



**ST MATTHEW'S
& THE MINSTER**
CHELTENHAM

ANNUAL CHURCH REPORT 2022

St Matthew's & The Minster Church Annual Report 2022

Welcome from the Rector

When the Lord brought back the captives to Zion,
we were like those who dreamed.
Our mouths were filled with laughter,
our tongues with songs of joy.
Then it was said among the nations,
"The Lord has done great things for them."
The Lord has done great things for us,
and we are filled with joy.

Psalm 126:1-6

I can honestly say that 2022 seemed like something of a dream. Not for a long time have I been part of a church that has grown so rapidly. I feel like the Psalmist whose mouth was full of laughter and tongue with songs of joy. I am not aware of doing anything differently than how I have carried out my ministry and led churches for the last 32 years but the Lord has chosen to bless and build our church and bring back a number of 'captives' to himself.

The best way to illustrate the year is with some statistics:

	January 2022	December 2022
10am Service	140 adults 25 children	200 adults 60 children
11am Service	25/30 adults	40/45 adults
6.30 pm Service	60 adults	100 adults 6 children
Youth Sunday am (Ignite)	5	13
Youth Monday pm	10	18
Sunday Club	37 children	50 children
Bright Lights	43 families	50 families
Small Groups	23 groups	25 groups
Central Small Groups	20 adults	37 adults
Saturday Kitchen	25 guests	35 guests
Alpha		40 guests
After Alpha		15 guests
At Home Church		32 members
Subscribers to weekly e-mails		389
YouTube views		41,327
Subscribers to YouTube Channel		389

This shows significant growth in many areas of the church's life and ministry. What it doesn't show is the spiritual growth in people's lives but this has also been evident in the many people who are active in ministry from our amazingly talented musicians who lead worship Sunday by Sunday in St Matthew's and The Minster, to those who serve at CAMEO and Bright Lights and Saturday Kitchen week by week; from our Sunday Club leaders to the team who look after the church fabric; from PCC members to the huge team who served on the Alpha course; from our pastoral team to our small group leaders; from our safeguarding team who have had a considerable rise in their case load to the sound and visuals team. And countless others who I have not named. Thank you for your faithful service to the Lord and his people. Spiritual growth has also been seen in a number of people coming to faith through our Alpha course, 9 adult baptisms and 4 youth baptisms (some of those in Feb 2023). 'The Lord has done great things for us, and we are filled with joy.'

We set ourselves the following priorities at the last APCM. We have seen progress on many of them:

The whole church to become more missional	
Whole church Alpha in Autumn 2022	✓ 40 Guests
Develop outreach ministries – Saturday Kitchen, CAP, Minster Merriment, Love Cheltenham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Saturday Kitchen has grown ✓ CAP adopted as mission partner, Money course run ✓ Successful Minster Merriment with hundreds of visitors
Mission with other churches	In discussion
Care for Creation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Ecochurch Group formed ✓ Bronze Award awarded
The Minster	
The Minster to become a missional hub	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Churchyard works complete ✓ Minster Merriment ✓ Huge increase in visitors
Pastoral Care	
Everyone to have someone who is responsible for their pastoral care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Most church members in small groups ✓ Others assigned to pastoral team members
Youth	
Equip young people to be passionate about Jesus and to share that passion with others	✓ Friends came to Youth Alpha
Reach young people within the parish and wider town for Christ	✓ Becca doing detached youth work with The Rock team
Children and Families	
Integrate Bright Lights Families into the St. Matthew's Community	✓ More Bright Lights families coming to services and Christmas events
Promote ALL-IN to non-church families	✓ More guests at All-In services
18's – 30's	
Grow in love for God and love for each other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Growth in 6.30 service and fellowship ✓ Growth in Central Small Groups
Equip young adults to live out and share the gospel in their contexts	✓ Central Small Groups and 6.30 programme

It has been a privilege to be serving with such a hardworking, dedicated and fun-loving ministry team. In June Stefan Davies began his ministry as our curate and has already taken on responsibility for the 6.30 service and Thursday Central Small Groups. In early 2023, Jayne Seward announced her retirement (from September 2023) having been our Children's and Families' Minister since 1995 and after 8 years as associate vicar, Clare Dyson was appointed warden of Marygate Retreat House on Lindisfarne Island to begin in April 2023. They will both be very hard to replace and will be much missed by the staff team and church family alike.

It has also been a privilege working with Clare Salisbury as churchwarden for the first four years of my time as Rector. She has been a tower of strength and wisdom to me and to the church family. We will miss her very much when she hands over in May. David Evans has made a huge contribution to the strategic leadership of the church in his first year as churchwarden and has helped us to develop our five year vision and plan which I will present at the APCM. Finally, I want to say a huge thank you to Adrian Bowcher who retires after four years as church treasurer in May. The turnover of our church has doubled in those four years. Adrian has introduced robust accounting practices and systems which have underpinned everything that we have been able to do and have put us in a secure position for the future.

Christian ministry is not easy, it's hard work and I very aware of many people working very hard for the Lord in our church family - but it's not complicated. As long as we continue to focus on the fundamentals of ministry – teaching God's word faithfully, praying and worshipping regularly and loving people then we can trust the Lord to 'bring back the captives' and build his church.

Richard Coombs

Churchwardens report

2022 started with Bill Harvey in post and finished with David Evans having been elected at the APCM in May. Over the year, the congregation continued to grow at a pace and the brilliant staff team were joined by Becca as Trainee Youth Minister in March and Stefan as curate in June all supported by a backbone of godly, gracious members of the church family all serving ably and faithfully in countless different ways. A big thank you to all those who have contributed in whatever way to enable services and activities to take place so that the gospel can be shared with many.

It was a privilege to meet with Richard on a fortnightly basis to discuss encouragements and concerns as well as to oversee the governance of the church, the finances, staff reviews and the administration of church life. 2022 also saw a number of larger projects including the Minster Churchyard renovation, the Living in Love and Faith course attended by the PCC, the beginning of a strategy review, the introduction of 'whole church' Alpha, and not only the celebration of the Platinum Jubilee but the commemoration of the life of Queen Elizabeth II on the occasion of her death. We are immensely grateful to those people who support us with prayer and encouragement and for the opportunity to serve in this way.

Bill, Clare and David

Report from Parochial Church Council (PCC)

PCC Meetings took place every other month in 2022 with good attendances and several new members. Each PCC Meeting receives a detailed report on the church's financial position. This includes information on total income, essentially giving from the church members, and expenditure. The work done by our Treasurer, Adrian Bowcher, enables us to have up-to-date figures and an accurate basis on which to make decisions and we are extremely grateful to him and his team of Andy Ponting (who stepped down in 2022 after ten years of faithful service – thank you, Andy), Russell Heusch and Charlotte Jamieson.

Our January meeting opened with Richard welcoming everyone to the meeting and sharing a reflection on 1 Chronicles 15: 16-22 which described how God's people worshiped in music and song, much like today. Reflecting on this, we gave thanks for our musicians and singers with their skills, time and talents, pledging to encourage and thank them personally. Oli Parker proposed that work should begin on the boilers in St Matthews as they were old and struggling to cope with the demands made of them. PCC ratified the decision for work to proceed as soon as possible. Thanks was given to Oli and Godfrey for their expertise and dedication in this matter.

Rachel reported on the re-branding with news that aprons, t-shirts and flags had been commissioned and received and welcome vinyls were ready to be placed on the walls of the Wesley room. Papers regarding the Minster Churchyard development had been circulated prior to meeting and PCC agreed to contribute to the cost of the proposed bollards. There was a discussion about how the Minster how we can use the Minster for outreach once the churchyard is redeveloped and ideas such as Art exhibitions, installing a glass wall around the prayer chapel, lunchtime concerts or recitals, a bookshop, café, open air services, second base for Saturday Kitchen, welcoming people to eat their packed lunch, mental health outreach were some of the suggestions made.

An update on staffing was given with Annie having finished and a gap between this and Becca's start date in March. The youth team were reported to be in good shape and David Evans agreed to oversee this for the time being. Simon had also stepped back to concentrate on his studies having handed over much of his ministry to Oli and we looked forward to welcoming Stefan in the summer to begin his curacy. The draft accounts for 2021 were shared and it was encouraging to hear that regular givers had increased over the last 6 months. In terms of safeguarding, we learnt that the Church of England has increased its training requirements with more online training courses released. All of PCC, clergy, licensed ministers, pastoral visitors as well as the safeguarding team must complete the online Domestic Abuse training course. Finally, Richard reported on Civic matters including the good attendance of the town carol service and objections to the Two Pigs licence.

At the March meeting Julia reported that it was good that the whole church is becoming more aware of people's welfare – health and safety, wellbeing and child concerns. Further training in respect of vulnerable adults is needed and Paul Collacott is developing a wider plan for our teams, training in order of priority. He is also considering specific support for the volunteers at Saturday Kitchen. Clare Dyson updated the meeting on the success of the Bereavement Course which had enable participants to be supportive of one another due to the excellent material provided. Updates were also received on the Living in Love and Faith course, the boilers, the Minster Churchyard and news that Richard was now the Chaplain to the High Sheriff of Gloucester.

Adrian introduced the budget for 2022 which had to take in to account several challenging factors including recovery from the pandemic, a rise in utilities bills and static planned giving. It was agreed that Richard should approach the congregation with this information and a plea for new members to sign up to regular giving.

In May we were pleased to welcome the new members and elect our officers and Standing and Finance committee. Richard reminded of 1 Corinthians 12 v12, highlighting that the PCC are part of one body of Christ and baptised in one Spirit. Each have different experiences and gifts brought together for the glory of God. He also re-presented the Vision as set out at the APCM and a discussion ensued regarding the importance of sharing experience between different age groups, integrating the young people, evangelistic opportunities at the Minster and with refugees and weaving Care for Creation throughout all Mission Priorities. The PCC were happy to endorse the Vision as presented and to frequently revisit.

Julia Sawers, on behalf of the four members of the Safeguarding Team, asked all PCC members to familiarise themselves with the current policies and complete the Foundation and Basic Awareness training as well as the Domestic Abuse Awareness training if possible. We were also updated on the Minster Churchyard development project and informed of the graffiti problem which PCC agreed needed to be cleaned.

At our July meeting, we were pleased to welcome Stefan, our new curate, and David Evans presented the desire to have a five-year strategic vision using Nehemiah 1:1-6 – ‘passion for the honour of God with an underpinning of prayer for all actions. PCC members were then given the opportunity to discuss and feedback in smaller groups after which they agreed unanimously that the Rector and Churchwardens should develop a 5-year strategic plan, taking into consideration a number of current and future changes and opportunities, and building on the 1-year strategic aims outlined at this year’s APCM under our over-arching mission statement.

Furthermore, we started to consider the idea of an Adult discipleship course, were updated on the Minster Churchyard and accepted Lydia Evans as a new mission partner working with Amar Dragoste. We were also delighted to hear that the boilers in St Matthews had now been replaced and thanks was given to Oli Parker for all his work in getting to this stage.

The business of the September meeting began with opening devotions on Isaiah 30 v 19-22, crying for help and God sending teachers so we can hear God’s voice saying ‘this is the way, walk in it’. We acknowledged the funeral of HM Queen Elizabeth II on the previous Monday and congratulations were extended to Becca and Andy on their engagement. Thanks was given to Jonny Thomas for all his work in changing the presentation of the Safeguarding policies and the tidying up of the recruitment process to make it more efficient and easier to use. A short discussion was led by Julia Sawers on how the church was supporting dysregulated children and she offered to run Trauma training again for those involved. Finally it was agreed that the Christmas Appeal should be given to Christians Against Poverty.

At the November meeting we were delighted to hear of the success of the Alpha day on the previous Saturday and that work in the Minster Churchyard had now been completed. Particular thanks was given to Clare Dyson, Bill Harvey and David Evans for their commitment to this project. Grateful thanks was also extended to Tim Burrell for arranging use of Cheltenham House for the Youth whilst Tyndale was being refurbished and the proposal to join the welcome directory was passed to safeguarding officers to consult with diocesan safeguarding personnel. An update was given on the strategic review with the vision being discussed and in small groups and thoughts being fed back. Andy Sawers presented papers on CAP and Eco-church to explain how the church could be involved in these areas and both were well received by the PCC.

The gifts and effort of the PCC members enables the significant and varied work of the PCC to be done and we are tremendously grateful to them members, as well as the invaluable advice given by other church members. We feel very fortunate to have such a committed and discerning group which allows Richard and the staff to concentrate on their ministries. We are also thankful for those who pray for us and support in other ways - it is a privilege to be part of this particular fellowship in God's kingdom.

Clare Salisbury

Standing and Finance Committee

The Standing and Finance Committee continued to meet as usual in the alternative months to the full PCC meetings to review the Treasurer's financial updates, address any staff issues arising, discuss the progress of the whole church strategy, review proposals from the Building and Fabrics Committee, note any safeguarding concerns, and prepare items for each following month's PCC agenda. Oversight of ongoing projects included the Minster Churchyard Development, the Youth Room refurbishment and our churches' rebranding. At the first meeting after the 2022 APCM, David Evans replaced Bill Harvey (as the new churchwarden) and it was agreed to invite Sarah Tilson to join the Committee and to co-opt Russell Heusch, who provides support to the Treasurer with the communication of budgets to budget holders and other financial matters. This Committee is particularly grateful to Bill Harvey for the wisdom of his advice and the generosity of his time, not least given to the Minster Churchyard project and all the meetings needed with the various partners under the direction of the Borough Council.

David Evans

Electoral Roll Report for the year 2022

At the Annual Parochial Church Meeting last year, it was reported that there were 283 names on the Electoral Roll, with 20 of these people living within the Parish boundaries.

This year the roll was amended only. There are 320 names on the new electoral roll with 22 in all living within the parish boundaries.

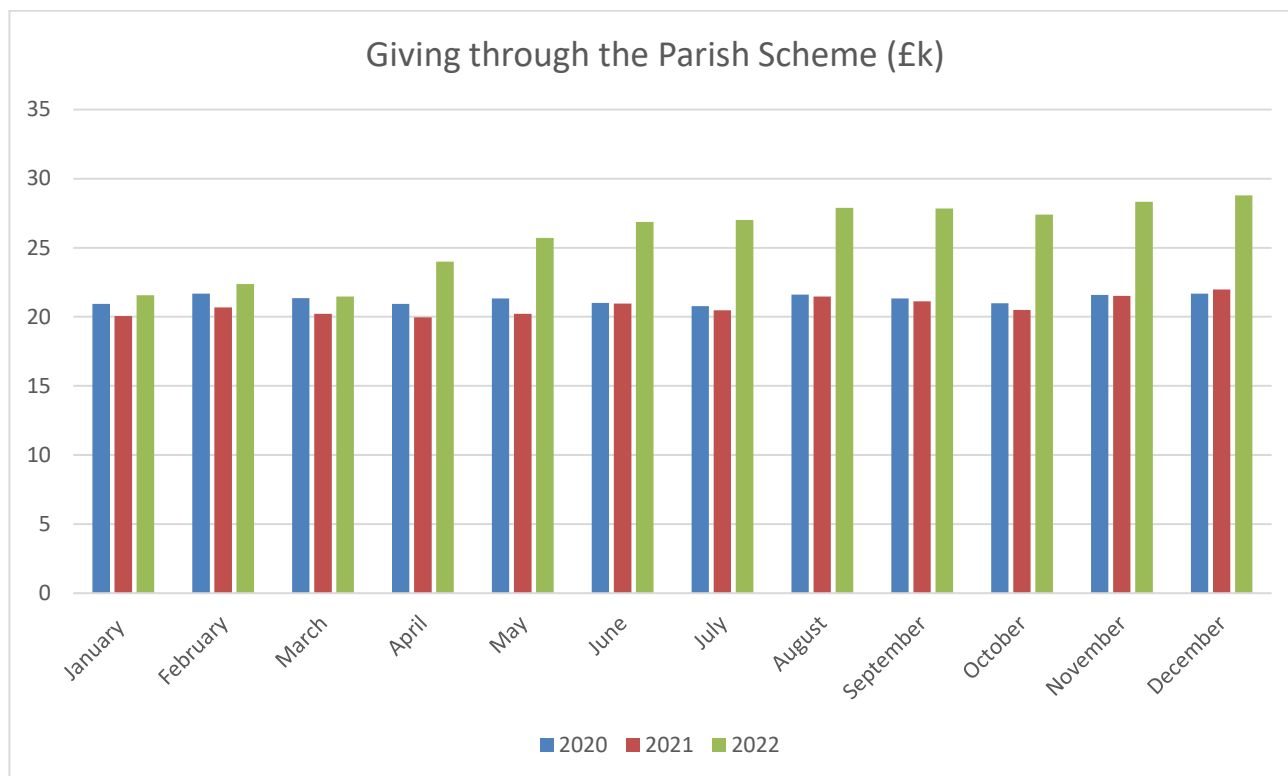
A number of applications to join the roll were received where the applicants did not meet eligibility at the time. These will be added to the roll after the APCM.

Gill Sage, Electoral Roll Officer

Regular Planned Giving

Church members have continued to give regularly and generously to the work of the church through the different schemes available. Around 200 donations are made each month, mostly through the Parish Giving Scheme with others coming directly to the church bank account, work place giving schemes and envelopes in the offertory plate. Where possible we claim back the gift aid increasing the value of each donation, the Parish Giving Scheme does this for us on a monthly basis (which is much appreciated as it helps with cash flow as well as greatly reducing our administrative burden!).

There was an encouraging increase in giving in 2022, which is well and easily illustrated by the numbers associated with the Parish Giving Scheme.



You can find out more about how to give through our [webpage](#) or by speaking to me and please let me have a gift aid declaration [form](#) if you give regular or special gifts through the bank account.

Thanks to all who support the church.
Charlotte Jamieson

Safeguarding

The theme of this year has been growth – growth in the numbers attending St Matthew’s and the Minster; growth in the number of volunteers involved in so many activities; growth in the number of people who need to do compulsory training courses in order to understand the safeguarding context within which we are all living; and growth in the amount of work that the safeguarding officers need to do.

This is a really exciting period for our church community and we are grateful for the increased understanding of the need for safeguarding throughout that community. Indeed the increased amount of work for the safeguarding officers is an indicator that our church is not only growing numerically but also growing in understanding of the need to look after each other.

This year we saw huge growth in the numbers of children attending the 1000 service and a consequent rise in volunteers to meet the need. It was also the year that we ran the first workshop helping volunteers understand the impact of early trauma on the lives of children and their behaviours.

We, as safeguarding officers, have had to make demands of large numbers of people and are grateful for the co-operation that we have received from people who have had to supply us with training certificates, from people who have contacted us for advice and particularly from the staff who have actively demonstrated how seriously they take their responsibilities in this arena. We also want to express our thanks to the Diocesan team who are a constant source of assistance to us when we need it.

There will always be more to do, of course. Please remain a caring community and talk to one of us if you believe there is an issue. It's always better to raise something early or even if you're doubtful about it because it becomes easier to find a solution, should one be needed.

Jonny Thomas and Julia Sawers, Parish Safeguarding Officers for Children and Youth

Paul Collacott and Emma Abbey, Parish Safeguarding Officers for Vulnerable Adults

Deanery Synod

Our lay members continue to be David Evans, Nerys Joyce, Graham Nicholls and David Warren. There were three meetings during the year in February, June and October. The first meeting at St Barnabas gave updates on General and Diocesan Synod meetings, followed by excellent presentations by the Deanery's two Pioneer Missioners (Janice Hamilton in Hester's Way and James White in Whaddon). The second meeting at St Mary's, Charlton Kings saw the continued development of a Deanery Strategic Plan, which was led by Rev Keith Elford as a Facilitator for the Cheltenham Deanery, followed by a discussion on the following three questions: What do we have in Common? What Challenges do we face? What is our Future Vision? The Deanery Strategic Plan should be published in 2023. At the third meeting, hosted by St Luke's because of the Alpha Course running at St Matthew's, Sarah Avery, Manager of Family Space in Hester's Way, introduced Warm Cheltenham as a follow up project to the Feed Cheltenham initiative during the pandemic, which had been very successful in meeting the needs of many families. Overall in 2022, there has been a very positive atmosphere of collaboration across the Deanery churches.

David Evans

Buildings and Fabrics

While it would be tempting to suggest that church members could judge the activities of Buildings and Fabric (B&F) committee by looking around them as they sit in either St Matthew's or The Minster, perhaps a better metric should be adopted for this report.

B&F is not the most glamorous or sexy activity of the church and success for us would probably be achieved if people don't notice us too much. By this I mean that if the buildings support the work of proclaiming The Gospel to the extent that they are not remarkable then that is a good thing. If you can sit comfortably on your chair without being rained on; if you can come and go through doors that open and close as they should without seeing artworks provided for free on the outside walls by the local youth; if you can avoid being frozen in winter (and boiled in summer); if the kitchen readily facilitates cooking of multiple hundreds of meals each week and so on then we've probably met many of our goals. We hope that we have served you well in this respect in the last year.

However as well as the 'business as usual' there have been improvements wrought. Notable amongst those have been the renovation of the Tyndale (Youth) room at St Matt's, upgrading of the lighting and replacing several miles (or kilometres, choose as you will) of cables at The Minster, a new water boiler in the kitchen at The Minster, non-slip steps installed outside St Matthew's and the replacement of a number of the larger lights around St Matt's (you may notice our preaching staff are illuminated particularly nicely when they are at the front of the church), as well as the interaction with Cheltenham Borough Council for the Minster Exchange project.

Notable thanks in all this go to Henry Williams and Roger and Roger for their hands-on work in both buildings, Rachel Hargreave for the ever-cheery admin support, Kathy Williams for keeping us all in line as well as minutes of meetings and Sarah and Jenny for their cleaning and tidying. Efforts from Bill Harvey and David Evans in liaising with CBC on the Minster Exchange work have been unlauded but certainly not unnoticed. May the Glory go to the Lord in all these things.

Oli Parker, Chair of Building and Fabrics Committee

Operations

Many many background projects were continued and completed in 2022. The branding project continued to be rolled out which saw the branding adorning the freshly painted walls of the Wesley Room. Darren Grainger refreshed the tired plain walls in both churches to a fresh Quartz Grey. Contactless donation boxes with their respective stands were commissioned for both churches to move with the cashless-age we find ourselves in. Work is not yet finished with the branding, so watch this space!

The Wednesday Word and Friday Focus emailed out each week are now here to stay as a means of distributing information to church members. Luke puts these together using MailChimp and YouTube for the video messages. For those unable to access emails or church, a paper copy is produced and with the help of Margaret Failes and Brenda Commons, members of the At Home Church are able to receive these with copies of the weekly sermon.

The Minster had broadband installed to upgrade last year's Wi-Fi introduction. The Minster Churchyard upgrade finally got underway, which has made a huge impact on the area. Improved lighting and pathways were long overdue and we were fortunate enough to include installation of bollards into the project.

Room bookings steadily picked up throughout the year as public confidence grew post pandemic, bringing in very welcome income. Sarah Brown and Jenny Aldridge supported these events with all the different set ups and cleaning required to keep the churches looking so welcoming for all our visitors. All the carpets and hard flooring in both churches were professionally cleaned. Then Matt and Mary our robot vacuum cleaners at St Matt's proved a very welcome addition to the team, doing a sterling job of keeping the carpets vacuumed. We also now have an electric floor cleaner for the hard flooring (as yet un-named), which has been a bonus in keeping the kitchen floor, in particular, clean. Happily we retained our five star kitchen hygiene status at our inspection in January (2023). Thanks does go to all who use the kitchen so considerately and diligently fill in all the relevant paperwork keeping up our high standards.

Thanks are due to the many volunteers who help the Office, those who helped with the Parish Mailing in December, preparing the banking, and all the jobs which make for a smooth running of the churches and ministry. Thanks are extended to the practical team: to Sarah Brown for setting up the many and varied events we hold each week, to Jenny Aldridge for cleaning both our buildings, and to Luke for the expertise in producing visuals for every occasion.

Rachel Hargreave

Prayer and Worship

10 O'clock

In preparation for writing this report I had a look at last year's report, which focussed on our thankfulness that we could sing again as a congregation after the pandemic restrictions. This feels like a distant memory now but it did remind me that it wasn't so long ago that we weren't allowed to sing at all for over a year and what a joy and blessing it is to be singing week-by-week at church without restrictions. Last year's report finished like this: 'I pray that we'll be able to continue singing praises to God without restrictions into 2022 and beyond!' I feel very thankful that this has been the case (and pray it continues to be!)

The last year has not seen any such fundamental changes but there have been some more minor ones – we have slightly reorganised the teams such that sound and visuals now fall under the music umbrella, which I hope is helping us to work together as effectively as possible. We've also had the first meeting of the 'Music Working Group' which aims to be a forum for voices within and outside the music team to input on decision-making.

I'm currently enjoying a bit of a break from organising music as we've recently had a new arrival at home; I'm very grateful to the other band-leaders for covering for me in my absence and it has been lovely just to be part of the congregation singing along for a few weeks. Once I'm back in action I'm hoping to focus a bit on reviewing our song-lists at both St Matt's congregations and will be grateful for broad feedback on this from the whole church – so watch this space!

Richard Tilson

Cheltenham Minster Bell Ringers

We seem to have had a very busy year with lots of ringing on our lovely bells

We celebrated the Queen's Platinum Jubilee at the beginning of June which started off with a 12 bell Practice on the Thursday evening. On Saturday morning we rang rounds & call changes on 12 and on the Sunday afternoon we rang a quarter peal.

The Queen died on Thursday 8th September. The steeple keeper put on the muffles (both old and new) and we continued with the practice on Thursday evening. Ringing fully muffled with an open backstroke on the tenor is a sound that no one had ever experienced before. At 12 o'clock on the following day we rang all 12 bells, having 14 ringers.

The next important ringing was on Monday 19th September. The Queen's funeral was due to start at 11 o'clock and we rang from 10 until 10.45 – ten bells this time. This felt very momentous.

In July we had an outing to Oxford. This was the third time it had been reorganised and it was a great success and we had nice weather, interesting bells, good ringing and a good lunch.

We have rung every Sunday and for every special occasion during 2022, making it a very successful year.

Liz Coke, Tower Captain

Flower arrangers at St Matthew's and The Minster

Flowers are arranged at the Minster on a fortnightly basis according to a rota, led by Ann Attwood and assisted by Nickie Pettman. The Minster rota flower-arrangers are Ann Attwood, Debbie Chadwick, Gail Jones, Janet Martin, Nickie Pettman and Kathy Williams, although other people join the team for special occasions such as Christmas and Easter. Nickie has resigned from being Flower Leader at St Matthew's in order to assist at the Minster so there is a vacancy for a new person to take on this role at St Matthew's.

In the interests of ecology, the flower arrangers now use biodegradable Oasis flower foam in which to fix the flowers. The traditional foam contributes to microplastics in the sea. The new foam looks the same and performs well but, of course, is more expensive!

We would like to thank all those who contribute their time and money to flower arrangements in both churches. A special contribution was made at Christmas 2022 by a Mr Minster, who was married at the Minster 60 years ago. As he now lives in the United States, Mr Minster was delighted to find out via a website that his wedding church of St Mary's was now a Minster and therefore shared his name. He made a generous contribution to the Christmas flower displays at the Minster to celebrate his wedding anniversary and we sent him photos of the displays. He was delighted.

Nichola Pettman

6.30 service

We began 2022 looking at Acts, a brilliant series with the focus on us joining in with the unstoppable mission of God. We looked at the gospel of Matthew leading up to Easter. Throughout the summer we used the London Institute for Contemporary Christianity (LICC) bible studies to inform 3 series looking at 1 Peter, Proverbs and Mark. Then in the Autumn we looked at 1 Thessalonians, then onto a short series looking at relationships including radical friendships based on Proverbs and then singleness. Before Christmas we studied Ruth which was informed by reflecting back on the radical friendship sermon we had done. We learned from Christmas 2021 not to do all 3 services leading up to Christmas as ones to specifically invite non-Christians to and instead focus on inviting friends to the carol service which worked well.

The demographic of the service has changed throughout the year and in answer to prayer, is becoming increasingly diverse! A group of students from both University of Gloucestershire and Royal Agricultural University has grown to about 10 and brilliantly remained committed. 3 x families are now also coming and a few middle aged and older people have found the 6:30 as their home. Integration of all the different groups remains a challenge and we are trying to overcome that by encouraging more prayer/discussion time in our pods. The hospitality/welcome has had an overhaul, the more sporadic rota system which had varying team makeups now consists of 5 dedicated teams with a team leader including one team of Youth headed by Becca all overseen by a Head of Hospitality. With the introduction of a chest freezer in the basement to store frozen pizza and the advent of a pizza shovel in the kitchen we now serve pizza every Sunday evening which is critical to the fellowship after the service.

The quality of the music seems to continue to increase and brilliantly there have been more new people leading and being a part of the music groups. We have seen on some evenings a smaller music group, sometimes even only one person on keys which has not been to the detriment of the sung worship and has even been refreshing to have the variety.

The service continues to grow in number with approx. 55 at the beginning of 2022 and 95 by the end. The leadership of the service has seamlessly passed from Oli to Stefan and has been a blessing to both of them to have a ringside side to how God is growing his church!

Stefan Davies and Oli Smith

Sound and Visuals

This year we have welcomed some new members of the sound and visuals team (you know who you are, and thank you!) and some changes aimed at small improvements. The livestream at the 10am attracts just over 100 views each week, so we hope that is still providing a useful service for those unable to make it to church.

In May we held a training session for all our operators, which was well attended and produced several useful ideas - many thanks to all who attended, and we hope that implementing these ideas will make the sound/visuals

team even more "invisible", enabling the congregation to worship without distraction.

Technology never stands still, and unanticipated changes will sometimes cause problems - as happened recently with some strange echoes! However, the team rallied around and we quickly put in fixes which have been effective. I can guarantee that problems will continue to occur from time to time; so please bear with us or - better still - ask for an introduction to what we do and see if you feel you could be part of the team!

Andrew Jack

The Minster

This past year has been a busy one for all at the Minster, with Clare working tirelessly to move on the developments of the Minster Churchyard project with the council. It is slowly taking shape and was able to be used at Christmas for the Minster Merriment Saturday, which enabled the whole event to be much more visible to those coming or walking by. There are now a constant stream of people sitting around the Minster and the lighting at night has also increased the footfall.

The Minster welcomers are such an asset to being able to keep the Minster open most days between 11am and 1pm and there is always a steady stream of visitors for historic or spiritual reasons.

An exciting Saturday in March saw the Minster bellringers host a heat of the national bellringing competition, in which our bellringers came fourth, a great achievement for them. The church and churchyard was full of people all day. It was wonderful.

Clare has formed quite a few links with schools in the areas and there are regular trips from these schools to our churches, not just to learn about the history but about their everyday use. A memorable one this year saw about 50 children come to both the Minster and St Matthew's and then a live link up with the Jewish Synagogue. The Minster also hosts numerous events run by the Friends, and the Heritage Society.

The services in the Minster continue to offer a bright, lively, yet traditional style of worship, alternating between morning prayer and Communion. The inclusion through the year of Paul Collacott's music group, Anne Earnshaw's singers and Michael Barrett's organs skills, means that there is continual wide variety of music styles, and ensures that new hymns are always being heard and learnt. Under Clare there has been a continual numerical and spiritual growth in those who regularly attend the Minster, during this last year.

It is always true that many people contribute to the life of the church and without YOU ALL the Minster would not be the place it is... and Clare undoubtedly thanks you all.

We look forward to the coming year, when many changes will undoubtedly take place and we pray that God will continue to develop us at the Minster, firstly spiritually and then as we develop new ways of working with St. Matthew's to grow every area of a church family life and above all in reaching into our community with God's love.

Louise Brown

Minster Organ

As many of you will know, we had hoped to have the new Minster Organ moved into its proper position by now, but the wheels of administration grind exceedingly slowly sometimes. We were able to make our final application to the Gloucester Diocesan Advisory Committee (the ecclesiastical equivalent of planning permission) in Autumn 2022 and received that from them almost immediately. We were thus expecting to be able to put up the required notices and then get the job done. However, it turned out that this was not the final stage and we had yet another set of questions to answer before the whole case could go before the Diocesan Registrar, which is a

full legal process and is required when a permanent change is made – oddly, this is less about installing the new organ than it is about removing the old (defunct, unworkable) one.

As I write this, there is one outstanding thing we need in order to be able to submit the final paperwork. This is a letter from our insurers. We have answered a series of supplementary questions from them and are now awaiting their (we hope, final) reply. As soon as this is satisfactorily accomplished, we shall be “pressing the button” – everything is automated these days – and then awaiting the notice period and the final decision of the Registrar. When we have this in our possession, we expect that we shall be able to get the project completed within a month.

I am sorry that it has taken so long, but there have been many things that have been outside our control.

Paul Collacott

Discipleship **Children's Ministry**

*'Jesus is bigger than anything!' a five-year-old earnestly declared.
'Bigger than everything' their friend added.*

A child who struggles with trauma was most insistent that the Good Shepherd laid down his life 'because he loves us'. And when another, new to Sunday Club, asked if Jesus was still dead added, 'No. He's not dead. His life is like 'Pow!' in all of us'.

The leader then confirmed the Holy Spirit is indeed in all who know and love Jesus.

The older group were looking at the reasons given to dismiss the Resurrection - grave robbers or Jesus merely in a coma or the disciples hiding the body. Unprompted, one commented, 'It's not grave robbers. They wouldn't have taken a corpse and left the cloth because the cloth was worth money. Who'd want a dead body?'

Another, reflecting on the disciples, pronounced with assurance, 'Well you wouldn't die for Jesus if you knew you'd got his body in your basement'.

There is little more rewarding than to see younger members of our Church Family growing in their understanding and relationship with Jesus. Doing theology with children is exciting!

Overall, our Children's Ministry has developed apace this last year.

Those of you who come to **The Ten O'clock** will have seen how the groups are buzzing. There are currently 60 Sunday Club members attending regularly i.e. every week or once a fortnight. The Creche is equally busy with an average of 6-8 babies each week and more on the way! This is wonderful although it brings challenges of team numbers and physical space. Please give thanks that we have been able to recruit and add to a talented group who are deeply committed to engaging with children about Jesus. They give a clear Biblical message within a loving and safe experience for all. Please pray for more to come forward so this work may continue.

On Thursdays the youngest gather for **Preschool Praise**; a lively mixture of songs, Bible, prayer and craft. Numbers range from 10 to 25 adults and children. It is great time for families to mix and friendships to deepen. There are also over 100 online sessions now available on our website for parents who work on Thursdays or for those in the week who just need some down time and a biblical alternative to Peppa Pig!

Extra events included the usual Light Party (alternative Halloween), Shoebox Sunday, and Easter and Christmas Craft Afternoons to which children brought friends. These were opportunities to present the true Bible story to those less aware of Jesus.

Supporting our families included a Parents' Cheese and Wine Evening to enable them to meet together minus their children. But also for Becca and me to encourage and empower them in their biblical role as the ones with primary responsibility for spiritual development of their children. Ideas and questions raised by the parents will now inform future gatherings. For example, in May we are running a practical resources session to support families of younger ones with their Bible times at home.

Bright Lights Monday Toddlers is busy with 60 households on the list. The optional Bible story times are well attended. Many families came to the Christmas events with Minster Merriment, the Nativity All-INS (despite the snow) and the Crib Service particularly well supported. The Christmas Party and Nativity was great fun although again badly hampered by the icy conditions. Please pray for how we continue to engage these families with St. Matthew's and the Jesus story.

We reached out to the **wider local community** with Bible story-telling and craft during the Minster Heritage Days. 'Goodie bags' of Bible stories, puzzles and crafts were also handed out during the 'Experience Easter' and

'Experience Advent' events in the Minster. Storybooks and invitations to the Nativity Services were again handed out in Pittville Park but terrible weather curtailed that effort too. This is an area we intend to develop so please pray for how we increase our local presence.

However, bringing children and their families to trust Jesus as their Lord is not just a matter for the Children's Minister, it is **the responsibility of all** the Church Family. So thank you to all of you who are playing your part whether as a Creche or Sunday Club leader, a teenager helper, a welcomer, a coffee maker, a smiler, an encourager, a prayer warrior, or as a parent showing Jesus when family life gets tough. Your faithfulness and your practical love changes lives for all eternity. So together let's crack on!

Jayne Seward

Youth Ministry

Ignite youth group - Ignite have been meeting on Sunday mornings and we have a consistent group of around 13 coming each week. These sessions are an opportunity to eat breakfast together, play games, dig into the bible and understand more about who Jesus is, and how it applies to our lives and what impact it can have. With this group really growing over the past year it has been great to see friendships growing and young people praying for one another.

Older young group - Wednesday evening older youth small group moved to Monday's in April of last year and we have been meeting every Monday of term time with those in year 10-13. We have a consistent group of 10 young people coming each week. Mostly our bible studies look at the sermon from the 6:30 service the night before, with an opportunity to pray for each other and spend time together.

Summer camps - Last Summer we took a group of young people away to Satellites Christian youth festival which was so much fun – an opportunity to meet other Christian young people, hearing talks on different topics and really dig deeper into the bible.

We also took some who were in year 7-9 away on Brymore 2 as well which is a ventures camp and although smaller than Satellites was equally as fun and exciting, with some amazing activities and games. As well bible studies, and whole camp sessions with talks.

This year we look forward to taking our year 7-9s away on Brymore 2 and year 10-13s away on Maidwell 3 – both CPAS Ventures camps.

Youth weekend away - Back in February 2022 we took the young people away to Gaines Manor for a weekend away which was so much fun. And this year in March we were so excited to have the opportunity again and to take so many more with us! These weekends away are so valuable in building relationships amongst the young people, having opportunities to ask big questions, praying for each other, doing bible studies. It was a huge blessing to the leaders as well as the youth.

Each week on a Monday I have been running a **Christian Union in Bournside Secondary School** alongside Hanna who works for Gloucester Youth for Christ and is the Youth Worker at St Luke's. This has been a huge blessing to be able to share the good news of Jesus within the school, when we first started, we were seeing around 3 young people per week, and we now regularly get 10 young people attending.

Once a month we have been having **Friday night Youth social** for all in years 7-13 and their invited friends. These evenings are socials and an opportunity for the young people to come together and hang out with each other doing some fun activities. Over Christmas we filled the church with inflatables, we have done games night, taskmaster and ready steady cook socials and so much more. We have also done socials with other youth groups and so we joined with St Pauls youth group for Rope Ball, an indoor BBQ and other games.

Over the past 2 terms we have run **Youth Alpha** for young people to attend and bring their non-Christian friends too. These courses have been such a huge blessing and an opportunity to find out more about who Jesus is, there has been the chance for some big questions to be asked and a safe place for young people to explore faith.

For the past year we have continued with **Detached Youthwork** in partnerships with the Rock. We go out every Thursday afternoon from 3:15 to engage with young people where they are. We have adapted how we do detached to best meet the young people's needs and so we are now stationary by Pittville park with hot chocolate for 45 minutes and young people come to us and chat and drink hot chocolate. This has been a huge blessing as we see the same young people every week, they wait for us or come and find us and relationships are really growing and deepening. And then we go out and walk around Pittville and the town after we have done this.

We go out under the umbrella of The Rock who provide training and safeguarding for all the team. We have had meaningful, one-off conversations with young people, conversations which have led to young people engaging with the prayer space and other activities at The Rock, and some encounters that have just shown that there are Christian adults who care about them.

Becca Horton, Trainee Youth Minister

Central Small Groups (CSG)

(a small group community for students and young adults that meets at church on Thursday evenings)

Throughout 2022 CSG has grown from about 18 young adults to 30. The vast majority of them attend the 6:30 service with a few going to the 10am as well and some who only attend CSG. The bible study has always followed the sermon series. There has been a mixture of authors of the bible studies from Simon writing all the Acts series, LICC bible studies for the summer series or Stefan or Oli for the others in between. We started 2022 with 3 distinct groups (one of which was mainly students), but as 2022 went on we began doing more centrally led studies. So the whole of CSG are kept together and given moments to split off to do certain tasks/discussions/prayer periodically throughout the evening. One of the most challenging aspects was catering for such a large gathering of people particularly when most have fulltime jobs and can not prep supper for such a number. It meant that the ministry team spent a good chunk of their week buying and preparing food. The whole church alpha course which started in October meant that the catering burden was then put on the new 'rota'd' teams. It also meant that some of the CSG could lead/take part in Alpha. Alpha was a huge blessing but meant that CSG for a time were slightly side-lined, being put in a small side room etc.

Intergenerational Life Groups

We have reflected a lot about what the future of CSG looks like and coming to the end of 2022 the idea of intergenerational life groups as being an alternative to CSG on Thursday was floated to CSG and 6:30. Many were very keen to be a part of some of the new life groups and one pilot group was formed with the Patterson's leading it. The motivation for these new groups were to help the mixing between groups within the 6:30 congregation, to ensure that everyone had pastoral oversight in small units and that people would be able to be nourished through 'doing life' with one another through prayer, eating together and bible study. The pilot has seemed to have gone brilliantly well and those who have shown an interest in being part of new groups know it may take sometime to form them.

Stefan Davies and Oli Smith

Pastoral activities

Clare's continued development of Pastoral Ministry across the churches has been wonderful and she leaves a solid foundation which can be lovingly continued. There are currently pastoral visitors from both churches, each visit a number of people and bring their own style of visiting. Some include praying and reading the bible

together, some are authorized to take Holy Communion, but all are committed to helping the people they visit to continually know they belong to our church family.

The pastoral visitors meet every two months to share the joys, and sometimes the difficulties of their ministry and to take time to pray for each other. To look at ways in which we can develop pastoral ministry across our churches.

A regular mailing goes out each Friday to those who either cannot attend church, or who do not have access to the internet. These include the weekly emails and a sermon for the week.

Gifts are taken to those who are visited at Christmas and Easter. When a member dies, the families are remembered by the sending of cards.

Louise Brown

Mission

Mission partners working group

Details of our Mission Partners are available on the church's website with the same information also available as a leaflet. The latter is available to be downloaded or a printed copy supplied upon request.

There were a number of changes during 2022. We added several new Mission Partners, namely: (a) **Lydia**, as she prepared to move to Madrid to work with Amar Dragoste; (b) **Al Massira** following the interest generated by the 2021 Christmas appeal; and (c) the local branch of **Christians Against Poverty (CAP)**, who were chosen as the recipients of the 2022 Christmas appeal. Late in 2022 we also confirmed that we would regard **Natalie** as a Mission Partner in recognition of her work with the Thai community in Gloucestershire.

To accommodate these additions, we ended our support for three partners, namely Mike & Barbara, SAT-7 and CCP.

Another pleasing development during the year was the transition from Nicola to Andy as the local UCCF CU Staff Worker. We were delighted when Andy, together with his wife Jane, chose to worship with us.

Similarly, we were delighted when Ivan (Al Massira's co-founder and Director of Development), together with Debbie and family, chose to worship with us.

Discussions began during 2022 for two changes to be made in 2023. First, Wanyeki & Mary retired at the end of 2022. We decided to support the organisation that they founded, namely **St Julian's Anglican Training Centre** in Kenya. Second, for **Bible Society** we have sponsored their bookshop and area resource centre in Minya, Egypt since 2010. Our relationship has changed, mainly because the people we knew and communicated with have either retired or moved to other roles within Bible Society of Egypt. We plan to continue supporting Bible Society but switch the sponsorship.

The Working Group continues to monitor local as well as global opportunities. What developments are we going to see during 2023?

Ian Davies; chair

Mission Partners as of 31st December 2022:

*The nine marked with an * receive regular support from the church's tithe*

Andy (UCCF)*	Dan & Narineh*	Ian & Wendy
Lydia*	Natalie	Mat & Katy*
Wanyeki & Mary*		
A Rocha (sponsoring Dave Bookless, Director of Theology)*	Al Massira	Bible Society (sponsoring bookshop and area resource centre in Minya, Egypt)*
Tearfund (with a focus on their Church & Community Transformation programme)	CAP*	Mike Milburn, Club Chaplain to Old Patesians Rugby Club offering pastoral and spiritual support to players and supporters
Gloucestershire YFC*	The Rock*	Foodbank
Hospital Chaplaincy	Open the Book	Street Pastors

We maintain close links with local organisations supporting asylum seekers and refugees

Christmas Appeal

The Christmas Appeal in 2022 was for CAP's Cheltenham branch. The appeal's primary focus was to cover the costs of an additional deb counsellor position with supplementary attention to funding other activities aimed at supporting those struggling with financial matters. The appeal raised a total of £9,000 (to use round figures).

During 2022 one of our congregation, Andy Sawers, was trained up to become a CAP Money Course Trainer. This course is helpful for everyone; teaching how to set, balance and maintain a workable household budget. We already have courses booked for January, April and June 2023 and further courses will happen every 3 to 4 months thereafter.

Ian Davies and Andy Sawers

Saturday Kitchen

	2022 Firsts	2022 Seconds	2022 Total
Total	1551	545	2096
Average	31.65	11.12	42.78

Saturday Kitchen (SK) continued to run each week, with numbers growing throughout the year. The start of the year saw an average of 22.5 firsts (which equates to the number of guests we served that day) and by the end of the year, the average had risen to 31.65. where possible, we gave guests a second meal, some of whom took it away for later or the next day.

While there was a solid contingent that came each week, there were also new people most weeks, some of whom then came on a regular basis while others were 'one-off' visitors.

We did a Thought for the Day each week, following a series of 'studies' by Tom Wright. As the year progressed and the guests got used to having this time of 'teaching', it became more welcomed and for a few, an important part of the time. We hope that in time, there will be a group that wish to do Alpha, either joining the Thursday group or having a separate session that follows SK.

There were five groups that operated during the year – Hope, (1st week of the month), Joy (2nd), Peace (3rd), Love (4th) and Peace (5th), with approximately 50 volunteers, that baked, cooked or hosted over the course of a month. We are grateful and thankful for the support and time that the volunteers give SK. In May, there was a change in the overall leadership of SK, with David Warren taking over from Paul Chesworth, to whom we are so grateful for his prayerful, compassionate and supportive leadership of guest and volunteers alike.

David Warren

EcoChurch Group

During the Summer of 2022 the EcoChurch was relaunched and proactive work by the group saw much progress. Overseen by A Rocha, one of our Mission Partners, the group aims to progress through the Bronze, Silver and Gold EcoChurch Awards from a low baseline. In December 2022 an application for a Bronze Award was successful and the EcoChurch Group aim to achieve the Silver Award by December 2023 and the Gold Award by December 2025. There is much work to be done still and the group would love to hear from people of all ages who would like to become involved.

Achieving Awards is a tangible benefit, but the EcoChurch Group really want to achieve a change in culture where "Caring for God's Creation" is seen as a golden thread running through all our current activities as well as new ones (litter picking, clothes swaps, etc.) which will come on stream during 2023. A proposal to include environmental impact in every Risk Assessment and every decision made by the PCC has recently been put to the Church Wardens for consideration during 2023 as part of the development of our Church strategy.

Andy Sawers

Community

CAMEO – Come And Meet Each Other

2022 has been a good year for CAMEO. We have seen many new members join us for our regular meetings of speakers, films and lunches with entertainment. The Book Group folded and our games week turned into just coffee and chat but we started a new feature of a quiz, which has been very popular. Our regular feature of Thought for the Day continues to be well received and thanks go to all our regular contributors.

We had an enjoyable trip and lunch with the Gloucester and Warwickshire Steam Railway in September, with Rich Morris joining us as our guide.

Stefan and Simon have joined our dedicated team of helpers this year. However they are leaving soon and some of our older helpers have become unable to continue, so we would be very keen to find some new, younger ones!

Early in 2023 we heard from Clare that she had found her dream job in Lindisfarne and were sad that she would be leaving us as CAMEO leader. Our members have been praying for her since her recent illness and hope she will be well again and able to take on her new challenge.

Our members are very appreciative of all we are able to offer them. They have made good and supportive friends with each other, chatting over a biscuit and a cup of coffee. Please join us in praying that those who don't yet know Jesus will do soon!

Valerie Waller

Street Pastors

Street Pastors schemes were established by the Ascension Trust at the instigation of Rev Les Isaac in 2003. The Cheltenham scheme has been running since 2009.

There are several night clubs in Cheltenham and consequently a lively 'night time economy'. Occasionally people run into difficulties through over indulgence and require practical assistance. Others appreciate the opportunity to talk through problems with someone with a sympathetic listening ear. Street Pastors are trained volunteers who seek to address these needs by patrolling the town centre between 10 p.m. and 4 a.m. on Saturday nights and alternate Friday nights. They can supply very basic first aid, bottles of water, and the ever popular flip-flops for those needing a rest from their high heels. Additional patrols are supplied on special occasions such as Race Week and exam results nights.

Street Pastors is an interdenominational initiative and much importance is attached to this. Several members of St Matthew's Church have served as Street Pastors. Committed Prayer Pastors support individual teams and a prayer meeting (open to all those with an interest) is held on the second Tuesday morning of each month at the church.

There have been some difficulties in recruiting and maintaining sufficient numbers to enable teams to go out every Friday, as was the case in the past. Expressions of interest are always welcome and a night out with a patrol as an observer, without obligation, is easily arranged. For contact details see <https://streetpastors.org/locations/cheltenham/>.

David Hunt

Minster Singers 2020

The Minster Singers is an all-comers choir, meeting once a month to practise in order to perform occasional concerts in the Minster. We have recovered well since the pandemic with new people joining us. Last year we performed two concerts in the Minster, one to mark the Anniversary of the Minster-Making in February and one

in November. There are more planned for this year. At our last concert, 48 people were in the choir and there are well over 60 “on the books”. Our repertoire is generally classical sacred music (for example Vivaldi, Mozart, Elgar, Mendelssohn alongside more modern classical composers) and appropriate secular songs (we have just reached concert standard with Eric Whitacre’s The Seal Lullaby).

We are very happy to have new members join us. People can feel free to contact me to get more information.
Paul Collacott

Finance

Treasurer's Report on 2022 Financial Year

(2021 figures in brackets)

Summary

For the first time in four years, we have a deficit. The deficit was £54k. Total income was £499k (£506k) Total expenditure was £545k (£459k) plus a loss on the investment portfolio of £8k (profit £8k)

2021 income was flattered by the first tranche of the legacy from Connie of £56k. No such legacy income this year.

Income

- Overall income was £500k (£506k)
- Planned Giving in all its forms was £487k (£444k)
- Legacies were £1k (£56k)
- Trading and other income £9.5k (5k)

We were delighted to see a healthy increase of about 10% or £45k in Planned Giving from the church family this year. The Church family has grown over the past 4 years but this year we have seen a good uptick in the planned giving. This is healthy as far as I am concerned as we all need to contribute to cover our day-to-day expenses with our planned regular giving.

Trading income which consists mainly of rentals and shop sales etc. has increased by £5k to a total of £9k but still not back to Pre-Pandemic levels.

Expenditure

Overall expense has increased by £86k to £545k (£459k) Mission and outreach at ££76k (53k) reflected some catch up with some late 2021 donations, increased budget in line with regular giving increase and timing of Xmas appeal payments. Parish share remained the same at £124k.

From a very low level in 2020 and slightly lower in 2021, buildings and maintenance works increased to £33k (£21k). Some catch-up one-off costs for items such as bollards £4k, gutter clearance £7k, decorating £4k and roof repair £3k.

Building overheads rose from £41k to £71k. The rise of £30k is mostly down to energy costs (Gas and Electricity). We have moved from Positive Energy, our brokers until the end of 2022 to Inspired Energy plc. We are in dispute with Positive Energy. We are claiming back for rates of VAT and other non-fuel charges charged at incorrect rates and also for rates which we consider excessive despite the volatile market seen in the last 18 months. Whilst we have some confidence about recovering many thousands of pounds at the time of writing we do not have certainty and have shown the accounts at the worst position. The claim process will involve the industry Ombudsman and indeed the regulator Ofgem if necessary. Any successful claims will benefit later year accounts.

Other one-off expenses but paid from restricted funds include Youth Room £6k and Rebranding £6k. Depreciation increased again £23k (£21k) due to investment into the fixed asset.

Balance Sheet

At the start of the year, we had £377k of net fixed assets. During the year we added £47k of assets, we paid a net £42k on boilers and £5k on Office equipment. The depreciation charge referred to above reduced the whole value by £23k leaving a closing value of our fixed asset of £401k.

Not such a good year with our investment portfolio managed by the CCLA with the value reducing by nearly £8k from £66k to £58k.

Debtors increased from £12k to £40k mainly for Gift Aid. We calculated our gift aid claim right to the end of 2022. 31.12.22 and so the claim was owed to us at year end.

Creditors also increased from £12k to £36k. Mainly the last energy bills from Positive Energy remained unpaid as we raised our dispute.

CASH POSITION

Cash balances reduced from £126k to £54k. This is explained by the following:

With the operating deficit for the year of £46k, before investment losses, then adjust that by the non-cash item of depreciation of £23k, add the outlay of the fixed asset investment so the cash reduced:

CASH CHANGE		CASH FLOW	
		Operating deficit	46,147
		Deprecation (non cash)	- 23,310
Cash 2022	53,876	Capex (Fixed Assets)	47,137
Cash 2021	126,786	Change in debtors and creditors	2,936
Reduction	72,910		72,910

TOTAL OF FUNDS

Overall, the Charity's assets reduced to £517k (£571k)

General Funds	80,461
Fixed Asset Fund	401,019
sub total	481,480
Restricted Funds	
Relief of Sickness & Distress	10,679
Town Centre ministry	413
Bellringers Fund	7,011
Tear Fund	86
Bible Fund	919
Youth Room	6,837
CAMEO	1,147
Rebranding Fund	8,429
sub total	35,521
Total	517,001

Budget 2023

The initial budget is forecast for a small deficit of £18k before depreciation. We have been cautious with the following examples:

1. expectations of further growth of Planned Giving
2. we have not budgeted for any legacies. At some time, we will receive the 2nd tranche of Connie's legacy, but we don't have certainty, so it is not featured in our budgets at all.
3. Also, the budget does not assume any successful claims of past year's energy costs.

Adrian Bowcher