
• Circle Dancing	23
• Handbell Ringers	24
• Badminton Group	24
• Knitting and Crafts Group	25
• Church Refreshments	25
• Scrabble Club	25

5. Community Engagement and Charities Reports

• Community Outreach Group	26
• Partnership for Missional Church	26
• The Parish Magazine	27
• The Children's Society	27
• Pre-School Group	28
• 29 th All Saints and Salutation Rainbows	29
• 11 th All Saints and Salutation Brownies	29
• 12 th All Saints Brownies	30
• 29 th Darlington Guides	31
• 29 th Salutation Brownies	31
• Millennium Hall	32
• All Saints' Millennium Centre Trust (Darlington) Ltd	32

6. Wider Church and Synod Reports

• Darlington Deanery Synod	34
----------------------------	----

7. Appendices

• Abridged Accounts	36-41
---------------------	-------

1. INTRODUCTION

This is the twenty fifth annual report of the Parish of Blackwell, a parish that became a legal entity on All Saints' Day, 1998. This report covers the period from the last Annual General Meeting held in May 2022 to April 2023. The Annual Report is a collection of individual reports from the different people, committees and groups involved with this Parish Church, and they show, as in previous years, the full expression of the ministry we are all involved in within the congregations and wider parish, and in service to the community. It is hoped that the report will be read by parishioners and friends as well, and that you will pray for those who are involved in all the different activities, groups and organisations.

The full report will again be published on the parish website to reduce the number of copies that need to be printed. We are grateful to those people who have taken time and care to write reports and to those who have had a hand in producing this Annual Report.

Vicar's Report

It is my pleasure and privilege to be writing my annual report for All Saints' Church, Blackwell. I would like to begin by congratulating our congregation(s) in enabling the church to bounce back from COVID-19 (C19). We have gradually increased our church services and our church socials – and this year I would particular like to offer thankyou to the ministry team and the social committee, with particular thanks to the team who have reintroduced the parish lunches. Our services and activities are crucial for the church and the local community. It is with heartfelt thanks that I extend our congratulations to the PCC and all of the church committees who help to make the church run smoothly. In 2022, as we recovered from post C19, we returned to church services and developed a new era of the 'normal' environment. In retrospect, it took weeks and months for people to return to church because we still lived alongside C19 as a prominent feature in our society. So, whilst many folk have returned to church, there is still a plethora of those who feel unsafe in public spaces. We acknowledge that this is a concern on a national level impacting on all our churches. However, we have acted positively by continuing to offer our range of services, whilst aiming to keep the staff and congregation as safe as possible.

This year we have had Sandra Whiston and David Smith as Churchwardens and they have helpfully navigated the church through adaptations and changes and have made significant contributions – I thank Sandra and David very much and I have valued their insight and wisdom. We also have had Mike Fryer as a Deputy Churchwarden and he has done significant work in helping in Churchwarden duties as well as church Verger duties – Mike enables the smooth running of services and prepares us for the occasional offices. Mike, thank you.

This past year has been my toughest time in 20 years of ministry, as I was plagued with health issues in the autumn of 2022 into the early part of 2023. During my absence, the Ministry Team (Tim, Debs, Kevin, Debby, Keith and Andy) of our benefice have been absolutely fantastic in enabling Holy Communion, Services of the Word and the Occasional Offices – they have led

worship, preached, prayed and led the church in the best way possible. On behalf of all of us, I thank you. Much of what takes place in our church is hidden, through the painstaking efforts of Nicky in the Parish Office. Nicky, thank you for your hard work and efforts, your reliability and the speed at which you work!

This year, I give particular thanks to Andy Young. This was the year that Andy completed his studies (fast track) and was licensed as a Reader. Congratulations Andy! Since his licensing, Andy has gone from strength to strength – not only is he our Director of Music, but he now leads worship, he has successfully done his first funeral, he can preach (extremely well), he is enabling the re-introduction of Parents and Toddlers and he directed a fantastic concert in the church recently and his leadership and wit(!) was much appreciated. Andy has overcome so much, and he is a joyous addition to our Ministry Team.

Church objectives and activities

Despite the challenges that C-19 brought to our nation, our community and Church, we have aimed at all times to provide full and accessible church services for those who live in the parish and to visitors. All the factors that we previously used, to measure the development and progress of our church, were last year, replaced with new parameters and we believe that we have still engaged with Mission Action Plan (MAP) priorities of the church which include:

- Discipleship and Spiritual growth
- Community connection/outreach
- Pastoral care
- Communication

During the year of the C19 pandemic, the church attendance, in line with national statistics, in a physical sense has seen a slow and sporadic return of parishioners. At our Sunday worship we have maintained the use of Zoom so that we can offer 'hybrid church' and the Church of England now calls it 'Stay at Home' church. During the year there have been times when a limited physical gathering was possible in church and we developed a way of live streaming our worship from church via Zoom. This meant that we could offer this hybrid church, i.e. physically or virtually attended worship. In this last year, we welcomed back the uniformed organisations and it was a joy to see them returning and at our first Parade service on Mothering Sunday in 2022, we had a tremendous turn out from the Guides and the Brownies and their families.

For those who don't own computers or have a way to connect to online services we continue to distribute 'service summaries' on a Monday to those in need, which consists of the words of the service, prayers for the day and a copy of the weekly sermon. These are very warmly received and there has been a request for these to continue. I extend my thanks to Katie Malcolm for facilitating this.

During the C19 pandemic a new and increasingly virulent variant of C19 (Omicron) was present in Darlington and alongside all the other churches in Darlington we needed to close the church for social gatherings, until it was safe to resume. However, in 2022 we saw that our social activities increased with quizzes, themed evenings, parish lunches and coffee mornings – all of which benefitted our parish in decreasing social isolation. Our parish statistics show that we have a larger than average elderly population, most children are now older and are teenagers, young adults are now still living with parents but there is a growing number of socially isolated people, not just the elderly but adults living on their own.

Discipleship and Spiritual growth

We have continued a weekly group to study the Bible together. There is a group who meet in person once a week in Lent, and another group which meets online via Zoom throughout the year. By having both options available, these sessions are attended. Lent groups are always popularly attended but Easter and Christmas services were affected by the restrictions that all churches have been required to put in place. I ran a healing ministry course for the members of the pastoral care team, so that the healing ministry can be offered on Sunday morning. This course, written by myself was put in place in Chester Diocese in 2011 and it is still used there.

There is a prayer group which meets monthly and provides an ongoing prayer forum for private requests in the parish and for those whom we regularly pray for. There is also a mid-week prayer for the support of the ministry of the church.

There is a willingness to run a rolling programme throughout the year of courses that focus on discipleship and spiritual growth. We have learnt that using tools such as Zoom has enabled more people to engage with Christian discipleship, in that there is not a need to leave the home and thus shortens the time required. We have risen to the challenge that we set ourselves and there remains an opportunity to focus on regular tithing as part of our Christian faith.

Community connection/outreach

We have continued to develop a greater presence in our community through our website and our Facebook page and we now also have a church WhatsApp group which enables communication, connection and friendship.

Throughout the year, the Community Outreach Group, which works in parallel with the Partnership for Missional Church (PMC), shares this ministry with the Incumbent. This group has continued to meet throughout 2022 and they are beginning to look at new ways of doing church that might enable community outreach. There has been a real desire to do Café Church on a Sunday afternoon once every couple of months initially and Café Church has taken place three times in 2022 and it is finding its niche in ways of doing church.

The Millennium Centre (managed through a separate trust company) and Salutation Hall continue to be an important way in which this Christian community serves the needs of the wider

community in which it is set. Both the Centre and the Hall are usually well used and provide invaluable service to the community. The Millennium Trust and the Building and Grounds Committee care for our buildings, including the church and its grounds, and progress of works is reported to the PCC.

The Green Action Group has promoted our care of God's Creation more effectively in recent years and has continued to be a strong presence during the C19 lockdown. The Group continues to work towards achieving the status of Eco-Congregation for the church and we have been awarded the Silver award, which is a tremendous achievement and are currently on their way to Gold. I extend my personal thanks to all of the groups and activities that support our community.

I have been developing the relationships with the schools in our community and I have run collective worship at St Edwin's and at Abbey schools. It is a great desire of mine, to further develop the schools' ministry and this isn't something that I can run in isolation.

In 2023, I offered a British Sign Language course and a regular group of 10 people met over 6 weeks to learn the basics of BSL. There has been a local request for an evening course, which I am more than happy to run. As the Diocesan Advisor for the Deaf, I am working towards setting up a church in each Deanery that might offer an interpreted sign language accessible service once a month, to enable Deaf people in our local community, the opportunity to attend a church service.

Pastoral care

This is an area of ministry which continues to grow, as we set up the pastoral care group to work alongside the Vicar in the pastoral care of the flock. Within this group there are three ordained ministers (incl. Vicar) and pastoral ministers. We have developed:

- 'Service summaries' which have the Sunday services in written format for distribution.
- Telephone groups using a free conference call facility for 3 or more people/friends to connect (this has now been dissolved)
- Completion of five successful runs of the 'Bereavement journey' which is a 5-week course and is part of a rolling programme in support of people who have experienced bereavement whether it is recently or a time in the past. Invitations are sent around our local community..
- We continue to offer Home Communion and pastoral visits
- Christenings, Baptisms, Confirmation, Weddings and Funerals are offered at All Saints' Church.

After C19, there has been an increase in mental health issues and bereavement. Research did show that in the first part of the lockdown, anxiety and depression increased by a third but these levels have since decreased. In this parish, we have seen a lot of hidden loneliness and isolation and this is present across the age groups – due to disability, illness, bereavement or mental health issues. Also, the Alzheimer's Society has told us that in Darlington we have increasing early onset dementia in younger adults. I have been doing 'Singing for the Brain' (SFTB) training with the Alzheimer's Society and ran two sessions in our community.

We offer fortnightly Holy Communion in Abbeyfields (an assisted living place) and I am also a Trustee. We also provide a monthly provision of services in the Garden Care Home. Regular pastoral visiting and bereavement visits are done by the clergy and the pastoral care team.

Communication

The Parish Vision highlighted that we needed to improve on our communication as a Church.

Our Parish Vision is:

To Grow God's Kingdom through All Saints' and Salutation, Blackwell. We believe God is calling us to do this by:

- Growing the Church
- Growing as Disciples
- Growing in Service to the parish and beyond.

The Vicar adds "The ministry of Jesus Christ's Church for us, is "changing the lives of the people of Blackwell, one life at a time".

The Parish Vision was first developed in 2009, revisited in 2011 and refreshed as the Parish Profile was written in 2014. May 2016, there was a Parish meeting to look at the Parish Vision and the current situation in the church and how this informs our plan for mission in the future. We are aware that we need to look again at the Parish Vision and further develop our priorities.

Pre-School

The All Saints Blackwell Pre-school is a feather in our cap and we are enormously proud of them. In 2022, an Ofsted inspection reported that the Pre-school is outstanding in all areas and this is a marvellous achievement, and this has come from the hard work of Amanda Summers and her team. The 2022 Ofsted report highlights:

"Children thrive at this lovely pre-school. They demonstrate high levels of independence and confidence and show that they thoroughly enjoy their time at the pre-school. Staff know children extremely well and plan exciting activities that ignite their curiosity. For instance, children show fascination as they watch caterpillars, using their magnifying glasses. Children's behaviour is impeccable. Adults set clear expectations for children's behaviour. They model respectful relationships excellently. Adults are very responsive to children's emotional needs and children make strong bonds with adults. Children thoroughly enjoy playing together. Close friendships are evident throughout the pre-school. Children take turns, discuss their ideas and work collaboratively. For example, children work together to hold a pirate flag up in the wind and say, 'Let's hold it up. Three, two, one!'

"Children benefit from adults who have a deep understanding of each child's needs. Children who need additional support receive this quickly and effectively. For example, plans are put in place so

that all staff know how to help children to make progress and referrals are made to other services for support, such as speech and language therapy.”

“Parents and carers speak very highly of the Pre-school and all the staff”.

I highly commend this annual report at my third APCM.

The Revd Jennifer Croft, Vicar of All Saints' & Salutation and Chair of the PCC, April 2022

The Church Wardens Report

As David Smith and I approach the end of our first year as Churchwardens, it is my turn to reflect on the past year which has seen a gradual re-emergence of the ‘new normal’ for church life post-pandemic.

Services have largely resumed in both number and format, including the continued use of a blended approach to offering worship. Thank you to Andy Hopkins for continuing to mastermind and problem solve the technical aspects of Zoom and to Ian Groves who does the majority of the Sunday morning Zoom duties and has given of his time to provide this service at numerous funerals throughout the past year, offering friends and families unable to travel the opportunity to witness these services. As I write the PCC have started discussions about how we might reintroduce the sharing of the Common Cup at Communion. Another small step towards normality for those who feel comfortable with this format.

Similarly, opportunities for social contact and outreach have gradually been restored or introduced. The social committee have delivered a year of events which are described in that report so I will not repeat it here. The opportunity to chat over a coffee after Sunday and Wednesday services and the re-establishment of the monthly Parish Lunch have been widely welcomed.

Thank you in particular the ministry team and fellow wardens for their support as we worked to maintain a range of worship during Jen’s absence due to ill-health, and to the PCC who tolerated my chairing of meetings.

As a Parish it was a pleasure to host the 2022 Deanery confirmation service and share with the candidates this important event in their journey of faith. Bishop Sarah was a delight on the evening, but a particular thank you to Brian Holmes for his wise guidance during the preparation for, and the service itself. A thank you also to all who supported the provision and serving of refreshments for the candidates and their families and friends after the service.

The sad death of Her Majesty the Queen brought an unanticipated change in the pattern of worship in September and challenges in implementation of the guidance. Members of the congregation and the wider community appreciated being able to come into Church, take time to reflect on a long life of duty and service lived as a committed Christian and add their thoughts to the Book of Remembrance. And a special note of thanks to Mike Fryer who did a sterling job raising and

lowering the flag to comply with the timetable of events once we'd worked out the complicated timings.

Thank you also to David Smith for taking the lead over recent months in developing a new Health and Safety Policy for the Church and undertaking the resultant risk assessments.

It has been a privilege to serve as Warden, and I am grateful for the help and support of Jen, my fellow Churchwarden, David Smith and Prowarden Mike Fryer and all the members of the PCC.

Sandra Whiston, Churchwarden.

PCC Secretary's Report

Throughout the last year, I would like to express my sincere thanks to Rev. Jennifer Croft, the Churchwardens, and members of the PCC for their continued help, support and encouragement to assist me to fulfil my role as PCC Secretary.

Since the last APCM in May 2022 the PCC has met 7 times in Church under the chairmanship of the Rev Jennifer Croft or Sandra Whiston, Churchwarden. The meetings were attended on average by 21 members.

I have carried out the role of Secretary to the PCC for a period of four years during some very difficult times including the interregnum and COVID, but I now feel that the pressure of circumstances outside of the Church have led me to make the difficult decision that it is time that I stepped back from the role.

Once again, I wish to thank Rev. Jennifer Croft the Churchwardens and all members of the PCC for the help and support they have given me over the last four years.

Sheila Walton. PCC Secretary

Electoral Roll Report

In accordance with Church Representation Rules 2020, a partial revision of the roll has been carried out. Those who were on the roll and have deceased during the past year have been removed and a there has been one new addition. One notification has been received requesting removal from the roll.

The new representation rules specify that the published roll must only display the names of those enrolled.

Over 50% of the people on the Roll reside within the Parish boundary and about 90% live inside the DL3 postal district.

A copy of the Roll is available for inspection in the Parish Office.

Year		Number on Roll
2019	Full revision	189
2022	Partial revision	193
2023	Partial revision	191

David V Smith, Electoral Roll Officer

Parish Office

The Parish Office is staffed Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday mornings from 9.30am until 12noon and is the focus of parish administration.

The office not only serves this parish of course, but also the Parish of Coniscliffe.

Nicky Waller, Parish Secretary

2. WORSHIP AND FAITH DEVELOPMENT REPORT

Parish Readers

It has been another busy year for the Readers, and it has been a great joy to have Andy Young join us as a member of the Reader team (in addition to his work as our Organist and Choir Leader), following his licensing in September last year. In the first few months since then, he has supported the Vicar and Rev. Brian Holmes in care home ministry at Abbeyfield and The Gardens' residential homes, and preaches, along with the rest of the team, on Sundays, and occasionally on Wednesdays at the 10.00am Eucharist. Andy is also developing a funeral ministry, and is involved with Café Church, which takes place every two months, on a Sunday afternoon. He is looking to get the Parent and Toddler Group re-launched in April, with support and encouragement from others, and he and Rev. Brian Holmes together designed and constructed the Easter tableau which has graced the area beneath the altar, this year. As can be seen, he has brought some new skills to the Reader team.

Amongst the duties that we *all* share, including preaching both at All Saints', St Edwin's and St Mary's, enabling worship across the Benefice, there has been pastoral work to be done, the leading of prayer, Bible study and Lent groups, being part of the magazine editorial leadership, organising the Men's Group, and more besides. The above doesn't fully cover what is done by your Reader team, (and I apologise for anything I have omitted), but it gives a flavour of what *can* be done.

There is always room for more people to come and expand the team with additional skills, so if you feel you may have a calling to ministry in some form, whether lay or ordained, please don't ignore it. Have a word with the Vicar, and find out what the possibilities might be. We have different gifts to offer in service, and we would all encourage others to explore their calling. You might be surprised where it could lead! We are grateful for the prayers and support given by the Vicar, Brian, and the congregation; but most of all, we give thanks to God for the privilege of serving him in all the ways we can.

With thanks from your Parish Readers:

Debby Gill, Susan Leatherbarrow, Keith Whiston, Kevin Winkworth and Andy Young

Verger's Report

Well doesn't time fly when you're busy, and I must take this opportunity to thank Phil and Alan for their continued help and support and above all their assistance in preparing the church for the varied services that are undertaken.

A great big thank you goes to Eileen Auty who has fitted in well and 'clicked' to our way of working. She will definitely be a tremendous asset to the existing verging team of vergers.

We as a team must all pull together when we are doing funerals, baptisms and weddings. They may come thick and fast, but the vergers of All Saints and Salutation church will rise to the occasion and do our duties diligently.

God bless you all.

Mike Fryer, Head Verger

Safeguarding Report

Once again there are no significant safeguarding incidents to report. Our commitment to safeguarding is evidenced by its profile on the church website and our dedicated safeguarding email address safeguarding@allsaintsblackwell.org.uk.

We continue to implement guidance cascaded from the Church of England via the Diocesan Safeguarding team. In the past year an online Parish Safeguarding Dashboard has been introduced to support Parish monitoring of their compliance.

Mike Fryer and Sandra Whiston, Safeguarding Officers

Readers and Sidespeople

There are almost 33 parishioners regularly involved, some just readers or sidespeople, some are on both rota's. We are very grateful for everyone's involvement.

We are always pleased when someone new wants to become involved in this important part of our worship. Please, let me know if you would like to be included in the next six monthly rota.

Nicky Waller, Parish Secretary

Music Director Report

This is the current state of music in the church:

Choir

We have a small number of people willing to sing when they are available for Sunday services. This is very much appreciated, and it is lovely to have, however congregational singing in the church is genuinely excellent. I would love us to have a weekly group. I don't need us to rehearse much, maybe 10 minutes before the service. Every member of our congregation would be very welcome to volunteer their help any time to make this happen - certainly that is the only way it will happen.

Our Tuesday night choir is doing good work on behalf of the church. They provided much of the choir for the Christmas services, and spend much of autumn rehearsing for those services. Without their help, we would no longer be able to put on either the Nine Lessons or the Advent service. With the help of this choir, we have also been able to restart parish evensong, a gentler, more user-friendly version of the evensong you get in cathedrals. You are all very welcome to join us on the third Sunday of the month. My aim is to make sure, through this choir, that we have singers when we cannot manage without them.

Their concerts also either raise money directly for the church or in the name of the church for groups like the Town Mission.

The choir also has the role of bringing people into the church and our church family who would not otherwise have reason to be part of the church. This has been a particularly successful part of the choir's changing role, which has paid a number of dividends already.

Band

Like the choir, this brings people into the church who would not perhaps do so, and has made the church a number of new friends who help out when they can. One of these is Alasdair, our piper, who you may have seen at a couple of events.

They also publicise the work of the church – last year playing at Piercebridge fete as well as our own, and also playing outdoors for a carol singing event.

As with the choir, we do not charge for participation, and we try to provide instruments when needed. There are some still available and you are very welcome to come and try out playing a wind or percussion instrument with us. Having regular church-goers in the groups helps to bring people into our worshipping congregation.

Organists

Caroline and James are doing excellently, and need your support when they play for services. The organ is a challenging instrument, and leading a congregation is extremely difficult and can only be learned by... leading a congregation. It took me a lot of years to do it with any confidence, and even now after 30 odd years of it, I find it can be a challenge and have more to learn.

Bequest

We now have a proper drum kit bequeathed to me, specifically for use to encourage new players, and to use in church. If anyone fancies learning to play it, or playing the piano whilst I play it, I would be delighted.

Andrew Young, Director of Music

Music Group

We are delighted to report that the Music Group has come together after the COVID break. What's more, we have two new members! We continue to enjoy praising God together and being an encouragement to others in their worship.

Lee & Dorothy Puchala

Flower Arrangers

It is good to get back to arranging flowers in church. I know they are appreciated by our parishioners. Thank you everyone for your kind comments. We have changed how we buy flowers, now only using fresh flowers for festivals or if they are requested for memorials, wedding anniversaries, birthdays etc. Fresh flowers have increased in price and we save money by using artificial flowers, and we don't have to change the arrangements so often.

There is only four of us on the flower arranging team! We need some more helpers especially for the festivals. So, if you can spare some time at Harvest come along and we will show you how to arrange flowers for the window ledges.

Lona Martin

3. Stewardship: Finances & Grounds Reports

PCC Treasurers Report

The repercussions of the pandemic continue to provide financial pressures on the church and our community.

The number of people attending services remains significantly lower than pre-pandemic levels and, together with the increased cost of living felt by all, has had financial ramifications for our church. However, as we come out of the pandemic things are slowly improving.

Details of the results for 2022 are shown in the extracts from the Annual Report and Financial Statements included under 'Abridged Accounts' later in this document and indicate an overall deficit of £5,217.

Total receipts on unrestricted funds were £122,932 (2021: £133,302) with total expenditure on unrestricted funds amounting to £129,164 (2021: £114,424) giving a deficit of £6,232 (2021 surplus: £18,878). However, during 2021 we were very fortunate to be the recipient of two legacies from former parishioners amounting to £35,000. Without these legacies we would have suffered a deficit in 2021 of £16,122, compared to that of only £6,232 in 2022.

Unrestricted Planned Giving reduced slightly to £57,584 (2021: £61,926), which is very disappointing

A total of £120,923 (2021: £110,070) was spent to provide the Christian Ministry, despite the main part of this, our payment of parish share to the Diocese, being reduced to £70,000 from £77,345 in 2021. Church Running costs have increased significantly to £13,424 (2021: £4,703), despite being helped by the receipt of £2,542 from the Diocese as part of the churches National Support for Energy Bills initiative, this amount being credited against our energy costs.

Full details of our income and expenditure during the year are provided in the extracts.

For the second time since the pandemic we were able to hold our Christmas Fair. This has always been a very successful event in our calendar and raised £3,672. Unfortunately, we have not, as yet, been able to resurrect another hugely successful event, our summer Garden Party, but we hope to do so again in 2023.

We have continued with our Charitable Mission & Giving throughout the year and I am pleased to report that we gave £6,042 to good causes in 2022.

We are also very fortunate to have many groups within our church which, as well as providing social activities, also raise funds for the church. Most of these have now restarted and returned to more normal levels, providing positive contributions to church funds. These include the Flower Fund (£164); Social Committee (£1,356); 100 Club (£466); Ladies Fellowship (£159); Circle Dancing (£235); Tea and Coffee (£654); Parish Lunch (£293) and the Bell Ringers who raised £703 enabling them to make a donation of £700 to the King's Church Foodbank.

The Restricted Funds surplus amounted to £41,015 (2021: £4,466).

This reflects the result of our Pre-School, which continues to go from strength to strength, obtaining from Ofsted during the year the award of “outstanding” in all areas, a fantastic achievement.

The overall net deficit of £5,217 is a disappointing result but shows an improvement over the deficit of £11,656 we would have suffered in 2021 without the two large legacies.

This deficit has resulted in our total net assets at the end of the year decreasing to £136,998 (2021: £142,215) of which £82,278 is unrestricted funds and £54,720 is restricted.

In an attempt to improve our finances the PCC decided that for 2023 we would reduce our parish share pledge to the Diocese from £70,000 to £60,000.

Despite this reduction the PCC still strongly believes in the doctrine that the parish share largely provides the stipends and housing for the clergy within the whole of the diocese and, therefore, helps parishes that are not as fortunate as we are financially.

Our parish share contribution has been reducing over the past few years from a peak in 2011 of £97,000 to £60,000 for 2023. In fact in the 10 years between 2010 and 2019 we paid an average of £92,500 per year.

Even after reducing our parish share we will still struggle to make a surplus in the current economic climate. As always, it is vital that we remain diligent in our control of costs and make every effort to increase income.

Peter Davison, Treasurer

Abridged Accounts – please see the Appendices on pages: 36, 37, 38, 39, 40 & 41

Planned Giving

What a year we have all had with so many increased costs in our everyday lives to contend with. The impact of these as you would expect have taken their toll upon our Parish finances. This year with the increased costs of running the Church, and the dip in giving, you will see from the Treasurers report we have incurred a deficit of £5217.

Our costs continue to increase, and this year although we have started to see much more activity across our Church, with the start of Café Church, Bereavement Courses, Sign Language courses, increased Church Services, Parish Lunches recommenced, and we piloted a warm space, all these and the many other activities we have offered and the regular maintenance we undertake on our buildings, incur costs. As a Parish it is important, we continue to grow our offering and engage with the local Community.

To enable our Church to flourish and maintain its offering, we need to consider how we can start to reduce this deficit. One area is through Parish Giving, and I appreciate this year hasn't been the best to be asking for more from you, however, my role is to help maintain and where possible grow the scheme, to benefit our Church.

Having reviewed the Standing Orders and the Parish Giving Scheme, I was delighted to note we have a number of new regular givers; those who have given for a long time have maintained their giving, and in a number of cases increased their giving. On behalf of the PCC please accept our grateful and sincere thanks.

Inevitably, we have lost some regular givers, and as expected some parishioners have needed to reduce or stop their giving, and this places a strain on our budget. I would urge all to consider whether they could increase their giving or start to make a commitment to regular giving to the Church. I would ask all regular givers, as well as people who would like to start to make a regular contribution to maintain the life and work of our Church to consider and sign up to the direct debit Parish Giving Scheme. Details of this scheme can be found in the foyer on the leaflet stand. This makes the administration much simpler, and feedback has been very positive about the ease with which you can contact the scheme administrators.

We are very conscious that giving should not just be about a financial commitment, but it is an intimate part of what you feel you can commit to our Church, your spiritual development and growth within it, and the Church at large. Please give what you feel you are able to both financially, and with your time and talents, and of course invite your family and friends to join us at services and events - to further our efforts to grow Gods Kingdom in this Parish and beyond.

Thank you for all your support.

Clare Curran, Planned Giving Treasurer

Buildings and Grounds

For many years the maintenance of the buildings and the grounds at the Ravensdale Road and Salutation Road sites has been managed through a committee chaired by a church warden, latterly Phil Elliott-Lyall. For the last year there has been a less formal arrangement but one that has been reasonably successful. I am grateful to Phil [Elliott-Lyall], David [Curran], Andy [Hopkins], Brian [Holmes], Andy [Young], Michael [Shepherd] and David [Smith] who have all made a contribution to the smooth running of the “estate” by completing many individual tasks.

A Quinquennial Inspection was conducted in June 2022 by our architect John White (of Padgett White, Crook, County Durham). The inspection covered All Saints’ Church and the Millennium Centre, although the centre is not subject to Faculty Jurisdiction. Equally Salutation Hall is not subject to Faculty Jurisdiction but was not part of the formal inspection. The more urgent of the architect’s recommendations are set out below:

Urgent Works Requiring Immediate Attention:

- i. Main Hall Store and Boiler Room: Walls are generally painted blockwork in fair condition. However, a stud wall infill use to form a dedicated boiler room has a plywood face which is combustible. Consideration should be given to lining with plaster boarded and skim.
Work completed.
- ii. Play Group Store: Walls are generally painted blockwork in fair condition. However, a stud wall infill use to form a dedicated boiler room has a plywood face which is combustible. Consideration should be given to lining with plaster boarded and skim.
Work completed.
- iii. Boiler Room/Cleaners Store: Wall mounted Worcester boiler with insulated distribution pipework, service due 24/07/20. This boiler service is overdue which should be rectified.
Service scheduled for 25 April 2023.

Work Recommended to be Carried Out During Next 12 Months:

- iv. Millennium Hall: At the eastern end of the southern face there is a broken slate under the ridge and a small quantity of pointing under the ridge that is missing, both of which should be replaced.
- v. Church Roof: There is a broken slate at eaves level at the foot of the valley gutter between the east face of the Nave roof and the north face of the Vestry roof, this should be replaced.
- vi. External Door: Millennium Centre has three painted steel security doors. The red decoration is fading/flaking and should redecorated.
- vii. Gutters to the north elevation of the Millennium Centre: A number of which have misaligned and leaking joints. These joints need to be stripped out, realigned, rejointed and resealed.
- viii. Vestries Entrance Lobby: The loft was viewed and is boarded out for general storage. However, it was noted that there were a number of heat producing electrical items thought

to be related to the organ. However, they were located randomly within the eaves, were simply stacked and not restrained in anyway. Consideration should be given to mounting the equipment securely and rationalising the wiring.

- ix. Carpeted wooden staircase leading to first floor Parish Office: all in good order with the exception of the uppermost riser with requires re-fixing.

Work completed.

During the course of the year a votive candle stand was bought and secured to the geographical south wall of the church under an Archdeacon's licence.

The two pairs of emergency exit doors in the Millennium Centre corridor had reached the end of their useful life as a result of years of misuse caused by hall users trying to close them from the outside. The doors were replaced in February 2023. The new doors, supplied by Polar NE, are more robust and suited to the way they are routinely used. These new doors represented a very significant investment.

The grounds at All Saints' Church and Millennium Centre plus Salutation Hall were maintained by Brian Park under a contract agreed with him during the course of the year.

Colin Price

Salutation Hall

Following the pandemic usage of the hall has slowly started to increase with many regular users returning. In addition, the hall was also used again for a number of parties throughout the year, all of which is very encouraging.

Consequently, rental income in the year improved to £2,926 (2021: £1,888), better than the previous year but still somewhat short of pre pandemic levels.

In addition, we were delighted to receive a total of £1,000 from 2 local councillors who gave £500 each from their grant funding to go towards the facilities at Salutation Hall. This money is still to be used, but various ideas are being considered.

Expenditure remained at 2021 levels at £1,998 (2021: £1,941).

As a result in 2022 Salutation Hall produced a surplus of £1,928 as compared to a deficit of £53 in 2021.

Pam Davison, Salutation Hall Committee

4. CHURCH COMMUNITIES GROUPS & ACTIVITIES REPORTS

Social Committee

'The committee is responsible for organising and coordinating social occasions throughout the year that give Church members and the wider community an opportunity for fellowship.'

As a committee we have endeavoured to provide a range of activities that in line with our terms of reference which we hope have offered opportunities for fellowship throughout the year.

The year started with a French themed evening. This was a successful event with French themed menu, wines, and entertainment which raised £550 for church funds. Feedback indicated that more of this type of event would be welcomed.

We were unable to arrange a Ceilidh at Harvest due to availability of the band but we had a successful quiz night in the hall with fish and chips supplied by 'Codrophenia'. This was well supported and enjoyed by all.

The Christmas Fayre was again successful. Thank you again to Andy Hopkins for masterminding the event. It was also great not to have to manage the catering behind the plastic screens as we had done the previous year.

We had a couple of coffee mornings (July and March) which were successful and well attended. A leaflet drop in the roads immediately surrounding Church prior to the March coffee morning raised its profile and brought some new people in. Thank you again to Alison Hopkins and Jane Elliot for delivering flyers in freezing conditions.

The committee worked with the Community Outreach Group to provide the coffee and cakes for the first Café Church in September. And at the end of January we supported Eleanor Winkworth to offer a Burns Supper which raised funds for the Green Action Group's projects in the Church grounds. This was a very well supported event by both Church members and their friends which was enjoyed by all and great opportunity to work with another group in the Church.

We hosted the Castle Players again in February with their touring winter production of 'Treasure Island'. The production was generally well received, the Castle Players enjoy coming to All Saints and we do get a significant number of outside visitors to the event.

It was disappointing that we had to cancel our planned James Bond themed evening in April due to poor ticket sales. We have yet to review this and to try to understand why it did not appeal. Over the years we have tried to introduce new events or themes, some with more success than others. It is often easy to continue to do the same things, but it is also good to have some aspirations and to push the boundaries a little to try to keep things fresh.

As ever, we are open to any suggestions for events that you might have, and we are always happy to welcome new members to the committee especially if you want to support the Church and have fun at the same time!

Sandra Whiston

Green Action Group

“The purpose of the Green Action Group is to help the Church to appreciate our individual and joint share of responsibility for climate change, and to relate this to our Christian faith.

The Group will encourage the Church and the wider community to move to a simpler, more sustainable lifestyle that will protect all God’s creation and justice for all God’s people”.

The group Zoom meetings have been replaced by face to face meetings and occur about every other month.

Magazine articles

Various articles on environmental issues have been published in the Parish Magazine.

The Giving Tree

The Giving Tree was used to attract donations to St. Theresa’s Hospice.

Eco-Church

Presentation of the Silver status award took place in Church and the plaque has been affixed to a wall in the entrance foyer.

Land

The orchard at the far end of the church land continues to be maintained and the harvest given to the congregation and the Food Bank. The Pre-school Group did most of the harvesting. A wildflower meadow is also being established in that area. Further trees have been obtained from “The Woodland Trust” and were planted in March. The trees include two oaks one of which will be used to commemorate the late Queen Elizabeth’s 70th Jubilee.

Community and Global Engagement

Ways of making the church and Millennium Centre more energy efficient/green are being looked at. The Deanery Synod have also been approached with a view to giving a presentation on the work of this group.

David Smith, Chair of Green Action Group

All Saints’ and Salutation Ladies Fellowship

Ladies Fellowship has remained a popular and vibrant group. It’s 45 members meet up to 11 times a year as part of a varied and interesting programme.

Talks from a variety of speakers have proved both informative and entertaining. Chris Lloyd, local historian and journalist talked about the role local suffragettes played in the fight for universal suffrage. Carol Tetlow recounted anecdotes from her career as a GP and police surgeon. Nicola Jones told us about the challenges she has faced as a ‘Mum Entrepreneur’. Peter Barron, former editor of the Northern Echo, brought along a local tennis coach to entertain us with some humorous facts about tennis. On two occasions Colleen Rhodes has led craft activity sessions. The

September meeting is now an established social get together with a quiz and games. In July the Strawberry evening has remained extremely popular. In December the annual Advent service (with light refreshments served afterwards) was a joyous event with readings from the books of Luke and Matthew by the committee, interspersed with a wonderful selection of carols and anthems. The annual outing (in conjunction with the local NCW) was a very successful trip to Skipton with lunch on a barge. All these events were celebrated in the AGM after which the President the Rev. Jennifer Croft talked about the challenges facing the hearing impaired and then demonstrated some BSL.

As well as the social benefits which this group provides, charities have received donations. The fellowship has continued to support USPG and the bellringers chosen charity, which this year is Kings Church Foodbank. Carol Tetlow donated her fee to a breast cancer care charity. At Christmas, gifts for the local Women's Refuge were provided by individual members.

Currently the Fellowship is looking to provide a banner to celebrate its many years as a group. This will be displayed in the church.

The group, supported by a committee of eight is continuing to enjoy success. New members and visitors are always welcome.

Ann Bell, Secretary, All Saints and Salutation Ladies Fellowship

Men's Group

The Men's Group is a friendly, informal organisation which seeks to meet on a monthly basis. It does not matter if you cannot attend regularly, we just hope you will come when you can, get to know some people a bit better and have fun.

It sometimes seems like the Men's Group is like the film "Groundhog Day" as every year we arrange pretty much the same events. At the time of writing this report our next event is however a planning meeting. Hopefully we shall come up with some new ideas for later in the year.

Kevin Winkworth, Secretary

Parish Lunch

We recommenced the Parish lunch last October with the welcome assistance of some new helpers. It was good to see the regular diners again as well as some new faces. The lunch is held on the third Thursday of the month in the Garden rooms, except for the Christmas meal when Pre School kindly moved to allow us the use of the main hall, enabling us to cater for over fifty people.

As usual, the proceeds from the Lent lunch were donated to Christian Aid. This year the cheque came to an amazing £230, for which we were very grateful.

I would like to thank all who help to make the Parish lunch such an enjoyable time, whether it be catering, setting up and tidying away, washing the dishes and tablecloths, bringing people to the lunch or simply attending.

In order to know how much food to prepare, we sell tickets, priced at £7.50 each, in advance, at the main church services.

We would love to see you at the next lunch – come and join us for a two course meal, with hot drink, and fellowship.

Susan Price

Circle Dancing

Venue: Salutation Hall

Monday afternoons during school term time

Time: 1:45 – 3:45 pm

Charge: £3

The year began in a very sad way. Mary Henry handed over the running of the group to Mary Grimes in her usual efficient way.

Initially Mary H was able to join the group and take part in the dancing but, just after her 81st birthday and just into the month of June, she died.

Mary remains in our hearts and minds as we dance and as we plan for our annual events such as the Strawberry afternoon and the Christmas dance we do. Mary was key to the success of the Circle dance group and I don't think that it is the same without her but we continue on with her in our collective memory.

This year numbers have fallen quite dramatically for a number of reasons – health issues; family commitments. We have welcomed at least two members who now attend regularly but we are looking to encourage more to come. An idea to attract dancers is to hold a taster session.

The dancing is easy and people say that they find it uplifting and supportive. In the centre of the circle we take it in turns to provide flowers and candles as a focal point for those who like to meditate when they dance.

It is so enjoyable to be with others and share the music and the gentle movement. It is hoped that we can attract new members and we are grateful for those who have been coming for many years. Anyone who would like to join us will be warmly welcomed and absolutely no previous experience is required.

Mary Grimes

The Hand Bell Ringing Group

“Let the bells ring out at Christmas”

Once again, following the hiatus caused by the Covid pandemic, the All Saints’ hand-bell ringers ventured forth to ring out carols before Christmas. This year’s chosen charity was Darlington Food Bank. We were welcomed at Sainsbury’s, where we were allowed to ring inside the store – much warmer than the foyer! As well as putting coins in our buckets, shoppers also donated goods to the Sainsbury’s food bank collection. In total, with the help of a generous donation from the church carol singers, £700 was raised for our charity. A cheque was presented to Caroline Todd, Manager of Darlington Food Bank at Kings Church, where a few of the hand bell ringing group were shown around the food distribution operation. As always, a big thank you goes to the bell ringers who rang their hearts out, and to others who contributed by holding collection buckets, counting money, and carol singing.

We are still looking to welcome new members to swell our ranks. Whether you have no experience at all, or if you have rung hand bells in the past, we would love to hear from you. Please contact me if you have a little time to spare, and feel that you would like to join our friendly group.

Jane Elliott

Badminton Group

The Badminton Group was finally able to reconvene early in January 2022 after a long hiatus due to COVID-19 restrictions. We continue to meet almost every Friday from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m. in the Millennium Hall, during term time.

There are usually between four and six adult players who attend regularly and latterly we have been able to welcome a younger player who has been accompanied by his parents. We welcome all adults and younger people to join us as this helps to encourage developing players and adds variety to the game of ‘old hands’.

There is one court on which we play doubles games, although more energetic participants are welcome to play singles games, whilst the rest of us catch our breath and catch up on the weekly news!

We each pay £2.00 per session, so if you are interested in joining us, please ring Sue Elliott-Lyall on 01325 241225.

Sue Elliott-Lyall

Knitting and Crafts Group

This group was formed in September 2012 to bring together those people who have an interest in any form of craft – knitting, sewing, embroidery, crochet, tapestry, dressmaking – the list is as diverse as the talents!

The group would usually meet most Thursdays from 2.00 p.m. to 4.00 p.m. in the Barbara Bishop room off the Church foyer. We continue to undertake individual projects and donate much of our work to local charities.

There is a wealth of knowledge to be shared by members of the group, so please, feel free to join us if you would like to spend a very sociable, and loquacious afternoon, with the customary cuppa and a biscuit! Ring Sue Elliott-Lyall on 01325 241225 for further details.

Sue Elliott-Lyall

Church Refreshments

Thanks to a dedicated bunch of 12 volunteers, the Sunday morning refreshments after the 10.30 service continue to provide a pleasant half hour or so to meet up and chat. The co-ordination of this rota, it is now produced by the church office. Many thanks to Sandra Whiston who keeps the tea/coffee replenished. If anyone can spare about an hour, three or four times a year, they would be very welcome to join the rota.

Nicky Waller

Scrabble Club

This group ceased to meet due to COVID-19 restrictions and has not resumed

Sue Elliott-Lyall

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CHARITIES REPORTS

Community Outreach Group

This last Church year, our Group has only been able to meet 4 times. We started the year with 7 members, and finished it with just 4. Efforts have been made to recruit new members, but without success.

My feeling therefore is that the Community Outreach Group has run its course, and the time is now right to draw it to a close. Our work has decreased over the last 12 months compared to previous years. This is due to a number of factors:

1. The difficulty of coinciding diaries for just 4 busy people. (Meetings are constantly rescheduled).
2. The post-Covid environment has severely restricted our ability to work with schools, care homes etc.
3. Previously established successful projects continue, without requiring any significant renewed input (eg. Darlington Foodbank, Compassion, Distribution of Harvest Gifts etc.)
4. One new project was set up in December, The All Saints Warm Space, but was soon closed down due to no demand.

In drawing this Group to a close, it is important to emphasise that our members continue to contribute to the community in other ways:

- Alison Mannion – PCC member and Millennium Centre Trustee.
- Christine English – Millennium Centre Trustee.
- Andy Young – Licensed Lay Minister, Leader of church and community choir/band. Also key in re-establishing the All Saints Parent & Toddler Group.
- Nick Auty - Member of All Saints Pastoral Group , chair of the Deanery Tackling Poverty Group , joint leader of the Bereavement Journey course , volunteer with Darlington Town Mission.

My thanks go to all members of the Group for their dedication and commitment over the last 12 months.

Nick Auty, Chair of the Community Outreach Group.

Partnership for Missional Church

2022-23 - We completed the 3rd year of All Saints' PMC journey with a celebratory gathering, service and meal. So, what was the purpose of the journey? Modern day churches exist in an ever changing modern day world. To be successful, they, All Saints' included, need to adapt to these changes.

To do this effectively, we were encouraged to find out how we could serve our local community to best meet the changing needs. We then planned how to meet these needs in the short, medium

and long term. Planning was seen as paramount, otherwise things just happen and there is no direction. Regular reviews support the planning to help us maintain focus and to adapt the plan when necessary.

The Planning Programme for the Cafe Church project was shared with, and approved by our PCC. We now look forward to hearing how the PCC will blend this into their overall planning for our church, and to them supporting the various All Saints' organizations to incorporate planning and review into their programme of activities.

Lee & Dorothy Puchala

The Parish Magazine

The parish magazine has been published most months since 1997. Ellis Leatherbarrow was the initial editor; after over twenty years he passed the baton to the late Richard Rayner, followed by Barry McNulty and David Smith.

In his twilight editorial years Ellis has been handed back the baton. No longer able to finish the race on his own, young Turks David Smith and Kevin Winkworth have formed a relay team with him.

The magazine is only as good as its contributors and the joint editors sincerely thank all those individuals and organisations that have provided articles over the past twelve months. We are always on the lookout for new contributors and would love to hear from you on any subject you think might interest the readership.

If anyone would like to join the mailing list, please have a word with the Parish Office.

Kevin Winkworth, David V Smith and Ellis Leatherbarrow, Magazine Editors

The Children's Society

It is now box opening time and would you please hand your box or donation to either Janice Shepherd or Alison Hopkins. We are happy to collect your box/donation if you would prefer or alternatively it can be dropped off at 42 Neville Road, Darlington.

Thank you for your continued support. Please contact us on the numbers below.

Janice Shepherd (489990) and Alison Hopkins (333865), Honorary Local Secretaries.

All Saints' Blackwell Pre-School

Preschool offers places for children from the age of two years to school age. Opening times are 8:30am – 2:45pm, Term Time only (38 weeks a year).

Funding is available for many families accessing preschool:

- Working families can access 30 hrs of free childcare for 3/4-year-olds,
- Universal funding for 15 hrs free childcare for all 3/4-year-olds,
- 2-year-old Grant for 15 hrs free childcare for eligible parents (this is means tested).

Amanda Summers is the preschool manager and holds a Foundation Degree in Early Years and all members of preschool staff hold at least a Level 3 Child Care qualification. All staff are DBS checked and hold a Paediatric First Aid Certificate.

In the spring of 2022 preschool returned back to normal working conditions after the pandemic. Staff continued to implement changes to preschool with greater focus on children's wellbeing and literacy development, in line with the changes to the Early Years Foundation Stage which the government had changed.

In May Ofsted carried out an inspection lasting over 4hrs and awarded Preschool 'Outstanding' in all areas:

- The quality of education
- Behaviour and attitudes
- Personal Development
- Leadership & Management

Staff were delighted with this judgement and it is testament to all the hard work and reflection carried out for many years to build on and improve the Preschool.

However, the impact of covid has been evident along with the cost-of-living crisis, in the lower numbers of children attending since September 2022. The drop in the birth rate, changes to families working habits and families having less money to spend may have affected children's numbers and also the hours attended.

Preschool numbers saw a steady rise in January 2022 and it is hoped the recent advertising will take effect and attract new families in future. Preschool would like to thank Andy Hopkins and Colin Price who have helped with the new banners and leaflets to publicise and raise awareness of the preschool. As well as the church members that helped to deliver the leaflets.

I would like to thank preschool staff for their continued support and hard work. I would also like to thank our Families, Members of the Preschool Committee, and the Church community for their continued support.

Amanda Summers, Preschool Manager

29th Darlington (All Saints' and Salutation) Rainbows

We have had a busy year in Rainbows. The Rainbows have continued to use their badge books to gain many badges from the programme.

We joined the Brownies for a Christmas disco, this was great fun for all.

The Rainbows continue to enjoy the games organised by Arianne and Kate and the beautiful singing by Jen. We have also welcomed Aisha to our team. Aisha has volunteered to train as a Guider for Rainbows.

I will be retiring from Guiding this summer after nearly 24 years. I would like to thank the team of volunteers Arianne, Kate, Jen and Aisha who all give up their time for the unit.

Jill Wildsmith, Rainbow Leader.

11th All Saints' & Salutation Brownies

We've had another really fun packed year this year.

We started off the year taking the girls on Brownie Holiday to Hawkshead in the Lake District. All of the girls had a lovely time and took part in lots of outdoor activities and even some chocolate making at the chocolate factory in Hawkshead, something they all enjoyed!

We also joined with other Rainbow, Brownie and Guide units at a Division day at Hummersknott School in May. The girls took part in lots of games, crafts and activities to celebrate the Queen's Jubilee.

In July we took the girls bowling to the Dolphin Centre, we had all of the lanes to ourselves and the girls had a lot of fun! It was a great venue for an end of term outing and the girls can't wait to go back!

In the Autumn, we had lots of external people come in and work with the girls on a variety of things, we had someone come in and teach the girls some first aid skills to help them achieve their First Aid badge, we also had a local author visit the girls and read some of their story and lead a drawing masterclass with the girls. We also had some lovely ladies come in near Christmas and help the girls make some Christmas decorations which were displayed on the tree in the foyer at All Saints. Before Christmas, we also celebrated with a Carol Service at Elm Ridge for the district which was well attended and a lovely last evening before Christmas.

We've made some tie dye pillow cases ready for our next Brownie Holiday this year! We've also had a number of celebrations, lots of girls joining Brownies and completing their promise, lots of girls completing badges and some girls earning their Bronze awards (one of the highest awards in Brownies).

In the last couple of months we have held fundraising events for this year's Brownie Holiday to Northumberland such as a coffee morning, this was well supported by members of the church which was really appreciated. We raised £185.90 at this event. We also held a Disco for the girls

and their friends which again was well supported and the money raised has been put towards our coach travel.

The girls have recently been completing lots of badges such as, Charity, Zero Waste, Speaking Out, Painting, Baking and Dancing. It's great seeing a wide variety of girls pushing themselves to learn and try new skills to earn these badges.

My thanks go to all our leaders who have helped us this year. They have all shown a huge commitment to ensure our girls have a varied and fun time whilst with us. We would also like to thank our Young Leaders, Jess, Libby, Evie & Alice who are all working towards relevant qualifications within Girlguiding. Georgia has also recently joined us as an adult helper and has been a great addition to the team. The Brownies love having them there each week and they are a credit to our unit! Finally, should anyone feel they'd like to know more about getting involved, please feel free to pop along to our meeting on a Wednesday evening 6.15p.m. – 7.15p.m, or drop us an email 11thallsaintsbrownies@gmail.com.

Thanks

Grace Rickards and Julie Ross, Brownie Leaders

12th All Saints Brownies

The Brownie unit has had a year of fun, and back to some normality after all the COVID restrictions. We have been completing lots of challenges from the new programme with Brownies achieving numerous badges over the six Themes. These include skills builders, theme awards and many interest badges on various topics.

Our unit has been on Brownie Holiday twice in the year, last May and at the end of November when we had a Christmas theme weekend with the girls. For both holidays we joined together with St Columba's Brownies. This is good for the girls to make new friends and reacquaint with those they already know from previous weekends together. As leaders we very much enjoy our time away under the guiding umbrella, we can do so much more with the Brownies and its enjoyable getting to know the girls over the two days and spending quality time with them.

In the summer we had a visit to St Cuthberts Church and were lucky enough to be able to visit the Belfry. We had fun completing the quiz and learning lots about some of the history of St Cuthberts. We were very proud of the Brownies who took on the challenge of the tricky climb up to the Belfry which starts with the stone spiral staircase, more amazing was Brown Owl completed the climb 4 times in the hour! The 14 Brownies who made it to the top and enjoyed a the demonstration from two of the main bell ringers, Kate and Aileen, who kindly gave up their time to show us the ropes.

Our unit helper, Sophie Finch is now working towards her Leadership Qualification and Ali and myself are supporting her to achieve this.

I would like to thank Ali Skilbeck for her invaluable weekly support over the years.

The 3 of us look forward to working together to give the brownies new opportunities, challenges and fun during the year ahead.

Anita Wilson, Brown Owl, Alison Skilbeck, Assistant and Sophie Finch, Leader in Training

29th Darlington Guides

Autumn term meetings at Guides in 2022 included working on an 'Express Myself' skills builder badge from the Guiding programme and new Guides working on promise activities, an activity celebrating the Queen's reign following her sad passing, making Remembrance felt poppies as well as Children In Need/Girl Guiding UK fundraising with gameathon challenges! Christmas craft is a must every year along with festive music and wearing Christmas jumpers and this year festive themed party games.

2023 started with celebrating Chinese New Year making a Chinese dragon and dragon dance. Guides started working on the next skills building badge 'Take Action', made pancakes, paper flowers for Mother's day, Easter Egg challenges and our out of unit activity for the term, was a bouncing time trampolining at ROF59 Activity Centre at Newton Aycliffe.

Spring/Summer term will include working on 'Having Adventures' skills builder badge activities, along with a Coronation Activity to celebrate the reign of King Charles, a Father's Day craft activity, a career's event held by Elm Ridge Guides and some of our Leaders and guides will be having fun learning traditional camping skills at a County Camp in June at East Shotton Camp Site.

Louise Gibson, Unit Leader, 29th Darlington Guides

29th Salutation Brownies

9th Darlington (Salutation) Brownies have enjoyed another action packed year! We've completed our 'Live Smart' and 'Network' Skills Builders. Our Brownies have been busy completing lots of interest badges at home too, with baking, painting, charities and aviation proving to be the most popular!

We've celebrated Diwali, Lunar New Year, Shrove Tuesday, Easter and Christmas through lots of different crafts and baking. A particular highlight was completing two escape rooms in our meetings - our Brownies are very good at cracking codes!

We were chosen to decorate a Christmas tree as part of Darlington's Christmas Tree Trail. Our Brownies chose a theme of an eco-Christmas and teamed up with the Guides to make our decorations from toilet rolls, egg boxes and bottle tops. The tree was displayed in the window of Earth Warriors on Skinnergate and we received lots of compliments!

In December we joined lots of other Brownie and Guides to take over Vue Cinema and watch a special Girl Guiding screening of the new Matilda film. It was fantastic!

We also celebrated one of our Brownies receiving her Brownie Gold Award (the highest award a Brownie can achieve) with a gold party earlier this year. Sophie planned and organised her party complete with gold decorations, and her choice of pug crafts and toast!

In June we went on Brownie Holiday to Camp House in Spennymoor. We had a brilliant weekend which was Disney themed. We made our own Minnie Mouse ears, created and decorated canvas bags, decorated glass tea light holders and build our own dens in the woods. The weather was even warm enough for us to have a water fight as part of our Wide Game! One of the Brownies' highlights was singing songs around the campfire and then roasting marshmallows to make s'mores.

We are currently looking forward to our Brownie Holiday weekend where the girls have chosen Roald Dahl books as the weekend's theme as well as spending lots of the summer term outside in Salutation Hall's garden.

We wouldn't be able to provide any of these opportunities without our brilliant leaders; Sophie, Abi, Avneer, Layna and Rachel and we are very grateful to the time they give up each week.

Jenny Groves, Brown Owl

Millennium Hall

The Halls continue to be busy, though the number of parties is down on previous years. Many thanks as ever to Colin and Pam for their ongoing support and help.

Dee Wastnedge, Booking Secretary

All Saints' Millennium Centre Trust (Darlington) Limited

The Millennium Centre is run by an independent charitable company, the Millennium Trust which is limited by guarantee. The land on which the Centre is built is leased for 99 years (from 1997) to the company by the church; and to be a member of the company one has to be a member of the parish electoral roll. The membership of the body of trustees consists of 12 members: the Vicar, seven nominated by the PCC, one nominated by the Bishop of Durham, one nominated by the Mayor of Darlington, one nominated by the senior ward councillor for Park West and one nominated by Evolution (previously known as the Darlington Council of Voluntary Service).

In 2022-2023 the functioning of the Millennium Centre gradually improved following the COVID-19 virus and in 2022-23 we have seen the full use of the Millennium Centre. The Pre-School has been up and running (very successfully) in the Millennium Hall and this has been highlighted by their Ofsted status of 'outstanding'.

We are grateful to all of those who served as Trustees over the past twelve months and we are particularly grateful for the continuing contributions of Dee Wastnedge, the Bookings Secretary; Pam Davison, the Finance Director; Alison Barker, the Company Secretary and a group of volunteers

who have continued to work on the upkeep of the building, led by Colin Price, David Curran and Phil Elliott-Lyall (and other volunteers). We are certainly grateful to them for all their hard work in the last 12 months, and they help to guide us as we have enabled meetings in the Centre again. My thanks go to Steve Archer for his care and dedication and reliability as he has cleaned and maintained all of the rooms of our building. There is a variety of regular groups using our facilities, both internal and external to All Saints' Church and our facilities are being hired for private parties.

The Millennium Centre has always been busy, we are as ever, mindful of the cost of fuel, we cannot be complacent about the finances. We said this in 2022 and we continue to strive to make cost savings. The Garden Rooms have been kept warm by the existing heat provision for pre-school, so earlier this year, we attempted to offer 'Warm Spaces' which was a government initiative. We had a fantastic crew of volunteers with people who were willing to give their time and energy, but unfortunately we didn't get any uptake. The running costs will continue to be a concern for us, and the cash flow is tight, but we want to provide this resource for our community. This year, we unanimously agreed that the Garden Rooms would be re-named the 'Enid Smith Rooms' as Enid was a dedicated, much loved and hard working member of our congregation, her faith was an inspiration to us all and her daughters are contributing to the aesthetics of this dedication(!)

A legacy is enabling a defibrillator to be available for our community and it will be mounted on the side wall adjacent to the main doors into the Millennium Centre. The PCC of All Saints' is also contributing towards the casing and the electrical supply. In an emergency, someone would phone emergency services and they would be given a code to access the defibrillator and instructions would be given. We are immensely grateful to everyone who has enabled this to happen, and the true gift of a legacy is made known.

The wall lights and the ceiling lights in the millennium hall have been replaced with LED fittings, alongside the wall and the globe lights in the foyer. 24 lights in the hall as well as the wall lights and lights in the foyer have been replaced with 40W/3750 lumen bulbs. This has successfully stopped the buzzing noise from the lights and it is much brighter.

The emergency doors in the hall corridor have been replaced.

There has been a lack of lighting in the car park – so a solar light has now been installed, which works well.

The silver eco award is on display in the foyer.

The Church community of All Saints established the Trust to build and run the Centre as a way of furthering its own vision to make this community more like God's kingdom than it otherwise would be. The All Saints' Millennium Centre remains an excellent example of how the Church contributes to the well-being of our society in ways that are often overlooked but which make a positive difference to countless people. Though a separate company, the Millennium Centre and its Millennium Trust represent a gift from God, to our Church and our community.

Rev. Jen Croft, Chairman of All Saints' Millennium Trust (Darlington) Ltd. April 2023

6. WIDER CHURCH AND SYNOD REPORTS

Darlington Deanery Synod

The first meeting of the year was held in St Cuthbert's Church Hall. The Reverend Mark East (Area Dean) asked those present to hold the parishes of St John's and St Columba's in their prayers, as well as the incumbent Tony Roache and his family, as he prepared to leave following his resignation. This was followed by a presentation from the Reverend Canon Duncan Podbury, who provided some background on the "Strategic Development Funding" projects in the Diocese. Included in the latest round of funding bids was one from St Cuthbert's Church, with their initial application having been accepted, and the second stage due to be presented in May. Members were also given a report on a successful "Christmas Journey" with over 800 school children attending the event at St Matthew's Church.

Synod members gathered at St Columba's Church for their Summer meeting where they heard presentations from Belinda Williams (Dementia Friendly Communities) and Kathryn Hardwick (Alzheimer's Society). They each outlined the work they undertake in the town and also provided information on some of the activities they organise. The meeting's other areas of business included an update on those parishes currently in vacancy, St Cuthbert's SDF bid, information regarding the 2023 Parish Share and the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Service held at St Cuthbert's.

At the final Synod meeting of the year, Billy Welch spoke passionately about the Gypsy, Romany and Traveller Communities, which included an informative and brief history of the movement tracing back to Israel and possibly part of one of the twelve tribes. Members were then given updates on Share payments and were advised of the financial support being made available from the National Church to help parishes following the significant increase in utility bills. The meeting closed with confirmation St Cuthbert's SDF grant application had been successful and as result two new posts had recently been advertised. Also, the Deanery would be welcoming three new curates in 2023.

Michael Shepherd (Deanery Treasurer)

APPENDICES

**THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF
ALL SAINTS' AND SALUTATION BLACKWELL, DARLINGTON
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022**

	Unrestricted Funds 2022	Restricted Funds 2022	Total Funds 2022	Unrestricted Funds 2021	Restricted Funds 2021	Total Funds 2021
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM:	£	£	£	£	£	£
Donations and legacies	88,706	-	88,706	115,411	-	115,411
Charitable activities	12,397	55,466	67,863	5,063	64,054	69,117
Grants receivable	-	-	-	-	1,075	1,075
Investments	4	7	11	-	1	1
Other trading activities	21,825	-	21,825	12,828	-	12,828
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
TOTAL INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS	122,932	55,473	178,405	133,302	65,130	198,432
	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====
EXPENDITURE ON:						
Raising funds	8,241	-	8,241	4,354	-	4,354
Charitable activities	120,923	54,458	175,381	110,070	60,664	170,734
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	129,164	54,458	183,622	114,424	60,664	175,088
	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====
NET INCOME / (EXPENDITURE)	(6,232)	1,015	(5,217)	18,878	4,466	23,344
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS:						
TOTAL FUNDS BROUGHT FORWARD	88,510	53,705	142,215	69,632	49,239	118,871
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	£ 82,278	54,720	136,998	£ 88,510	53,705	142,215
	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF

ALL SAINTS' AND SALUTATION BLACKWELL, DARLINGTON

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2022

	2022	2021
	£	£
FIXED ASSETS		
Tangible assets	358	518
	_____	_____
CURRENT ASSETS		
Bank accounts	140,344	148,138
Cash in hand	2,313	2,459
Debtors	11,435	8,962
Stocks	154	182
	_____	_____
	154,246	159,741
LIABILITIES		
Creditors - amounts falling due within one year	(17,606)	(18,044)
	_____	_____
NET CURRENT ASSETS	136,640	141,697
	_____	_____
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES	136,998	142,215
	_____	_____
NET ASSETS	£ 136,998	£ 142,215
	=====	=====
PARISH FUNDS		
Unrestricted	82,278	88,510
Restricted	54,720	53,705
	_____	_____
TOTAL FUNDS	£ 136,998	£ 142,215
	=====	=====

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF

ALL SAINTS' AND SALUTATION BLACKWELL, DARLINGTON

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM:

Income from donations and legacies

	Unrestricted Funds 2022	Restricted Funds 2022	Total Funds 2022	Unrestricted Funds 2021	Restricted Funds 2021	Total Funds 2021
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Voluntary income						
Planned giving:-						
Envelopes, covenants and Gift Aid	57,584	-	57,584	61,926	-	61,926
Tax reclaim	16,340	-	16,340	15,385	-	15,385
Collections (loose plate)	12,204	-	12,204	3,100	-	3,100
Special Charity collections	1,321	-	1,321	-	-	-
Donations and Legacies(Designated in 2021)	1,257	-	1,257	35,000	-	35,000
	£ 88,706	-	88,706	£ 115,411	-	115,411

Income from charitable activities

Church activities

Occasional offices	12,397	-	12,397	5,063	-	5,063
All Saints Blackwell Pre-School	-	55,466	55,466	-	64,054	64,054
	£ 12,397	55,466	67,863	£ 5,063	64,054	69,117

Grants receivable

Government grants	-	-	-	-	1,075	1,075
-------------------	---	---	---	---	-------	-------

Income from investments

Interest receivable	4	7	11	-	1	1
---------------------	---	---	----	---	---	---

Other trading activities

Activities for generating funds

Fundraising	15,545	-	15,545	10,096	-	10,096
Salutation Hall income (£1,000 Designated)	3,926	-	3,926	1,888	-	1,888
Sundry income	2,354	-	2,354	844	-	844
	£ 21,825	-	21,825	£ 12,828	-	12,828

Total Income and Endowments

	£ 122,932	£ 55,473	£ 178,405	£ 133,302	£ 65,130	£ 198,432
--	-----------	----------	-----------	-----------	----------	-----------

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF

ALL SAINTS' AND SALUTATION BLACKWELL, DARLINGTON

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

EXPENDITURE

Raising funds	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
	Funds	Funds		Funds	Funds	
	2022	2022	2022	2021	2021	2021
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Fundraising	8,241	-	8,241	4,354	-	4,354
	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====
 Charitable activities						
 Church activities and expenses						
Charitable and Mission giving	6,042	-	6,042	110	-	110
Parish share	70,000	-	70,000	77,345	-	77,345
Clergy expenses	363	-	363	726	-	726
Church running expenses	13,424	-	13,424	4,703	-	4,703
Cost of services	3,181	-	3,181	1,871	-	1,871
Church maintenance	1,379	-	1,379	3,005	-	3,005
Insurance	878	-	878	786	-	786
Salutation Hall	1,998	-	1,998	1,941	-	1,941
Salaries, wages and honoraria	19,002	-	19,002	13,140	-	13,140
Sundry costs	393	-	393	2,292	-	2,292
Administration costs	2,853	-	2,853	2,792	-	2,792
Depreciation	160	-	160	159	-	159
Independent Examination	1,250	-	1,250	1,200	-	1,200
All Saints Blackwell Pre-School	-	54,458	54,458	-	60,664	60,664
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
	£ 120,923	£ 54,458	175,381	£ 110,070	£ 60,664	170,734
	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====
 Total Expenditure	 £ 129,164	 54,458	 183,622	 £ 114,424	 60,664	 175,088
	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF

ALL SAINTS' AND SALUTATION BLACKWELL, DARLINGTON

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

FUNDRAISING					2022	2021
	Income	Expenses	Total	Donations Paid Out	Surplus/ (Deficit)	Surplus/ (Deficit)
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Christmas Fair	3,782	(110)	3,672	-	3,672	3,874
Parish Lunch Club	733	(440)	293	-	293	-
Magazine	876	(1,370)	(494)	-	(494)	(190)
Ladies Fellowship (excluding bank interest)	2,457	(2,202)	255	100	155	145
Tea and Coffee	762	(108)	654	-	654	-
Flower Fund	275	(111)	164	-	164	170
Social Committee	2,711	(1,355)	1,356	-	1,356	973
Badminton	190	(190)	-	-	-	1
Men's Group	476	(476)	-	-	-	-
100 Club	1,680	(1,214)	466	-	466	634
Bell Ringers	703	-	703	700	3	(62)
Circle Dancing	900	(665)	235	400	(165)	197
	<u>£ 15,545</u>	<u>(8,241)</u>	<u>7,304</u>	<u>1,200</u>	<u>6,104</u>	<u>5,742</u>
	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====

Summary

Income		15,545				10,096
Costs		(8,241)				(4,354)
		<u>£ 7,304</u>				<u>£ 5,742</u>
		=====				=====

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF

ALL SAINTS' AND SALUTATION BLACKWELL, DARLINGTON

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

	2022		2021	
	£	£	£	£
CHARITABLE GIVING				
PCC : St. Teresa's Hospice		910		110
Ukraine Appeal		614		-
Cancer Research UK		508		-
MacMillan Nurses		445		-
Parkinsons UK		374		-
Children's Society		370		-
NHS Blood & Transplant Charity		364		-
British Red Cross Ukraine Appeal		336		-
British Heart Foundation		154		-
Leukaemia UK		145		-
Cancer Support		123		-
Great NE Air Ambulance		119		-
Durham Wildlife Trust		116		-
Marie Curie		102		-
Royal British Legion		82		-
Darlington Town Mission		80		-
		<u>4,842</u>		<u>110</u>
Groups:				
Ladies Fellowship: USPG	100		-	
Circle Dancing: St. Teresa's Hospice	200		-	
Circle Dancing: Ukraine Appeal	200		-	
Bell Ringers: King's Church Foodbank	700		-	
		<u>1,200</u>		<u>-</u>
	£	<u>6,042</u>	£	<u>110</u>
		=====		=====