



The Parish of St John the Evangelist, Whittle-le-Woods
with Clayton Brook Community Church

Annual Report 2024
Charity Number 1134259

**The Annual Report on the proceedings of the
Parochial Church Council
and the activities of the Church**
To be received by the Annual Parish Meeting on 31 March 2025

Received and adopted by the PCC on the 17 March 2025

Rev Philip Venables, Chairman

Bryn Williams & Gill Menhennet, Churchwardens

Legal and Administrative Information

The full name of the church is St. John the Evangelist, Whittle-le-Woods.

We are a Church in the diocese of Blackburn of the Church of England, with two worship centres, the Parish Church (St. John's) and Clayton Brook Community Church. Each worship centre has a group of ministry co-ordinators who are responsible to the Parochial Church Council, which keeps one set of accounts. This Annual Report covers the activities of the Parish during the year 2024, referring to the parish as a whole with its two congregations and including the parish accounts.

Incumbent: Revd Philip Venables
 The Vicarage
 Preston Road
 Whittle-le-Woods
 Chorley PR6 7PS

Parish Church Location: Preston Road
 Whittle-le-Woods
 PR6 7PS

As a church in the Diocese of Blackburn, we are a charity excepted from registration with the Charity Commissioners. Charity number 1134259

Bankers: TSB Bank plc
 Chorley Branch
 PO Box 373
 LS14 9CG

 The Royal Bank of Scotland Plc
 56 Market Street
 Chorley
 PR7 2SD

The Parish of St John the Evangelist PCC Report

The vision of the Church is as follows:

We Seek Revival through: -

Speak Out

Reach Out

Gather in for Christ

During the year 2024 the following served as members of the PCC:

Rev Philip Venables	Vicar & Chair
Bryn Williams	Churchwarden St Johns
Les Jones	Resigned Sept 2024
Kathy Bigio	Reader
Gill Menhennet	Churchwarden Clayton Brook
Ed Lillie	Secretary, Co-opted on to PCC Nov 24
Chris Woolham	Treasurer
Gill Lancaster	Reader & left Diocesan Synod in September
Alison Wynne	Left Sept 2024 due to expiry of Diocesan Synod membership.
Chris Wynne	Deanery Synod Representative
Lyndon Wright	Deanery Synod Representative
Nick Brake	Deanery Synod Representative
Ade Brown	
Stuart Cross	
Chris Dawson	
Jamie Dixon	
Paul Haslem	
Susan Parkinson	

Throughout 2024 the PCC met six times in person. A co-ordinator report from each church was given at the meetings and a report from the various PCC teams as applicable. The Standing Committee met four times

Electoral Roll report 2024

The total number of people on the 2024 electoral roll was 161

130 resident in the parish and 31 non-resident

135 from St John's and 26 from Clayton Brook

Vicar's Report for 2024

For me personally (as opposed to my role as vicar) 2024 was dominated by a son's wedding, by frantically preparing a house fit for them to live in, and by a summer sabbatical break. All of which were wonderful.

On the church & parish front, nothing particularly exceptional occurred, but that's OK. The day to day, week to week, ministry continued, led by a willing and faithful band, and both congregations have been in good heart. One highlight was a wonderful joint SJCB service of Easter Praise held at St John's. We rarely manage to combine the two congregations, but this was so well received by everyone that we are repeating it in 2025. We also had two excellent women's and men's garden parties again, and likewise have planned these for June 2025. St John's bought a new sound system which has been a wonderful gain, and Clayton Brook a new loop system, equally helpful. 2024 saw the 40th anniversary of Clayton Brook Church. The congregation there is never large, but it has become even more than previously a real family of all ages, with a small but very committed team. The Lord has brought in a real mix of people and we rejoice in that. We had an excellent PCC day away, which helped to keep up the longing for the renewal of St John's building, and in September we had another very happy church day out to Chipping, with excellent teaching on The Lord's Prayer. Christmas, too, was a really encouraging time with a definite growth in numbers attending at both churches.

On the wider deanery front, we had a first ever Deanery Mission in May and the original 'Ace' from Gladiators visited St John's. He was excellent. A new vicar arrived at Heapey and it is great to have a real partnership with them, St James, and ourselves, along with others. The work of Street Pastors continued, with regular patrols in Clayton Brook, supported by a good prayer team.

Finances were more of a challenge than in previous years, but the Lord has kept us afloat and we continue to look to him.

Rev Philip Venables

SOCIAL AND OUTREACH TEAM 2024

Because of my absence over the summer SOT was a little less active this year and we met only three times. (Team members: Philip & Caroline Venables, Lyndon Wright, Deborah Green, Frances Grieve, Sue Lillie, Nick Brake, Anne Harris.) However, we did plan and work towards important outreach events: the deanery mission, the garden parties, Chipping, Christmas Adventure.

St John's Churchwarden Report 2024

Psalm 95

¹ Come, let us sing for joy to the LORD;
let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation.

² Let us come before him with thanksgiving
and extol him with music and song.

In September, we celebrated the installation of the new sound system and speakers at St. John's. Gone are the crackles and high-pitched squeals and now we hear the services with clarity and we can all 'sing for joy', alongside our wonderful music group.

Throughout the year, the Sunday Services continue to be a combination of Service of the Word, Holy Communion and All Age Services. Junior Church and Pathfinders remain well-attended and we pray that the children will grow in faith as they learn more of God's Word.

We celebrated Easter with our choir led Easter Praise Service – probably, the Warden's favourite service of the year!

In the Summer, Philip (and Caroline) took a long-overdue and well-deserved sabbatical. This meant that through July and August we were delighted to welcome several guest preachers: Archdeacon Mark Ireland, David Phillips (twice), Andy Meeson, Simon Griffiths and Alex Phillips to preach and lead us through the Gospel of Mark.

Alex was also able to give an update on his work for Crosslinks in South Korea. Crosslinks being just one of the missions we support as part of our charitable giving.

The annual Advent-ure event brought its usual joyful gathering of families, some from our church family but many who are not and some making their first visit to St John's – we pray that they will return.

The Christmas period was, of course, a busy time for our church as we welcomed our two Church of England primary schools to enjoy their own Christmas services, with children, parents and teachers filling the pews.

The Carol Service was a wonderful celebration of the birth of Jesus. The choir returned to lead the congregation as we sang for joy the carols, as part of the telling of the Christmas Story.

It is always a challenge to manage and maintain a heritage building like St John's within a tight budget and this year the Diocese awarded us a small grant to carry out some external repairs which, when complete, will help to keep the building more water and airtight.

We continue to pray for the start of the reordering; despite the complications we are faced with, it feels like progress is being made - albeit slowly.

Finally, it is important to acknowledge our many church volunteers, without whom the ministry of St John's would be greatly diminished. For their service to St John's, we give thanks and praise the Lord.

Bryn Williams, Churchwarden at St John's.

Clayton Brook Churchwarden Report 2024

Reflecting on 2024 it's wonderful to remember how busy Clayton Brook church was. Our focus, as always, was to spread the good news of Jesus Christ in our community. God continually blessed us as we heard sermon series from Exodus, John, Ephesians and Isaiah throughout the year. Philip and Caroline took a well-deserved break during the summer when visiting preachers taught us the miracles of Jesus from Mark's gospel. Our church family has grown this year with new members joining as well as some moving away to pastures new.

We continue to thank God for our young people, for their growing faith, enthusiasm and willingness to be involved in our services, reading the bible, saying prayers and much more. Prayer is the foundation of our faith and we continued to meet every Friday morning to pray for the war in Ukraine and other tragic situations around the world as well as for our own parish. We held 2 prayer breakfasts during the year, Chorley Street Pastors and Sion Hall a speaker from Antislavery. We support both of these organisations as part of our Mission outreach. The Street Pastors visit Clayton Brook twice a month to go out into the community. It's an amazing outreach and we support them by meeting in church before each patrol to pray for divine appointments and protection. We welcomed new faces to our weekly Growth Group as we studied the word of God. On Maundy Thursday our two churches came together to share a meal and fellowship together followed by a joint service at St. Johns to celebrate on Easter Day.

Children from Clayton Brook school visited us to learn about the Easter story and again at Christmas to hear about the Nativity. They held their Christmas service in church when Philip shared the Christmas message with the children and their families.

Our church building is well maintained. We had a new loop system installed and work was carried out on part of the roof in October to replace some rotting fascia boards and beams to ensure that squirrels cannot gain access! A new capacitor was fitted to the sump pump during December.

In September we enjoyed a parish away day at Chipping where we received teaching on The Lord's Prayer, a delicious lunch and time to catch up with church family.

Our building is in the heart of the community and was hired out to various groups including dance, drama and private meetings throughout the year. In October Anne organised a prison event where we heard from former inmates and those affected by crime, how Jesus has transformed lives. In November Samaritans Purse used our building to process shoeboxes for the Operation Christmas Child outreach. Thousands of boxes were checked and prayed over before being sent to children across the world with an invitation to learn about Jesus.

We thank God for his many blessings during 2024 and as we pray that he will guide us as we serve him at Clayton Brook Community Church during 2025.

- Gill Menhennet & Ade Brown
Churchwardens

Clayton Brook Pastoral Report 2024

Pastoral team members met with each other on a spontaneous and 'as a need arose' basis during 2024. This enabled any issues arising to be dealt with promptly and effectively with the appropriate people involved. The LLM's and ALM's updated their personal development this year by refreshing their Safeguarding Courses. Les Jones left the team in September to pursue new opportunities and we thank Les for his contribution to our church family pastoral care over past years.

We have been extremely busy providing prompt pastoral care according to needs, eg. Prayer, visits, hospitality, encouraging words and messages, shopping, lifts to services and events and general loving support and supporting each other through prayer, loving care and practical help. We have also welcomed new members to our church family and new volunteers to serve on Sundays and praise God for this growth.

We thank God for his provision and care throughout 2024, in particular for guiding us in the diversity of pastoral care. We look forward to another year of providing pastoral care with his loving guidance.

Gill Wright

Warm Welcome 2024

There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are differences of ministries but the same Lord. And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all.
1 Corinthians 12 v 4-6

I would like to thank our team of volunteers who are committed and dedicated. Our team are Gill Wright, Jean Owen, Hetti Johnson, Frances Grieve, Kathy Bigio, Adele Fletcher, Leigh Cottam, Sandra and Christine Whiteside. You will notice that all of our volunteers bar 3 are over 65 and yet they regularly commit their time and talents in service to others to keep Warm Welcome operating, even though it might be quite tiring. We are looking to add some younger volunteers to our experienced team. This year we have been pleased to offer a voluntary service placement to some young people in our church and have really enjoyed having them with us and they have benefitted from the experience.

We have between thirteen and twenty regulars each week who enjoy the companionship and food we provide. Some of our regulars have attended church events eg the Carol Service and the day out at Chipping. A sense of belonging and community has been encouraged by putting together a shoe box and having a stall on the Craft Fayre. Everyone has enjoyed our seasonal special events which we provide free of charge and we had about thirty five guests at our Harvest Lunch and Christmas meal.

Our God is good, we used up all of our funding at the end of the year but were able to again obtain funding from the local community. We received funding for 2025 again from Chorley Council and for the first time from local company Amber River True Bearing Chartered Financial planners. They are a local company based in Buckshaw who like to give something back by funding local charities. They gave us a generous grant of £1,000 and allowed two of their employee's time of work to volunteer at our Christmas lunch.

To conclude, I feel there are many positives, God has provided for us financially and even though there have been some health issues among key volunteers which have placed a burden at times on others volunteers we have still been able to keep going. We are looking to recruit

new volunteers this year, especially to help with lifts. I am grateful to our team for their service this year.

- Sue Lillie

St John's Junior Church & Pathfinders Report 2024

We are so grateful to God for giving us a large team of leaders and helpers and for bringing in all the children and young people who attend our groups.

Each **Sunday** the youngest children (**Bubbles** 2-5) descend to the basement for bible-based activities focusing on an interactive bible story. Prayer, singing and craft are used to reinforce the teaching and to help the children understand the story chosen from the Bible. We pray that God is growing faith in each of these little ones.

The older children (**Splash** 6-8 and **Searchlight** 8-10) meet in the school hall. The (same) bible story is taught as engagingly as possible with the children often participating in reading different parts or taking part in a drama. The message is consolidated with questions, prayer and a related activity.

A lively group of **Pathfinders** (10-15) meets in the Vicarage sitting room 3 Sundays a month to study and discuss the same passage. It is exciting and encouraging to see them engaging with God's word and asking searching questions.

Other older pathfinders also stay in church to help with AV and sound or help out with Bubbles and Junior Church. It is also most encouraging to see our children and young people help out by welcoming at the door and serving drinks after the service. We are thrilled to see the different ways in which these young people serve the Lord.

Pathfinders also meet on Mondays and Tuesdays at the Vicarage. On Mondays we welcome the older pathfinders who enjoy 'chilling', listening to music, playing games and engaging with God's word. We finish with a shared meal.

On Tuesdays, years 6 and 7 join us after school. The format is the same as above. Their favourite activity in the wet winter months is playing hide and seek in the church!

It has been such a privilege getting to know the young people in these groups and we give thanks to God for providing the adults whose service enables these groups to thrive. Please continue to pray that these children/young people carry on growing in faith and love of Jesus.

Junior Church report-- Clayton Brook Community Church 2024

We commenced the year with Sunday Kings Kids meeting as one group covering all ages.

Our teaching plan continued with the Old Testament, and later in the year we started teaching from the gospels. Our numbers have been similar to previous years, averaging around 12 each week, and with a register of over 20 children. The leaders do a wonderful job for which we are all very very grateful.

During the year we introduced a new initiative called Kings Kids Extra, every few months or so, when children stayed on after the service and enjoyed lunch, games, crafts and a short talk. We ran a KK Extra in March, July, September and November, all well received and we plan to continue.

We continue to sponsor Justine in Ghana, through Compassion, and the children faithfully bring their donations to put into “Justine’s Jar”, whilst learning about giving, generosity and caring for others.

Highlights of our year included a Saturday trip to Lytham St Annes for some older children, others attending the church day out at Chipping, and of course a well attended (29 children) Christmas party where we were joined by some of St John’s Pathfinders.

It is a great encouragement that many of the children are actively involved and participating in the church service, including welcoming, prayers and readings. We thank God for this blessing!

During December we were delighted to work with Clayton Brook Primary School as we hosted their school service, received a group to teach about Advent, and also went into school to teach the nativity story.

Thanks to all for your prayer support, and to all the leaders who serve God faithfully week by week.

Stuart Cross

Worship group St John’s 2024

2024 was a very strange year for us as during the Summer months the Sound System blew up. So for a few weeks (that we couldn’t sing) we used CD’s for our Worship. We did however have a wonderful Easter Praise service which was held in the morning this year and was a big success. The new Sound System arrived in September and what a difference it has made to our Worship, praise God, and just in time for Christmas when Carolyn led the choir again. It was a wonderful celebration of our Saviour’s birth and we had a full church. We praise God for His faithfulness over the difficult year and look forward to new things in the year to come.

- Christine Whiteside

Worship group Clayton Brook 2024

Honouring God with our voices through song is an important part of our worship and is a powerful expression of our love and devotion to God. Colossians 3:16 reminds us to, “sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.”

At Clayton Brook we sing a variety of songs and hymns that complement the theme and readings each week. We have a dedicated music team who sacrifice their own time during the week to practise the songs before coming together on a Friday to rehearse ready for the Sunday morning service. This year we have introduced four new songs and have added four new songs to the Worship Lyric Video resource. We continue to make good use of this resource before our service begins whilst enjoying fellowship over tea and coffee and also during communion.

At the beginning of every month we take great delight in celebrating family members’ birthdays with our special birthday song and on Mothering Sunday a few of our ladies had the opportunity of choosing their favourite song.

As a team, we pray that through sung worship we are encouraging our congregation not only to offer up their praise and thanks to a faithful God, but also to declare the truth of God’s word and His promises over their lives.

St John's – Prayer Report 2024

During the year intercessions were offered during each Sunday service for people in church and those watching on line. Thank you to everyone who does this important ministry. The prayer chain is now on WhatsApp and remains faithfully active for urgent or emergency prayers. An increasing number of prayers, over 140, have been requested throughout the year. Thank you to every member from St John's and Clayton Brook who prays so fervently. Tuesday evening parish prayer meetings were held once a month either in church or on zoom. Small prayer groups continued to meet regularly, in person or by zoom. The church prayer diary continued to be produced monthly, which contained prayer suggestions for both churches for people involved in services, groups, meetings, activities, events, training courses, missions we support, the re-ordering of StJohns church, sick & bereaved, care homes and housebound, clergy, churchwardens, ALMs, our bishops and the Diocesan Vision prayer. This ensures everything and everyone is covered in prayer. The prayer diary was emailed out to our congregations, with a few printed copies sent to the housebound, and was also available in church.

Mission Team Report 2024

The Mission Team works on behalf of the PCC to make decisions about how the 10% tithe of church income should be distributed. This amounts on average to ~£10k per year. The ministries that we regularly support are Churches Ministry among Jewish People, Church Missionary Society (CMS – Alf and Hilary Cooper in Chile), Crosslinks (Alex and Kate Phillips in South Korea), Compassion (through individual sponsorship), Open Doors, Street Pastors, Tearfund, The Salvation Army, and Wellfield Church in Leyland. Our support for Barnabas Aid has been suspended until further notice due to difficulties within the ministry. These ministries were selected on the basis that they are well-established, work alongside local churches worldwide, and we have advocates within our churches willing to speak out on their behalf. Intercessors are asked to pray for our mission partners regularly, and dedicated noticeboards are in each church outlining the work of the supported ministries.

Two mission breakfasts were held this year, one in February with Bev Taylor, the new lead for Street Pastors from Living Waters church, speaking about the work that they do in Chorley and Clayton Brook, and the second in November with speaker Sion Hall talking about anti-slavery initiatives locally. Both were well-received. Over the summer two of our teenagers went on a school mission trip to Zambia, and gave an interesting presentation at both churches in October. This year monetary harvest donations were directed to the Bishop's Harvest Appeal supporting the Diocese of Multan in Pakistan, and food donations were taken to Living Waters food bank. In October/November we took part in Operation Christmas Child supplying 102 shoeboxes (including those online) to children in low and middle income countries, and Clayton Brook was used as a drop-off and processing centre for OCC for one week with volunteers helping from both churches. In October Anne Harris ran an excellent event at Clayton Brook on the work of the Prison Fellowship, which included speakers from Recycled Lives and testimonies from ex-offenders. In November we held World Mission Sunday with Philip Venables preaching at both churches. During the services this year we held monthly focus spots showing videos of 5 of the ministries we support, one interview with our Street Pastors representative (Hetti), and we hosted 3 visiting preachers - Alf and Hilary Cooper in June (CMS), Alex Phillips in August (Crosslinks), and David Dean in September (Barnabas Aid, on Suffering Church Sunday).

The mission team met twice during the year. In January we updated our Diary of Mission Team events (held between 2015-2024 – available upon request) overviewing all activities over the past 10 years. In September Jean Owen and Gill Lancaster gathered signatures at each church for an Open Doors petition for Arise Africa, initiated by Stuart Cross. Gill Lancaster wrote Gazette articles to highlight the launch and results of OCC in October and December, respectively, and Gill Lancaster and Kathy Bigio, and Gill Menhennet organised the logistics of the shoebox appeal and processing, respectively. Throughout the year Cath Orr (editor) regularly highlighted the needs of Living Waters foodbank in the Gazette, and published newsletters from our CMS and Crosslinks overseas partners. David Barlow continued writing articles each month highlighting the plight of persecuted Christians worldwide. Robin Lancaster (St Johns) and Sue Lillie with help from Stuart Cross and Gill Menhennet (Clayton Brook) regularly delivered our contributions to the food bank.

Kathy Bigio and Gill Lancaster highlighted the mission fund at the beginning of the year in each church, and during the year we had 3 mission fund applications (for Kennedy Solano's sports ministry in Kenya £200; International Aid £200; Prison Fellowship event £200). The remaining £400 left at year end went to the local Friendship Foundation towards their anti-slavery work. Sue Lillie continued to regularly rotate mission information on the noticeboard at Clayton Brook.

We would like to thank everyone who has supported Mission within our two churches over the past year, and encourage everyone to get involved. Please see our mission leaflet for more information.

Mission Team: Gillian Lancaster (chair), Kathy Bigio, Stuart Cross, Hetti Johnson, Philip Venables

Beehive Report 2024

The first half of the year was busy as usual but from September onwards our numbers dropped dramatically due to 30 free hours offered by Nurseries. Since September we have had very few children, so we have started an Advertising Campaign by producing new flyers and posters and using Social Media. Alison Wynne is now our Admin. Person for our Facebook Page. We have a very committed team who work tirelessly to make the Beehive the best Toddler Group we can. Every week, we have a Bible Story with corresponding craft as well as open play and finish with singing choruses and nursery rhymes accompanied by guitar. The highlights of the year were:-

January - We had a visit from the Little Zoo who brought lots of small animals for the children to feel and hold using a Gruffalo Story.

April - We had an Easter Party with Easter Egg Hunt and various crafts.

June - We had our Windmill Farm Trip which was well attended and thoroughly enjoyed.

Dec. - We finished the year with our Nativity Play and Christmas Party which was enjoyed by all.

We look forward to God blessing us with an increase in numbers next year and thank Him for His faithfulness to us.

- Christine Whiteside

Parish Gazette 2024

The gazette continues to maintain its content and quality and produces 14 or more A4 pages per issue. It is a good source of communication and information for the parish and contains three advertisements for local businesses. The gazette was emailed out to over 130 people each month. These copies have been produced in colour and are greatly appreciated. Several large print copies are produced each month for church members who prefer larger print. For those who are not on email copies are distributed either by post or by hand. Thank you to Susan Parkinson for helping with this task. The Parish Gazette is also available on the church website. Thank you to everyone who has contributed articles throughout the year.

Safeguarding Report 2024

The Safeguarding Team consist of the Vicar, two Safeguarding Children's Champions, the Disclosure and Barring Service Administrator and the Parish Safeguarding Officer.

The team's terms of reference remain as follows:

- Completing the Parish Safeguarding Self Audit at least once a year,
- Reviewing the safeguarding needs within the parish, at least annually,
- Reviewing the Parish Safeguarding Policy and Procedures at least annually,
- To consider safeguarding training requirements within the parish on an ongoing basis, with particular regard to Diocesan recommendations,
- Ensuring that appropriate records are kept in a safe place,
- Signing off the Annual Safeguarding report to the PCC and Annual Parochial Church

St John's and Clayton Brook are registered for the Diocese of Blackburn Safeguarding Dashboard and Hub. This is a central register helping to manage safer recruitment and people management for all our training requirements. Parish Safeguarding Officer has completed further online training for the HUB this year, this replaces the Self Audit process as a full printout of status can be done at any time.

Access to HUB is restricted to Vicar, Parish Safeguarding Officer and Barring Service Administrator

There were no safeguarding incidents during the year. The Diocese Safeguarding Team have been asked for advice on procedures for Lone Working that has been incorporated into working practice.

A list of activities for children, adults and community that are ongoing throughout the year were confirmed at PCC in March as having full risk assessments

- Carol Wright, Parish Safeguarding Officer

Treasurer’s Report 2024

Thank you to all those who have contributed financially over the past year, especially in light of the continuing financial pressures that we all currently face. Your generosity and prayerful support is vital to enabling our ministry here in Whittle-le-Woods, Clayton-le-Woods and Clayton Brook. Thank you also to all those who continue to serve in many and varied ways across our church, investing many hours each year to enable us to reach out, speak out and gather in for Christ. Thank you in particular to Marion Barlow for her continued support in regularly submitting our Gift Aid claims and answering my many questions, and to Lyndon Wright for banking the offertory on a regular basis.

Your generosity has enabled us to continue to serve our Parish across Whittle-le-Woods, Clayton-le-Woods and Clayton Brook, supporting over 160 services throughout the year, including additional celebration services over Christmas and Easter. Your support has also enabled us to reach out into our community with events such as Christmas ADVENTure, as well as enabling other social and outreach events, such as the women’s summer garden party, the men’s beer and pies event, and our annual church family away day at Chipping.

As a PCC, we continue to tithe 10% of our income to support our mission partners locally, nationally and internationally.

We really couldn’t continue this ministry without your generous financial and prayerful support, so thank you so much, and thanks be to God for His generous and faithful provision.

“You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.” 2 Corinthians 9:11

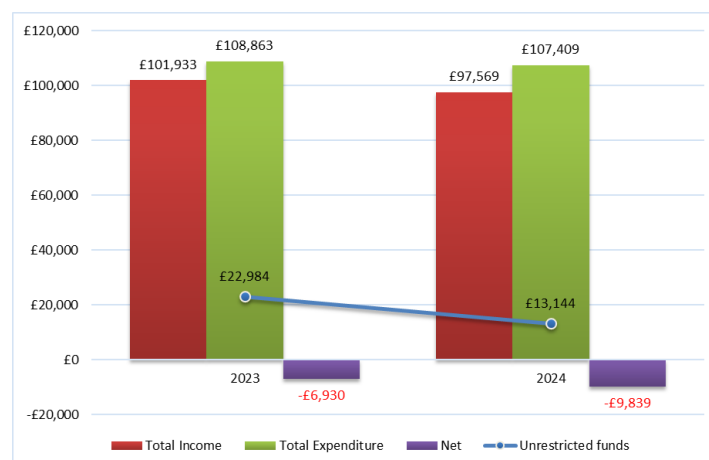
As a PCC, we face significant financial challenges for the year ahead and beyond, so we are incredibly grateful for your continued prayerful and financial support during these difficult times. Please continue to pray for our PCC and for our financial situation as we seek to agree our budgets for 2025.

Unrestricted Funds

Whilst the PCC started the year with a budgeted deficit of almost £17,000 in 2024, thanks to careful management of expenditure and a generous response to the sermon series on giving, we ended the year with a much-reduced deficit of **£9,834**. This leaves us with **unrestricted reserves** of just **£13,149** at 31 December 2024, with a challenging year ahead for 2025. It is the PCC’s policy to try to maintain a balance on unrestricted reserves which equates to approximately 3 months unrestricted expenditure (c£28,000). However, reserves at the end of 2024 have fallen to less than half of this.

The PCC are still in the process of agreeing a budget for 2025, as current forecasts anticipate the PCC going into debt during the year. This presents a very significant challenge for the PCC for 2025 and beyond as we look to grow our church, so we are grateful of your continued prayer and financial support during these difficult times.

We worship a generous and faithful God, and trust in Him that we will be able to meet our needs, as He has always enabled us to do so often in the past.

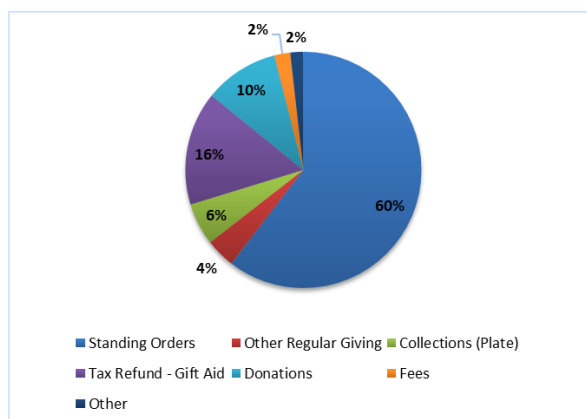


Unrestricted income

Total unrestricted **income** for the year was **£97,574**, of which £78,520 was from congregational giving, £15,181 was from gift aid and £2,129 was in respect of fees retained by the PCC for weddings and funerals. As in previous years, almost all of our income (96%) comes from our congregation in the form of regular giving, donations and gift aid.

Income was down by some 4.2% compared to 2023 (£101,933), largely due to a reduction in other one-off donations likely due to the financial challenges faced by many households in the current economic climate.

The chart below shows where all our unrestricted income came from in 2024:

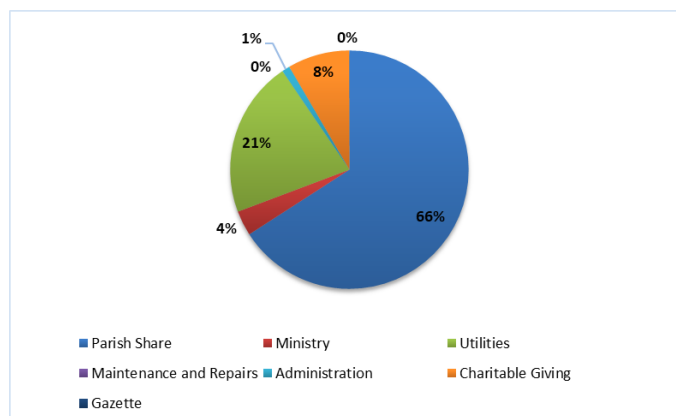


Unrestricted Expenditure

Total unrestricted **expenditure** for the year was **£107,409** (2022: £108,863). The largest areas of expense were:

- Our Parish Share to the Diocese of £70,762 (2022: £75,564). The Parish Share paid for Philip, together with supporting the financial costs of ministry throughout our diocese including training for lay and ordained ministry.
- Utilities and services were £17,027 (2023: £11,096) covering electricity, gas, oil, water, Council Tax, and insurance. The increase compared to 2023 is largely due to us receiving support towards our heating costs in 2023 through the Energy Cost Support Grant which was distributed to all parishes by the Blackburn Diocesan Board of Finance from the national Church. We also reached the end of our fixed rate electricity and gas tariffs in 2024, which has led to an increase in our gas and electricity costs of around 50%.
- Ministry and outreach spend was £2,922 (2023: £4,781).
- Finally, even in these challenging times, the PCC remains committed to tithing 10% of our unrestricted income to charity which amounted to £9,000 (2023 £9,720).

The chart below shows where all our unrestricted expenditure went in 2024:



Restricted Funds

The funds of the PCC also include restricted funds in relation to grants or donations received towards a specific purpose. Total **restricted funds** at 31 December 2024 was **£435,495**, of which the majority is in respect of the St John's Refurbishment Fund (£425,129).

The PCC also received a number of other grants over the year. In particular, grants totalling £1,671 were received towards the Warm Welcome space at Clayton Brook which has been running regularly on a Monday lunchtime throughout the year, as well as grants totalling £1,100 towards the Christmas ADVENTure event at St John's held at the end of November.

Other grants were received towards maintenance of our 2 church buildings, including repairs to the roof at Clayton Brook and replacement of the lead pipes at St John's.

St John the Evangelist P C C, Whittle le Woods
Statement of Financial Activities for the Year Ended 31 December 2024

	Note	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total £	2023 Total £
Income from:					
Planned Giving	2	62,962	550	63,512	62,893
Other Giving		15,559	3,052	18,610	26,494
Legacies Received		0	0	0	0
Grants Received	3	0	8,121	8,121	3,600
Tax recovered through Gift Aid		15,181	0	15,181	15,708
		<u>93,701</u>	<u>11,723</u>	<u>105,423</u>	<u>108,695</u>
Income from fundraising activities		0	0	0	0
Fees retained by PCC for weddings and funerals etc		2,129	3,839	5,968	6,239
Magazine and rental income	4	0	4,700	4,700	3,007
		<u>2,129</u>	<u>8,539</u>	<u>10,668</u>	<u>9,246</u>
Investment Income	5	313	22,400	22,713	13,357
Other Income	6	1,431	333	1,764	0
TOTAL Income		<u>97,574</u>	<u>42,994</u>	<u>140,568</u>	<u>131,298</u>
Expenditure on:					
Raising Funds		0	0	0	0
Charitable Giving	7	9,000	219	9,219	9,842
Church Activities					
Parish Share and Assigned Fees paid to Diocese	8	70,762	2,363	73,125	78,318
Salaries and honoraria		0	0	0	456
Parish Clergy Costs	9	4,396	0	4,396	4,029
Ministry costs	10	2,922	3,176	6,098	9,254
Regular church running expenses	11	12,444	5,258	17,702	14,478
Church heating and lighting costs		7,809	712	8,521	6,496
		<u>98,334</u>	<u>11,509</u>	<u>109,842</u>	<u>113,032</u>
Governance costs		75	0	75	75
TOTAL Revenue Expenditure		<u>107,409</u>	<u>11,728</u>	<u>119,136</u>	<u>122,949</u>
Major Capital Expenditure					
Major repairs to church	12	0	31,994	31,994	0
New Building work		0	0	0	0
		<u>0</u>	<u>31,994</u>	<u>31,994</u>	<u>0</u>
TOTAL Expenditure		<u>107,409</u>	<u>43,722</u>	<u>151,131</u>	<u>122,949</u>
Loss (Gain) on investment assets		<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
NET outgoing resources and movement in funds		-9,834	-728	-10,562	8,349
Reconciliation of Funds					
Transfer between Funds		0	0	0	0
Total Funds brought forward		<u>22,984</u>	<u>436,224</u>	<u>459,208</u>	<u>450,859</u>
Total Funds carried forward		<u>13,149</u>	<u>435,496</u>	<u>448,645</u>	<u>459,208</u>

**St John the Evangelist P C C, Whittle le Woods
Balance Sheet at 31 December 2024**

	Note	£	2023 £
Investments	13	0	0
Current Assets:			
Deposit with CCLA		429,418	422,018
Cash at Bank and in Hand		19,227	37,190
Total Net Assets		<u>448,645</u>	<u>459,208</u>
The Funds of the charity:			
Unrestricted funds		13,149	22,984
Restricted Funds	14	435,496	436,224
Total Charity Funds		<u>448,645</u>	<u>459,208</u>

Approved by the PCC on 17 March 2025

Philip Venables

Rev. Philip Venables
P C C Chair

St John the Evangelist P C C, Whittle le Woods
Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024

Basis of accounting

The financial statements are prepared under the historical cost convention on the receipts and payments basis, with the exception of investments which are included at market value. The financial statements are prepared in accordance with the Charities Act 2011 Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice for charities applying the Financial Reporting Standard 102 (January 2015) and applicable accounting standards.

Donations and legacies

Donations are accounted for in full in the accounts in the year in which they are received. Income from legacies is accounted for when received in view of the uncertainty up to the point the amounts are received.

Investment income

Incoming resources from investments, including interest received, is included when received.

Resources expended

Expenditure is included in the statement of financial activities when paid, inclusive of VAT which cannot be recovered, other than on certain repairs to the Parish church. Resources expended, where directly attributable, are allocated to charitable activities and governance costs. Charitable expenditure includes all expenditure incurred in the provision of charitable services, together with support costs, in pursuance of the charity's objectives.

Pensions

The charity does not have a pension scheme as there are no eligible employees.

Investments

Investments held by the CCLA on behalf of the charity are stated at their market value. All movements in values are shown in the statement of financial activities. All investments were realised in 2021 and the funds transferred to the St John's Building Fund.

Fund Accounting

The charity has various types of funds for which it is responsible and which require separate disclosure as follows:

Restricted and endowment funds:

Donations or legacies received which are earmarked by the donor for specific purposes within the overall aims of the charity.

These funds may be income only (where the capital must be retained) or income and capital (where the donation and income deriving therefrom may be utilised).

The charity has no endowments

Unrestricted funds:

Funds which may be spent at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the objects of the charity. The PCC may designate some of the unrestricted funds for particular purposes, these funds may be undesignated at the trustees discretion.

St John the Evangelist P C C, Whittle le Woods

Notes to Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024 (continued)

2. Planned Income	£	£	£	£
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	2023
Income received through Standing Orders giving	59,020	550	59,570	58,949
Income received through other regular giving	3,942	0	3,942	3,944
	<u>62,962</u>	<u>550</u>	<u>63,512</u>	<u>62,893</u>

3. Grants Received

In 2024 the PCC received grants of £4,800 from the Blackburn Diocese Minor Repair Grant Scheme towards roof works at Clayton Brook, £550 from the United Utilities Lead Pipe Replacement Scheme towards lead pipe replacement works at St John's, £500 from Whittle-le-Woods Parish Council, £500 from the Blackburn Diocesan Board of Finance and £100 from Chorley Borough Council towards the Christmas ADVENTure event, plus grants of £1,001 from Amber River True Bearing and £670 from Chorley Borough Council towards the Warm Welcome space at Clayton Brook.

4. Magazine and rental income

Income from the Parish Gazette	0	0	0	0
Rental Income from Clayton Brook	0	4,700	4,700	3,007
	<u>0</u>	<u>4,700</u>	<u>4,700</u>	<u>3,007</u>

5. Investment income

Bank interest	313	22,400	22,713	13,357
Investment income and dividends	0	0	0	0
	<u>313</u>	<u>22,400</u>	<u>22,713</u>	<u>13,357</u>

6. Other income

Other Income comprises refund from SSE Business Energy in relation to the electricity account for Clayton Brook.

7. Charitable giving

Barnabas Fund	800	0	800	1,200
Bishop's Harvest Appeal	0	219	219	122
Chorley Street Pastors	600	0	600	1,070
Christian Ministry to the Jews	600	0	600	600
Christians Against Poverty - Leyland	0	0	0	300
Church Missionary Society	1,200	0	1,200	1,200
Crosslinks	1,200	0	1,200	1,200
International Aid Trust	200	0	200	0
Mission Direct	0	0	0	300
Open Doors	1,600	0	1,600	1,200
Prison Ministry	200	0	200	0
Salvation Army	600	0	600	600
Sports Ministry Outreach in Kenya	200	0	200	0
Tearfund	1,200	0	1,200	1,450
Wellfield Church	600	0	600	600
	<u>9,000</u>	<u>219</u>	<u>9,219</u>	<u>9,842</u>

The PCC allocate 10% of all unrestricted giving and donations for charitable giving.

8. Parish Share paid to Diocese

The Parish Share paid to the Diocese of Blackburn covers the cost of the Vicar's stipend (salary), Clergy housing and training. In addition the Parish Share also contributes to the cost of running the Diocese and a contribution to the costs of running the National Church.

St John the Evangelist P C C, Whittle le Woods
Notes to Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024 (continued)

9. Parish clergy costs

		2023
Clergy Expenses	738	568
Council Tax	3,292	3,075
Water Rates	367	386
	<u>4,396</u>	<u>4,029</u>

10. Ministry Costs

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total £	2023 £
Books	0	25	25	0
Candles, Communion wine etc	58	0	58	99
Children's Work	0	339	339	932
Clayton Brook Festival	0	0	0	782
Lay Ministry costs	200	0	200	324
Licences etc	867	163	1,030	1,048
Love Fund	0	228	228	660
Outreach	330	2,420	2,751	3,234
Safeguarding	63	0	63	66
Other	1,405	0	1,405	2,109
	<u>2,922</u>	<u>3,176</u>	<u>6,098</u>	<u>9,254</u>

11. Regular church running expenses

Administration Costs	1,077	0	1,077	1,126
Broadband Clayton Brook	62	333	395	124
Broadband St John's	395	0	395	423
Clayton Brook Landscaping costs	1,969	0	1,969	1,395
Cleaning - Clayton Brook	1,656	0	1,656	1,600
Insurance Clayton Brook	866	0	866	815
Insurance St John's	4,693	0	4,693	4,489
Minor Repairs	0	3,973	3,973	1,309
Parish Gazette Costs	40	0	40	40
Portaloos	0	0	0	365
Professional Fees	1,687	300	1,987	1,750
Quinquennial inspections	0	0	0	0
St Johns Repairs	0	617	617	416
Other Costs	0	35	35	627
	<u>12,444</u>	<u>5,258</u>	<u>17,702</u>	<u>14,478</u>

11. Major repairs

Clayton Brook roof	0	8,000	8,000	0
St Johns Architect Fees	0	2,580	2,580	0
St Johns Lead Pipe Replacement	0	3,468	3,468	0
St Johns Sound System	0	14,872	14,872	0
St Johns Survey	0	3,074	3,074	0
	<u>0</u>	<u>31,994</u>	<u>31,994</u>	<u>0</u>

12. Trustees

None of the trustees (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration during the year; one was reimbursed with a total of £738 in relation to travel expenses and phone costs (2023: two were reimbursed £624).

13. Investments

Investments were previously held with the Diocese of Blackburn in a number of their central funds which produced a better rate of return than if the Church invested separately. They were the result of small legacies left over the years where the capital was to remain in order to produce income to help maintain the church. The investments were realised in 2021 and transferred to the St Johns Refurbishment Fund.

St John the Evangelist P C C, Whittle le Woods

Notes to Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024 (continued)

14. Restricted Funds

The funds of the charity include restricted funds comprising the following unexpended balances of donations held on trust for specific purposes

	Balance at 1 January 2023	Movement in Funds		Transfer between Funds	Balance at 31 December 2024
	£	Incoming Resources	Resources Expended	£	£
Assigned Fees paid to Diocese	79	3,839	2,363		1,555
Bell Tower Fund	500	0	0		500
Bishops Harvest Appeal	0	219	219		0
Café Life	333	0	333		0
Childrens ministry	0	339	339		0
Chipping Away Day	125	807	932		0
Christmas ADVENTure	0	1,100	300		800
Clayton Brook Fabric Fund	3,067	9,802	11,973		896
Clayton Brook Worship	0	180	163		17
Flower Fund	92	0	35		57
Love Fund	2,356	620	228		2,748
Mens Ministry	0	25	25		0
Pathfinders	73	0	0		73
St John's Refurbishment Fund	426,612	23,429	24,911		425,129
Vicars PA	1,938	0	0		1,938
Warm Welcome	1,049	2,634	1,901		1,782
	<u>436,223</u>	<u>42,994</u>	<u>43,722</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>435,495</u>

Independent Examiner's Report to the Parochial Church Council of St John the Evangelist, Whittle le Woods, for the year ended 31 December 2024.

This report is made solely to the Charity's Trustees, as a body, in accordance with Section 145 of the Charities Act 2011. My examination has been undertaken so that I might state to the Trustees those matters I am required to state to them in an Independent Examiner's Report and for no other purpose.

Respective responsibilities of trustee and examiner

As the members of the PCC, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts, and you consider that an audit is not required for this year under Section 144 (2) of the Charities Act 2011 and that an independent examination is required.

It is my responsibility to:

1. examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
2. to follow the procedures laid down in the general directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145 (5) (b) of the 2011 Act; and
3. to state whether particular matters have come to my attention of a material nature.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners under S145(5) (b) of the Act. That examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the Charity and a comparison of the accounts with those records. It also includes considering any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from you as Trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent Examiner's Statement

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

(a) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:

1. to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 130 of the 2011 Act, and
2. to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act;

have not been met; or

(b) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed: Gill Taylor ACMA

Print name: Gill Taylor

Dated: 10/01/25