

ST. JAMES' CHURCH, BIRSTWITH

Agenda of the Meeting for the Election of Churchwardens and the Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Thursday 18th April 2024 at 7.15pm in St. James' Community Hall

MEETING FOR THE ELECTION OF CHURCHWARDENS

(To be attended and voted on by anyone living in the Parish whose name is on the Register of Local Government Electors)

1. Welcome
2. Opening Prayer
3. Apologies
4. Election of Churchwardens

PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

(To be attended and voted on by anyone on the electoral roll for St. James' Church, Birstwith)

1. **Minutes of the Previous Annual Parochial Church Meeting on 30th March 2023**
 - Matters arising
2. **Electoral Roll Report**
3. **Annual Report & Financial Statements from the PCC**
 - Vicar's Report
 - Churchwarden's Report
 - PCC Report
 - Deanery Synod
 - Financial Reports
4. **Elections**
 - Ex-officio PCC Members
Vicar/Churchwardens/Readers/Synod Reps
 - 3 positions available for Deanery Synod for a 2 year term
 - Lay members to the PCC
 - 2 vacancies for a 3 year term
 - 2 vacancies for a 2 year term
 - 1 vacancy for a 1 year term
5. **Appointment of Sidespeople**

Confirmation of willingness to stand or resignations to the Secretary in advance please.
6. **Any Other Business**

Please inform Sophie Bartlett (PCC Secretary) of any matters you may wish to raise at least 48 hours before the meeting on 07590 273291 or s.lancaster@me.com
7. **Closing Prayers**

1. *Nomination forms for Churchwarden, PCC and Deanery Synod are on the table at the back of church with full details.*
2. *Please advise the Churchwarden or the PCC Secretary if you wish to be added or removed from the list of Sidespeople.*
3. *The first meeting of the newly formed PCC will follow after the APCM.*

ST. JAMES' CHURCH, BIRSTWITH

Part of the Benefice of Hampsthwaite with Felliscliffe and Killinghall



Annual Report & Financial Statements of the Parochial Church Council for 2023

Vicar: Reverend Suzy McCarter

Patron: Mrs Sarah Finn (née Greenwood)

Independent Examiner:

Mr David Bird

Elton Cottage, Birstwith, HG3 2WF

Banks:

National Westminster Bank, 3 Cambridge Crescent, Harrogate, North Yorkshire, HG1 1PE

The Co-operative Bank, PO Box 250, Delf House, Southway, Skelmersdale,

WN8 6WT

St. James' Church, Birstwith

Minutes of the 103rd Annual Parochial Church Meeting Thursday 30th March 2023 at 7.15pm in the St. James' Community Hall

The meeting opened at 7.20pm with 16 parishioners present.

MEETING FOR THE ELECTION OF CHURCHWARDENS

(To be attended and voted on by anyone living in the Parish whose name is on the Register of Local Government Electors)

- 1 Welcome from Reverend Suzy McCarter
- 2 Opening Prayer from Reverend Suzy McCarter
- 3 Apologies: Norman Castle, Louise Garnett, John Hindle, Arlene and John Lees
- 4 Election of Churchwardens

Sue Baugh stood for election and was unanimously voted upon with Louise Garnett proposing and Maurice Worsnop as seconder.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

(To be attended and voted on by anyone on the electoral roll for St. James' Church, Birstwith)

- 1 Minutes of the Previous Annual Parochial Church Meeting – 20th March 2022
The minutes were accepted as an accurate account of the meeting. Proposed by Sue Baugh, seconded by Debbie Britton – all in favour.

Matters arising: none.

- 2 Electoral Roll
Madeline Hall-Jackson (Electoral Roll Officer) reported that following the Annual Revision to the Church Electoral Roll completed on 2nd March 2023 the number of people listed is now 83 (83 also shown in 2022). Madeline gave her thanks to everyone for their help with the revision and Rev'd Suzy thanked Madeline for her hard work. Next year will be another revision.
- 3 Annual Report & Financial Statements from the PCC
 - Vicar's Report: Jenni Worsnop wanted to note that there should be thanks to the Lay Readers who take Evensong in Rev'd Suzy's report.
 - Churchwarden's Report: Sue Baugh wished to thank personally a most important person who was at the meeting, Susan Layfield, for being her 'prop' throughout the year.
 - PCC Report: Rev'd Suzy read out a section of this report regarding the Vision group and the state of the financial affairs of the church. There were no questions.
 - Financial Report: A correction to the printed accounts was noted at the meeting. CBF Music Fund 1 (Restricted) – line 0025. Rev'd Suzy expressed thanks to John Hindle for all his years as Treasurer and is still grateful that he has agreed to continue as Bookkeeper for us until we can find a replacement.
 - The report was accepted with Debbie Britton proposing and Sue Baugh seconding. There were no questions.
 - Deanery Synod: Rev'd Suzy discussed the carbon neutral/green initiatives, alongside the Barnabus project which she thinks will be a great step for us.

4. Elections

- Ex-officio PCC Members

Vicar/Priest/Wardens/Readers/Synod Reps

3 positions available for Deanery Synod for 3 year terms – no nominations.

- Lay members to the PCC

There are 3 vacancies this year for a 3 year term, due to completion of terms by Debbie Britton and previously unfilled positions, plus 1 vacancy for a 2 year term due to the resignation of Madeline Hall-Jackson.

There was 1 nomination and no other nominations were received so Debbie was automatically appointed with no objections:

- Debbie Britton – proposed by Sophie Bartlett, seconded by Bill Baugh.

5. Appointment of Sidespeople

Elected en masse. Proposer Maurice Worsnop, seconder Debbie Britton. All in favour. Thanks were passed onto them all.

6. Any Other Business

Thanks in general from Sue Baugh for all those who work so hard in cleaning the church, looking after the upkeep, opening/closing, supporting in very hidden ways, catering, flowers, fabric, music. Special thanks to our Verger, Maurice Worsnop, were passed from those present at the meeting.

Edward March raised the Good Neighbours pack and had questions over the Sunday Club and family worship. He was also looking for new volunteers to cover roads when someone has moved in. The Good neighbours pack was discussed in general (and praised!) – could we upload it online or share it in the Birstwith Residents group on Facebook? Edward to send the digital pack to Sophie.

Reverend Suzy then led us in our closing prayers and the grace at 7.53pm.

Signed:

Date:

Chair: Reverend Suzy McCarter

For Information - Membership Proposal APCM 2003 & Adopted 2004: It was resolved that:

1. Membership of the PCC shall consist of ex officio members as set out in the Church Representation Rules*; nine elected members; and co-opted members.
 2. The APCM shall elect up to nine members of the laity from those on the Electoral Roll to serve without re-election for a period of up to three years ensuring where possible that one third of the elected members are elected each year.
 3. The PCC may, as and when required, co-opt up to two members, including the Secretary or Treasurer, who shall serve until the next annual meeting.
- * which includes all clergy licensed to the parish; the churchwardens; readers licensed to the parish or working principally in the parish; and members of synods who are on the parish electoral roll.

THE CHURCH OF ST. JAMES', BIRSTWITH

PARISH MISSION STATEMENT

St. James' Church is a welcoming family, worshipping God and extending Christ's work in the world, joyfully serving and caring for all in the village community.

ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2023

St. James' Church is part of the Diocese of Leeds within the Church of England and is part of the United Benefice Hampsthwaite with Felliscliffe and Killinghall. The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is responsible for promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. It also assists the Churchwardens in maintaining all church property and is accountable for the administration of the finances of the church. The PCC is a charity excepted from registration with the Charity Commission.

PCC MEMBERSHIP FROM MARCH 2023

(Membership of the PCC is in accordance with the Church Representation Rules. Up to 9 members of the laity are elected to serve for a term of 3 years.)

Vicar of the Benefice:	Reverend Suzy McCarter
Churchwardens:	Mrs Sue Baugh <i>(2021-22, 2023-present)</i>
Representatives on the Deanery Synod:	<i>vacant</i>
Elected Members:	Mrs Debbie Britton <i>(2013-16, 16-17, 17-20, 20-23, 2023-26)</i> Mr Norman Castle <i>(2016-19, 19-22, 22-2025)</i> Mrs Jan Jobling <i>(2019-21, 2021-24)</i> Mr Maurice Worsnop <i>(2004-10, 10-13, 13-16, 16-19, 19-22, 22-2025)</i>
Treasurer	Fiona Klimek
Secretary	Mrs Sophie Bartlett <i>(2016-19, 19-22, 22-2025)</i>

COMMITTEES

The PCC currently has a Standing Committee and two sub-committees. Copies of PCC Minutes of meetings are kept centrally on file.

Standing Committee (Chair: Vicar)

This is the only committee required by law. It sets the agendas for PCC meetings and has power to transact the business of the PCC between its meetings, subject to any directions given by the Council. It comprises the Vicar, Churchwardens, Treasurer, Secretary & a lay member appointed by the PCC annually.

Fabric Committee (Chair: Maurice Worsnop)

This committee attends to matters relating to the fabric of the church, such as the buildings and the churchyard.

Fundraising Committee (Chair: Jan Jobling)

This committee attends to fundraising matters, organising events and opportunities to raise vital funds for the Church.

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE CHURCH

Birstwith School Foundation Governor: *vacant*

(Debbie Britton was appointed in December and took up post in January 2024)

Cathedral Ambassador: *vacant*

SAFEGUARDING REPORT

The PCC of St. James' Church is fully compliant with its duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016. Safeguarding is a standing agenda item at each PCC meeting. The PCC of St. James' Church, Birstwith follows the House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy (2017) for children, young people and adults. As such, information is displayed in church regarding child and adult safeguarding issues, including contact details for help and advice.

Safeguarding is everyone's business, but the incumbent and PCC take overall responsibility. This is a legal liability. The Safeguarding Officer is a volunteer to support the above people. Everyone needs to be vigilant in this important aspect of church life.

Who to contact:

- Visit the Diocesan Safeguarding website: <https://www.leeds.anglican.org/safeguarding.php>
- See posters inside church on the notice board and the larger hall toilet re who to contact.

These are, in ascending order:

1. The Parish Safeguarding Officer;
2. The Incumbent;
3. The name Safeguarding Advisor, Diocese of Leeds, if the above are unavailable;
4. Social Services - obtain advice first unless an emergency;
5. Police - obtain advice first unless an emergency.

Ongoing work is keeping DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks and training requirements up to date. Currently, DBS checks and training are up to date in our parish.

JAN JOBLING
PARISH SAFEGUARDING OFFICER

CHURCH ATTENDANCE

The Worshipping Community is made up of 59 Adults and 9 Children. Average attendance on a Sunday was 29 adults and 8 children (2022: 21 adults and 3 children).

VICAR'S BENEFICE REPORT

2023 was a good year for the benefice. We have many things to look back on with a sense of achievement and the knowledge that we are going from strength to strength as a benefice. The statistics that the Diocese collect show an upward trend in the people joining all our churches as new members and the numbers attending regular worship and particularly those in our 'regular worshipping community'. That

last one is an important figure because the way in which people use their church has changed over time. We no longer see as many people who attend Sunday service every week, but we do see people who choose to attend twice a month or once a month and these people once they are recognised as regular attenders become members of our 'regular worshipping community'. The good news is that in all our churches there are more people in that category than there were before and more have joined the churches and electoral roll than have left.

One of the other changes alongside the pattern of attendance at worship has been the way in which people choose to give their offering to the church. Cash collections are reducing in importance as more and more people are giving directly through their bank accounts. This is enormously helpful and important for the churches. The regular giving from our wonderful community is what keeps the roof on, and the doors open. We might have to turn the heating off though because all the churches are finding it hard to make income meet expenses. This reflects the economic climate. Each church has signed up to the Parish Giving Scheme (PGS) and we now have contactless payment devices in our buildings to enable the cashless modern society to still support our work. Thank you to all those who have embraced the change and moved from their standing order to the PGS – it really does help us. PGS automatically claim gift aid and we receive it in our bank account on a monthly basis. The reduction in the work load for the Treasurer is immense and the stability of our regular income makes it easier to keep the bank account in the black. The Diocese is encouraging everyone to embrace the Parish Giving Scheme, it is totally safe and reliable.

We are sad to have said goodbye to our faithful and long serving treasurers John Hindle from Birstwith, Peter Capel-Cure from Hampsthwaite and James Crawford-Porter from Killinghall. Thank you to them all for their hard work over many years. We are delighted to be able to welcome Fiona Klimek, a member of Killinghall congregation and a Chartered Accountant with charities training, as the new Treasurer for all the churches. My thanks to her for this year's Accounts from Birstwith and Hampsthwaite. James remained in post until the end of 2023, the Killinghall report has been prepared by him, thank you James. I would like to thank those who organised the grant funding to enable various works to be done in each of our churches. The process of completing grant application forms and faculty applications is time consuming and frustrating. We can all see where the work has been done these last few years. It can be a slow process over a long time to achieve the desired results and we do appreciate your efforts. Notably the roof repairs, tree work and gates and railings and the back wall in Killinghall (2022/23), the paths, trees, flower beds and the vestry roof in Hampsthwaite and the work in the Tower and redecorating at Birstwith, and the work ongoing towards works that will be completed in the years ahead.

We have also welcomed Scott Phillips as our Director of Music and he has been doing wonderful work with the choir and the Junior Choir. We all enjoy the excellence of the organ music on Sunday mornings. Thanks, also to Sarah Warnes who briefly returned as organist in Birstwith to help us out and to our assistant organist Andrew Kingscote who has sadly resigned from his role. We are very grateful for all his hard work and excellent musical accompaniment. Thanks also to Birstwith band leader John Mitchell and the members of the band for their wonderful music this last year and to Pam Roberts for her support of the band. Thanks to Ken Winter-Briggs for his continuing support of the evening services and the great help he has been in times of need.

I also thank the Flower people for their amazing and beautiful contributions to our churches, especially on special occasions. Thanks to the cleaners and those who wash the altar linen and the vergers for all that they do to enable our worship. Thanks to the maintenance team from each church and the gardeners for all their hard work keeping our churchyards looking so tidy and pretty. Especially to the volunteer gardeners who took on some heavy duty digging and hard work this last year. Thank you to those who organise and arrange the regular and extraordinary maintenance of these large and beautiful areas of

land. Particularly this last year those who quietly and efficiently dealt with the aftereffects of high winds and falling branches! Hampsthwaite thanks the Community Payback Team for their help and Geoff Howard for co-ordinating matters.

As a member of Hampsthwaite bell ringers myself I mustn't forget to thank them for the wonderful ringing on special occasions and the dedicated regular practising. Thank you Ailsa for your cheerful and uncritical teaching of so many new bell ringers during 2023. It really is a joy to be a part of the group and the high number of new ringers becoming more proficient every week is a credit to your teaching style.

The community room in Hampsthwaite and the community hall in Birstwith are both available for hire and bookings are regular although I think we would like to see more use made of both facilities. Thanks to Jud Charlesworth for her hard work looking after the bookings and keeping the room clean for Hampsthwaite and John Dawson for looking after the bookings for Birstwith. Few people realise that this job involves a great deal of toing and froing checking that the heating is on and the hall has been left as people would hope to find it. As well as opening and closing for bookings of course. Thank you both for all the hard work you put in. Thanks also to Kairen who is doing a wonderful job cleaning the Birstwith hall for us.

Our churches could not function at all without the volunteers who give sacrificially of their time to keep our churches running. Thanks to all the members of the PCC or other church committees. Thank you for the time and dedicated service offered to the church. I also wish to particularly thank the Church Wardens. It is a very important and challenging role, but so rewarding. I thank you for the time and the energy that you all give to both the maintenance of the weekly services, the fabric of the building and the churchyards and the pastoral care of those who come to our churches. Few people appreciate how much time you all spend in and around the church, or at meetings about the church. Thank you for your love and care and your support for my ministry this last year.

All our churches rely heavily upon the generosity of the local community and our regular givers. We thank you. We thank the fundraisers in each church who have worked so hard arranging social functions, concerts, quiz nights, regular coffee mornings or afternoons, Open Gardens, Tree and Angel Festivals and other events. The planning, preparations, catering and clearing up very often falls on the same few people. You know who you are – well done and thank you!

Lastly, I would like to thank the retired clergy without whom the benefice service pattern could not have continued for so long. We are very grateful to those regular retired clergy who come to take services in our benefice and to the Lay Readers and musicians who support the Evensong service at Birstwith. There is always the danger of missing important people out when giving thanks. If I have done so I apologise.

2023 will be remembered as the year in which King Charles III was crowned and we all enthusiastically celebrated the day. There was good food, picnics and bell ringing and various musical treats. Memorable for myself this last year has been the joy and enthusiasm of the children from our various primary schools when they performed in our churches and especially when the school choirs joined us in our worship at Harvest or Christmas events. I am grateful for the excellent relationships with all the schools and the unfailing support from staff, students and parents for church events. We are blessed to have 3 church schools that are all rated as good by OFSTED and all provide a unique caring educational environment for children to grow and flourish in. Killinghall and Birstwith Primary schools both welcomed excellent new headteachers in September 2023. I encourage the church community to pray for the schools, the headteachers, governors, staff and pupils.



HFKB

One of the greatest gifts that God has given to us all is the variety and unique individuality of people. We all enjoy and like different things. For some of you the music and concerts will hold a special place in your memories, and we have been fortunate to host many excellent musical events. For others the quality of the food and the warmth of friendship experienced when visiting our churches will be what stands out and for others it will be the beauty and tranquillity of our churchyards. For myself 2023 has been a year of experiencing loving support and making new friends and deepening existing friendships. I am very proud of the church community in this benefice, the welcome, the loving care for others and the prayerful, worshipping community is a joy and blessing.

**REVEREND SUZY MCCARTER
VICAR**

CHURCHWARDEN'S REPORT

I would like to start my report by extending my thanks to everyone who has supported me over the last year. The Warden's Assistants – Jan, Louise, Maurice and Geoffrey, everyone who has agreed to read the Lesson, say the Prayers and assist with the Chalice at the Sunday morning Services and to Ruth Raspin for setting up the Altar each Sunday as well as ensuring the Altar frontal has always been changed to the correct Liturgical colour. To everyone involved I am truly grateful and offer my sincere thanks. However, St. James' Church depends on many volunteers who seek no acknowledgement but without them St. James' would not be able to continue and to them I extend a very special Thank You.

Throughout the year we have been fortunate to have various retired priests take Services and grateful thanks for making our Services so interesting and meaningful must go to Revd David Williamson, Revd David Kirby, Rev Canon Tony Shepherd and especially so to Ven Paul Hooper who agreed in 2022 to take the Service here in Birstwith every first Sunday of the month. We too must thank the Band and Pam Roberts for faithfully providing the music accompaniment at all the Family Worship Services and the Organists, Sarah Warnes, who sadly retired in July but promised to play for us if we were in need of an Organist, Andrew Kingscote and of course Scott Phillips, the Benefice's Director of Music who joined us in 2023.

What would St. James' Church do without our hardworking and dedicated Verger – Maurice Worsnop? We all owe Maurice our sincere thanks and appreciation for always being there when needed.

Two regular features held throughout the year in St. James' Community Hall and enjoyed by those who attend have been the third Thursday of the month Coffee and Chat mornings and the Fellowship Group held on the first Wednesday afternoon of the month.

Sadly, in January of 2023 we saw the end of our printed Pew Sheets and we must thank John Hindle and Bill Baugh for faithfully producing them for many years.

Mothering Sunday in March was a lovely occasion with Suzy taking the Services in all three Churches. The APCM was also held in March and this saw some changes to the makeup of the PCC - two being Madeline Hall Jackson retiring as Electoral Roll Officer, after doing a sterling job for several years and me being elected as Churchwarden.

The usual Easter tide Services took place with Paul Hooper Presiding over the Palm Sunday Service where congregation members held their Palm Cross aloft and walked round the Church in memory of the event held 2,000 years ago in Jerusalem. Good Friday events were a new innovation by Suzy and after the usual Birstwith village green short Service those who wished walked on to Hampsthwaite Church via the (very muddy!!) side of the River Nidd. A welcome bowl of soup awaited them in Hampsthwaite Community

Room before they continued on their walk to Killinghall Church where a meaningful time of Reflection was held at 2pm once Hot Cross buns and a drink had been served. As usual a new Paschal candle was lit in a darkened Church at the Birstwith Easter morning Service and as this was placed by Suzy into its stand it shone down beautifully on the lovely Easter Garden the Sunday Club had made and had been positioned at the front of the Church.

The Fund Raising Spring Fayre held at the end of April was a great success, thanks to everyone involved and those that supported the event. Also a great success, once again having been arranged by the Fund Raising Committee, was the Concert of music and Voces Seraphorum held in Church in May which saw an audience that nearly filled the Church. May also saw a new and settled time of 10.30am for all morning Services at Birstwith Church which was a relief to the congregation as previously there had been different times to remember. As the Coronation of King Charles III had just taken place on Sunday 7th a special Celebration Coronation Service - complete with trumpeter – was led by Paul Hooper and the Refreshments, served in the regally decorated adjoining Hall, included special Coronation cakes.

A special birthday took place in May when Suzy announced she would be 60! Cards and an Orchid plant were presented to her at the morning Service on 14th May and we later celebrated in style at The Station Hotel in June.

Never having been done before, Revd David Williamson held the July Family Worship Service in the Hall. Using the overhead projector and The Band as music accompaniment. It was a huge success and enjoyed by all who attended.

Once again the July Show Service, with this year's theme as a PET SERVICE was held in the Marque on the Show Field, thanks to the generosity of the BHS Committee. This proved to be a great success as did the children's tent on Show Saturday, arranged by Georgina McIntyre with the help of Missie Pearson, which really showcased the Church and thanks must go to her for all the hard work this entailed.

No morning Services were held in Birstwith Church during August but once the holiday period was over and the children back at school the usual Harvest Service was held with the Church beautifully decorated with flowers, just as at Easter and Christmas , thanks to Jenni Worsnop and her team.

The Benefice Confirmation Service which was Presided over by the Bishop of Ripon, The Rt Revd Anna Eltringham, was held at the beginning of October in Hampsthwaite Church during which three members of Birstwith's congregation were confirmed. However, in October Covid once again raised its ugly head and Paul Hooper was unable to be at Birstwith on the first Sunday of the month. Thankfully, Rev David Kirby stepped in at the last minute to take this Service as well as both Family Worship Services in October and November. Both were a joy to attend with David playing his guitar as accompaniment to the hymns on his own in October and with The Band in November.

This year Suzy presided over the Remembrance Service and Scott played the Organ with once again members from the Army Foundation College taking a major role in the Service, for which we are very grateful as we are to the trumpeter, Amy Shepherd, and those who made the Service so memorable. Special thanks must go to Stuart Garside who read out the names of the fallen and for placing the Birstwith Wreath at the front and to the Sunday Club, flourishing once more thanks to the many parents involved, who once again made a beautiful Remembrance wreath and provided drawings and picture for display on the Church Notice Board.

The end of November and beginning of December saw the first snow and freezing fog of winter and sadly this impacted on the Advent Evensong Service restricting the number able to attend but to those that did manage to be there the usual sherry and Advent Cake were served and a convivial end to the evening took place. Happily, by the 8th December the weather was fine enough that morning to allow people to attend a lovely Christmas themed concert in Church given by Arcadian Strings. We are most grateful for all the amazing work Georgina McIntyre did to produce a truly lovely December Christmas Fayre and for giving half the proceeds to St. James' Church. She even managed to get in touch with Father Christmas and ask him to spend some time here in Birstwith at the Fayre when it is such a busy time for him!

Once again the December/January Parish magazine was delivered to all houses in Birstwith and a printed Christmas card detailing the Benefice Christmas Services was enclosed. Thanks are extended to all those who delivered the magazines and for the usual monthly delivering of them, no matter what the weather.

The Crib Service on Christmas Eve was a fantastic event with more in attendance than ever and although the donkey was unable to be there, due to the high winds possibly impacting the trailer it would have been brought in, the Service was more than a success - it was amazing!! Without Louise Garnett and her "helpers" organising the many children present this would not have been so. Really Amazing and enjoyed by all!! On Christmas Day, Paul Hooper was here at Birstwith to take the morning Service which saw a good size congregation and several visitors within it. On hearing that there would be no refreshments after the Service, Paul arrived with chocolates which he handed out to the congregation as they left. What a lovely way to end the year and my report as I look forward to the new year and all it holds.

**SUE BAUGH
CHURCHWARDEN**

PCC REPORT

The PCC is responsible for the upkeep and finances of St. James' and we met 10 times during 2023, which included some extraordinary 'Vision' meetings to specifically discuss plans for the future. You can find the list of PCC members on page 5 and I would like to extend my thanks to them all for their dedication, flexibility and patience again this year as we had another year with an increased workload!

We thank Rev'd Suzy for her commitment to us and the Benefice, and we must all send our heartfelt thanks to our Churchwarden Sue Baugh for all her hard work this year keeping everything ticking along, ably supported by the Churchwarden's Assistants. Thank you, Sue. We must as ever express our sincerest thanks to Maurice Worsnop, our Verger and Chair of the Fabric Committee, and all those on the Fabric Committee, for the work they do in maintaining the grounds and buildings. I would also like to extend my personal thanks to John Hindle, our outgoing Treasurer, for coming out of retirement once more when we needed him – please enjoy THIS retirement! I'd also like to echo a warm welcome to Fiona Klimek, our wonderful new Treasurer who has been working closely with John on the handover. My thanks too to Gill Clarke our Parish Administrator. I am terrible at getting things to her on time (in all likelihood this pack will be in that category!) and she's always very lovely and patient. Thanks Gill!

I am conscious that last year I wrote quite a stark report about the challenges facing us within the church, so this year I'm going to keep it more positive and focus on what we have achieved in 2023! However, you might notice a theme during the rest of my report... We need YOU! Or your neighbour. Or your coding-whizzkid teenager. Or your husband who happens to really enjoy power washing paths or cutting grass... ☺ We need people to give their time or talents to help us out in small chunks. There are so many jobs being spread across fewer and fewer people, we need to start reaching a new audience and asking for help with small, specific tasks. My report this year is basically a recruitment exercise!

In 2023 we continued with some of the new marketing that was deemed successful in the previous period – you may be noticing more printed materials around the village or inside your church magazines. If you are on social media you may be seeing some of these online instead. We are trying to expand our reach beyond the existing church community and existing subscribers of the church magazine. If you have any digital/content creation skills and could help us with redesigning the website, creating riveting content on social media or designing some beautiful artwork on Canva, please get in touch. If your teenager needs a project to do for some school coursework in IT, Creative Writing, Art or Media then once again – please get in touch. As an ex-teacher I can think of a number of projects that I could make applicable for coursework or portfolio work.

In last year's report I touched upon our growing Sunday Club and once again we find ourselves in a great position with an average of 8 children (and their grown ups) attending each session. It has been run collaboratively by the parents, with someone taking the lead each time. Against a backdrop of Sunday morning sports clubs/matches, birthday parties, trips and a national trend of declining church attendance, it is amazing to see such a vibrant and active Sunday Club. We thank the parents for collectively taking on the co-ordination of this. To build on its success there is a children's church service starting once a month from January – we are excited to see how this goes. If anyone reading this would like to come and see what Sunday Club or 4pm Church (4th Sunday of the month) is all about, please do get in touch!

Music continues to flourish and thrive within our Parish. Scott has successfully started a new Junior Choir for the Benefice who rehearse immediately before the senior choir and they make the most wonderful sound. Their first performance was at the Children's Crib service on Christmas Eve and it was joyful. If you have any budding young singers, please look out for that. Similarly the senior choir (particularly for Birstwith) is in need of singers, as is our dwindling band. If you can sing or play an instrument have you thought about joining the choir or band? For younger instrumentalists we can cater their parts to their level/grade, so please don't let anybody be put off by thinking they have to come in, sight read and play a hymn straightaway!

I think it's absolutely amazing that we have managed to just about stay afloat again this year, thanks to the many people who have worked SO hard and given so much to enable this to happen. We have just started the Parish Giving Scheme which is a Diocesan recommendation to replace the Envelope Scheme or monthly Standing Orders. It means we can reclaim due Gift Aid monthly, rather than annually, and it also saves our Treasurer a lot of admin time. If you aren't a member of the Birstwith 100 Club have you thought about joining that? It's £6 per month and each month we giveaway three prizes: £100, £60 and £40. ALL proceeds go to the Church which is about £1,500 per year. It's looking for new members...

As with the previous years, there are a number of vacancies on the PCC (it's the smallest PCC we've had for about 10 years). We need Deanery Synod representatives and we also need more Fabric Committee members, so have a think. Could this be you?

We as a PCC continue to pray that people within our congregation may be called to join the PCC or any of our volunteer roles or groups to help with the important work, both for the St. James' of today but also for the St. James' of the future so that our children and grandchildren can enjoy this church, its people and its spirit in the way we have.

SOPHIE BARTLETT
PCC SECRETARY

FABRIC, GOODS AND ORNAMENTS

The Quinquennial inspection took place in 2021 and as confirmed by the Diocesan Architect, Stuart Holland, at the Fabric committee meeting which took place on 2nd October 2023, all major works have

now been completed. Work on the tower continues regarding making it bird proof and wind proof – hopefully to be completed in 2024.

In May 2023 Northern Tank Services Ltd replaced the two in situ large rusted and leaking oil tanks with one new small and more Eco friendly oil tank .

Also in May 2023, and for which we are very grateful, Birstwith Parish Council wrote to say that “St. James Church/Village Hall” had been awarded a commuted sum due to the development of land on Clint Bank. The Fabric Committee are currently in the process of considering the best use of this commuted sum which can be used for any eligible project approved by North Yorkshire Council up until February 2032. During 2023 no actual gifts were received, however, we were most grateful to receive a legacy from Tom Wright that was restricted for use towards the replacement of the existing Church heating system to that of a more Eco friendly system.

The gravestones are regularly inspected for safety purposes and all were found to be in good order.

**SUE BAUGH
CHURCHWARDEN**

ELECTORAL ROLL

At the end of 2023 the Electoral Roll stood at 83. This is from 1st January to 31 December 2023.

Following the Annual Revision to the Church Electoral Roll completed on 8th March 2024 the number of people listed is 82. It reflects the removal of three names from the previous roll of 2023 due to bereavement and moving away from the parish, with the addition of two new names. Of the eighty two listed fifty two are residents in the parish and thirty non – resident.

This being the fourth revision of a new Electoral Roll which was prepared in 2019.

**CAROL PACKER
ELECTORAL ROLL OFFICER**

DEANERY SYNOD

Four meetings were held in 2023:

A meeting had been scheduled for 02.02.23 with guest speaker, the Rt Revd Dr Helen-Ann Hartley. Following her appointment from Ripon to Newcastle, she was no longer available and so this synod was cancelled.

24.04.23 - at St Mark’s Church, Leeds Road, Harrogate. The main speaker was Liz Morton, Children, Young People and Families Team Leader, who informed synod members about the focus and work of the Children, Young People and Families Team.

11.07.23 - at St Peter’s Church, Cambridge Street, Harrogate. This was an extra meeting at which the new Deanery Synod Officers and Members of the Standing Committee were introduced. Synod members shared food provided by members of St Peter’s congregation from many different countries and also had the opportunity to get to know one another during the meal. This was followed by a celebration of the Eucharist.

20.09.23 - at St James’s Community Hall, Lackon Bank, Birstwith. The guest speaker was Theo



HFKB

Sheridan-Watts, Chief Officer, Wellsprings Together, supported by Adrian Cook and Peter Smith. Synod members were informed about the work of Wellsprings Together in supporting parish churches and other faith groups.

23.11.23 – at St Andrew’s Church, High Street, Starbeck. The guest speaker was the Rt Revd Nicholas Baines, Bishop of Leeds. He spoke on a number of issues and then opened the floor to questions. He was an impressive, informative and amusing speaker.

If anyone would like further information regarding any of the above meetings, please get in touch with one of the parish reps – see below. Information, including minutes and meeting dates, is available at harrogatedeanery.org. Deanery Synod meetings are open meetings and anyone is welcome to attend.

**SUE MACDONALD, BETH WICKENDEN, SOPHIE LEFTLEY
DEANERY SYNOD REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE BENEFICE**

ST. JAMES' CHURCH, BIRSTWITH

Part of the Benefice of Hampsthwaite with Felliscliffe and Killinghall



FINANCIAL STATEMENTS **FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 2023**

FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2023

Financial Review

Income decreased by 9% during the year to £55,208 (2022 - £60,514). The difference is mostly due to higher benefice shared costs invoices paid, 2023 - £5,488, 2022 - £12,146.

Expenditure decreased by 7% to £61,469 (2022 - £66,336). The difference is mostly due to higher Parish share contributions in 2022, £16,000, compared to £10,000 in 2023. However, in 2023 the Church spent £16,508 on repairs to the Church and Churchyard and only spent £11,813 in 2022. Outstanding parish share as at 31 December 2023 was £53,553 (2022 - £40,146). The PCC have agreed to pay the outstanding share for 2023 as soon as possible.

This all resulted in the net expenditure of £8,291 (2022 – £9,527). However, with the movement from the investments to cash in 2022 of £12,000 (2023 – No movement) the end result was a net income balance of £2,473 in 2022, whilst 2023 remained at a net expenditure balance of £8,291.

The value of investments increased in 2023 by £14,207 (2022 – decreased by £13,535). This resulted in a positive movement of funds in 2023 of £5,916 (2022 – negative movement of £11,062).

Thank you so much to everybody who contributed to the Church, whether it be financial donations or their time and skills.

FIONA KLIMEK
TREASURER

Funds

The Church's funds consist of unrestricted, restricted and endowed amounts as shown in the Statement of Assets and Liabilities.

Unrestricted funds may be used at the discretion of the PCC in furtherance of the Church's objects. Restricted funds may only be used in accordance with the donors' wishes. Further information below and in Note 4 of the accounts. Endowed funds are invested and unable to be spent. The investment income is spent on the restricted fund as per the donors' wishes. Further information below in Note 4 of the accounts.

The Endowed Churchyard fund is an endowed and from the Marshall legacy left to pay for work associated with the fabric of the Church and the Churchyard via interest raised. Interest from this account is paid into the Restricted Churchyard fund and used to pay for the upkeep of the Church Fabric and Churchyard during the course of the year.

The Endowed Music Fund is part of the Hayden Legacy and is an endowed fund. Interest from this account is paid into the Restricted Music Fund and used for the upkeep of music in the Church during the course of the year.

The Churchyard Appeal Fund is a restricted legacy left to pay for work associated with the extension to the current burial area of the churchyard.

The Bell Fund is restricted money to pay for the repairs on the Church bells.

The 100 Club fund is money raised by the 100 Club and a donation is made to the Church each year which is unrestricted.

The Green Heating fund is restricted money raised from the Tom Wright Legacy to help fund a green replacement heating system.

The Restricted Donations fund is money collected by the Church that was re-distributed to other charities.

The Designated Fabric Fund is a designated fund created with the proceeds from the closure of the Barings Growth and Income Fund. A decision made by Barings themselves.

Reserves policy

It is the policy of the Church that unrestricted funds which have not been designated for a specific use should be maintained at a level equivalent to the current needs of the Church.

The Church held cash reserves at the year end equating to 16 months expenditure, after paying the outstanding parish share for 2023. The PCC members consider that reserves at this level will ensure that, in the event of a significant drop in funding, they will be able to continue the Church's current activities while consideration is given to ways in which additional funds may be raised.

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

The Members of the PCC are responsible for preparing the Annual Report and the Financial Statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

Law applicable to charities in England & Wales requires the PCC to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the Church's financial activities during the year and of its financial position at the end of the year. In preparing these financial statements, the PCC are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Church will continue in operation.

The PCC Members are responsible for keeping accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy the financial position of the Church and which enable them to ascertain the financial position of the Church and which enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with applicable law, regulations and Measures. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Church and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approved by the PCC on 29th February 2024 and signed on their behalf by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S Bartlett'.

Sophie Bartlett
PCC Secretary

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF
ST JAMES' CHURCH, BIRSTWITH**

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of St James' Church, Birstwith for the year ended 31 December 2023.

This report is made solely to the Charity's Trustees, as a body, in accordance with Section 154 of the Charities Act 2011. My independent examination work has been undertaken so that I might state to the Charity's Trustees those matters I am required to state to them in an Independent Examiner's Report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, I do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Charity and the Charity's Trustees as a body, for my independent examination work, for this report, or for the opinions I have formed.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

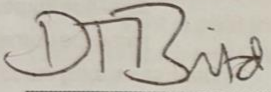
I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

 Signed	Relevant professional qualification or membership of professional bodies (if any)
Print name DAVID BIRD	Street ELTON COTTAGE
Date 8th March 2024	Town BIRSTWITH
	Postcode HG3 2NF

ST JAMES' CHURCH, BIRSTWITH
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowed Funds £	2023 £	2022 £
Receipts					
Offerings and Donations	24,120	2,408	-	26,528	29,077
Activities for generating funds	1,997	-	-	1,997	2,347
Income from investments	1,333	385	1,857	3,575	2,888
Church activities	7,327	-	-	7,327	6,775
Trading activities	5,914	257	-	6,171	5,878
Other income	5,836	3,774	-	9,610	13,549
	46,527	6,824	1,857	55,208	60,514
Payments					
Cost of generating funds	412	-	-	412	100
Direct charitable expenses					
Church activities	25,263	508	-	25,771	34,235
Church expenses	15,479	839	-	16,318	17,808
Major capital expenditure	7,858	8,650	-	16,508	11,813
Other expenditure	260	2,200	-	2,460	2,380
	49,272	12,197	-	61,469	66,336
Net (Expenditure) / Income before retained					
Investments	(2,745)	(5,373)	1,857	(6,261)	(5,822)
Income retained in Investments	211	(2,241)	-	(2,030)	(3,705)
Net (Expenditure) / Income	(2,534)	(7,614)	1,857	(8,291)	(9,527)
Transfers between funds	(382)	2,239	(1,857)	-	-
Transfers (to)/from Investments	-	-	-	-	12,000
Cash funds this period end	(2,916)	(5,375)	-	(8,291)	2,473
Cash funds b/fwd	15,788	1,664	-	17,452	14,979
Cash funds c/fwd	12,872	(3,711)	-	9,161	17,452

ST JAMES' CHURCH, BIRSTWITH
STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowed Funds £	2023 £	2022 £
Cash funds					
Bank and cash balances	12,872	(3,711)	-	9,161	17,452
	12,872	(3,711)	-	9,161	17,452
2022	15,788	1,664	-		
Investment assets					
Unlisted investments	100,212	45,660	67,962	213,834	197,597
	100,212	45,660	67,962	213,834	197,597
2022	95,649	39,830	62,118		
Current liabilities					
Outstanding Historic share	40,145	-	-	40,145	27,573
Outstanding share current year	13,408	-	-	13,408	12,573
Accruals	1,561			1,561	-
	55,114	-	-	55,114	40,146
2022	40,146	-	-		

ST JAMES' CHURCH, BIRSTWITH
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

1 Basis of accounts

The PCC Members have taken advantage of section 144 (2) of the Charities Act 2011 and have prepared accounts on a receipts and payments basis. Cash-based accounts are not prepared on an accruals basis and therefore the Charities SORP does not apply to their preparation.

2 PCC Member remuneration and expenses

No remuneration was received by the PCC Members in the year (2022 - £nil). £230 in reimbursed expenses was paid in respect of PCC Members (2022 - £255) and £560 was paid in respect of vergers fees (2022 - £520).

3 Related Party Transactions

There were no related party transactions in the year (2022 – None).

4 Funds

Fund	Balance				Balance	
	01/01/2023	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Revaluation	31/12/2023
Endowed Churchyard	43,987	1,315	-	(1,315)	4,138	48,125
Endowed Music	18,131	542	-	(542)	1,706	19,837
	<u>62,118</u>	<u>1,857</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(1,857)</u>	<u>5,844</u>	<u>67,962</u>
Restricted Churchyard	9,233	312	(8,650)	1,315	-	2,210
Restricted Music	2,033	72	(839)	542	-	1,808
Restricted Churchyard						
Appeal	28,564	1,400	-	382	3,589	33,935
Restricted Bell	850	258	-	-	-	1,108
Restricted 100 Club	814	3,774	(2,200)	-	-	2,388
Restricted Green Heating	-	500	-	-	-	500
Restricted Donations	-	508	(508)	-	-	-
	<u>41,494</u>	<u>6,824</u>	<u>(12,197)</u>	<u>2,239</u>	<u>3,589</u>	<u>41,949</u>
Designated Fabric	20,553	615	(6,656)	-	1,933	16,445
Unrestricted						
Undesignated	90,884	45,912	(42,616)	(382)	2,841	96,639
	<u>111,437</u>	<u>46,527</u>	<u>(49,272)</u>	<u>(382)</u>	<u>4,774</u>	<u>113,084</u>