



St James' & St Luke's  
Church Glossop

# **Report to the Annual Parochial Church Meeting for the year ended 31 December 2023**

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**Charity Number 1134145**

# A Glimpse of 2023 in pictures



# Vicar's Report

Reverend Chris Neilson

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As I arrived, at my first morning service in August, I decided to move the chairs aside and place the communion table in the centre of our worship. I felt God asking us to gather as His people, around His table. Here we, TOGETHER, find forgiveness, grace, renewal, acceptance, peace, fellowship, and hope. I have found all those things in Whitfield since I arrived, I hope you have.

Before I arrived, I read a parish profile and heard stories of issues and ill feeling. This year, I have observed a substantial turn around in this. Church is experiencing growth again; people are engaging in new ministry and there is consistent support for leadership and a willingness to move and embrace what God is doing with us next.

I met so many people in those early weeks, as you visited for BBQ's at the vicarage. People came to help paint my house and transform my garden, this was such a blessing. I found a church with a busy programme and many people engaged in serving these programmes. The finances of the church looked precarious in the parish profile, but before I arrived great work had been done on reducing costs and the congregation responded with huge generosity and we are now in a much healthier position. Christmas was busy and we saw more people come back to church. The new year has brought a new programme of services and a focus on developing our Children and Youth. I have appreciated support in this and wish to continue and add to this focus in the coming year.

There are too many people to thank by name, and I will inevitably miss out someone I know has been wonderful if I try. However, I can certainly say that I have received huge support, from hardworking wardens, assistants, staff, and congregations. The PCC has backed every idea I've had and questioned appropriately. The team of people we have leading and contributing to services, including two excellent retired ministers and spouses, has allowed me time to focus on developing children's work and overall strategy.

On my arrival I had two words, PEOPLE AND PRAYER, as my priorities. Moving forward I have two more GROWING TOGETHER. I want to see us form stronger relationships in the church, not just with people we have known for some time, but with all who come to worship together. That each person who comes to this church finds Jesus among a community of faithful friends. People who know, care, pray and support them. An open and welcoming fellowship is the basis for growth, so more people will come to know and love Jesus, some will return to church and faith and all will find a fertile ground in which to grow together.

Thank you for your welcome and support in my first few months with you at Whitfield. Please extend this welcome and support to everyone in church and those who may be new. As we come and sit at the Lord's table in communion, let's extend it, so all can come and sit and eat with us.

# Churchwarden's Report

Hilary Collard and Martin Galvin

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If 2022 was an *annus horribilis* for Whitfield Parish, 2023 was an *annus mirabilis* during which so much was achieved, for which we can be extremely thankful. In the absence of a second Churchwarden until elections took place at the 2023 AGM, Sheila Humphrey (Deputy Churchwarden) worked closely with Hilary and the measures put in place by the Diocese, in particular, the growing relationship we had with David and Sue Bracewell, meant that the year began well with a parish prayer day at the beginning of January and then Commitment Sunday and a parish service and lunch in the Vineyard. In fact, a pattern of congregations worshipping together on the last Sunday each month in alternating churches (with a bring-and-share on a fifth Sunday) has continued throughout the year. A significant amount of work by the PCC, under the expert guidance of Andy Hackett and the finance team, resulted in a measurable degree of financial recovery before the annual meeting. At the same time the Mission Action Planning (MAP) Team continued to meet, work through the clearly defined Diocesan process and regularly reported progress to the three congregations.

In the middle of February 2023 Hilary was invited to join a Zoom meeting with Bishop Malcolm Repton, the then Archdeacon (Carol Coslett), Bob Jackson and David Bracewell and thereafter began what must be one of the quickest appointment processes on record. By the time Rev Canon Nicky Fenton became Acting Archdeacon of Derbyshire Peak and Dales on 1<sup>st</sup> April the parish profile had been produced, the vacancy advertised and we were blessed to have two excellent candidates to interview on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> May. As soon as the Diocese had completed remedial work on the Vicarage, willing volunteers got the house and garden ready so that Chris, Laura and their three sons could move in at the beginning of August.

In the meantime, parish activities continued including an eight sermon teaching series and church health check survey as part of the MAP process. The PCC carried out a *Time and Talents* survey, immediately after the APCM, which was held on 23<sup>rd</sup> April.

Last year's meeting was both encouraging and positive as we looked forward in faithful expectation of God's provision for the following year. This was in no small way facilitated by the loving and wise support we received from David and Sue Bracewell, who continued to travel tirelessly to Glossop to help us through a period of healing and reconciliation, the pinnacle of which was a special Holy Communion service on Ash Wednesday. David also added to his workload a rollercoaster ride through the Book of Revelation between May and June, which was well attended and much enjoyed. Following Chris' appointment, we gathered to say heartfelt thanks to David and Sue at a service on 20<sup>th</sup> August, when they were presented with a financial gift and a quilt made by Val Allen, on which we had all signed our name. David blessed us with three more sermons over the following months before wishing us "au revoir" in December.

The period from June to August was dominated by preparations for Chris' Licensing Service. This required a considerable amount of planning and, like so much the church does, could not have been achieved without the willing contribution of many of our dedicated members. The event, which took place on 21<sup>st</sup> August at St Lukes Church, was well attended and all went smoothly as Chris was licensed by Bishop Libby Lane and welcomed as the new Priest-in-Charge of Whitfield Parish.

Another significant event followed a request from the Diocese for nominations for the Bishop's Badge. This year we were pleased to nominate Ruth Bennett, Gill Booth and Laurie Gill who received the award from Bishop Libby at a service in Derby Cathedral on 1<sup>st</sup> October, in recognition of their Missional Long Service.

# Churchwarden's Report

## Continued...

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During the summer meetings commenced with Archdeacon Nicky Fenton to explore options for the future reorganisation of the Glossopdale parishes to try and reach agreement on how best to share resources in the coming years, given that the Diocese can only commit to three fully paid clergy. A steering group consisting of the clergy, wardens and PCC representatives from the five parishes was appointed and meetings were held in July, September and December. In the meantime, PCCs also met to consider the options, which have now been presented to all church congregations, to achieve a church-wide consultation. The next steering group meeting is in March 2024 and it is hoped that a consensus will be achieved for a final decision by April.

We must also acknowledge the work of Heather Kindleysides as our Children and Families leader. Heather was initially appointed from January to July 2022. Due to uncertainty over finances, and then the need to allow our new Vicar to be consulted, Heather's contract was extended on a temporary basis in short terms up until December 2023. At that time, and after much thought and prayer, Chris made the very difficult decision that to facilitate growth in our ministries to families, children and youth, we need to take a step back to develop a new vision. Consequently, Heather's contract was not renewed from December. This decision was not lightly made but, after consideration, the PCC agreed that this was the right way forward. The PCC also agreed with Chris when he said, "It should be acknowledged, and gratitude expressed to Heather for her diligence and faithful activity and support of many young people in the parish."

As we came to the end of the year it was good to be able to plan our Christmas events with Chris at the helm. Early in December we welcomed Glossop Music Festival and Dark Peak Music Foundation to St James' for their annual concerts and the Christmas music with afternoon tea for seniors was greatly enjoyed once again. We also had the opportunity to support Friends of Whitfield Rec' with their Lantern Parade which culminated with refreshments in the Vineyard. We joined with other Glossop churches in Norfolk Square on 15<sup>th</sup> December as Dark Peak wind band accompanied the carol singing. Three primary school choirs performed and a good crowd enjoyed food and drink served by local businesses on a cold but dry evening. As well as our usual Carols by Candlelight service we were once again able to have Midnight Communion on Christmas Eve at St Luke's; whilst at St James' Chris and Laura led a Christingle Service on 23<sup>rd</sup> December followed by a Crib Service on Christmas Eve led by Heather. The congregations celebrated Christmas Day together with Holy Communion afterwards for those who wanted to stay.

As the parish continues to grow in unity and purpose, Martin and the PCC have identified many of the unseen but essential aspects of parish administration that need attention. For example, policies governing our volunteer roles, health and safety and church records are under review, Chris and Suzanne are now working on the more efficient use of Church Suite and we hope to commence work on updating the parish website in the near future.

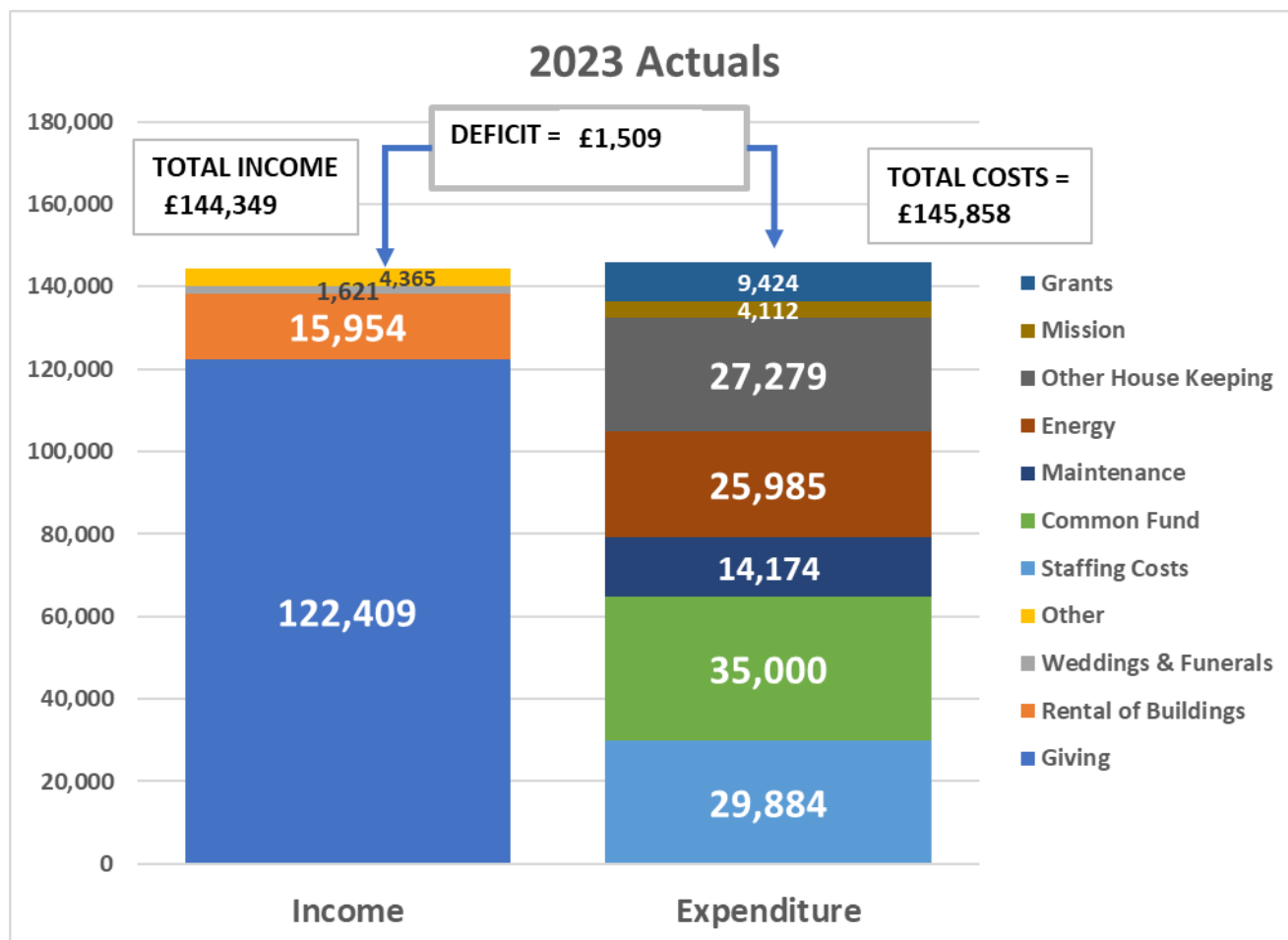
Finally, we are thankful to the many dedicated church members who freely, and consistently, volunteer their time to the parish's work and vision because of their commitment to serving Jesus, whose name we always seek to uphold and glorify.

*"But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God..." (1 Peter 2:9-10)*

# Treasurer's Report

Andy Hackett

## 2023 Financials



Figures per Management Accounts

Our first outlook for our 2023 finances was looking very challenging and our financial situation was uncertain. With the sharing of our financial position, we were blessed with overwhelming generosity from our congregations that together with gift aid tax relief resulted in a giving amount of £122,409. Together with rental and other income, we had a total income of £144,349. Our total expenditure was £144,858 as detailed above. Energy costs were more than double that of 2022, but to mitigate we reduced costs in other areas. As our income developed during the year, we were able to spend on required areas of maintenance and our Audio and Visual equipment.

Overall, this resulted in a small deficit of £1,509 for the full year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023. Please note that in the financial statements there is a slight surplus due a higher amount of gift aid accrued in 2023 vs 2022.

As a result of this deficit, our general (unrestricted) cash reserves at the end of 2023 reduced slightly from £75,739 to £74,229. The Charity Commission recommends holding 3 months of expenditure in general reserves. This equates to £36,000.

More detailed figures relating to 2023 can be found in the Financial Statements for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023 within this overall report.

# Treasurer's Report

## Continued...

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### Looking forward to 2024 and 2025

There were a number of one-off gifts for 2023 following our Pledge Day in December 2022, and as a result giving is expected to reduce in 2024 from 2023, unless there are new givers or current givers are able to increase their giving.

We worked hard in 2023 to reduce our costs, but there are now fewer options:- our buildings need continual maintenance, and we are still experiencing high unit costs for energy, although it is expected that these will continue to reduce slowly based on current wholesale prices. Having reduced the amount of Common Fund that we pay the Diocese, we are now trying to slowly increase this by £5,000 to get closer to the requested amount, which has now reduced based on our congregation numbers. We have not renewed the contract for our Children and Families leader, the saving on this has been moved from staff costs to mission costs in 2024 and 2025 as we are committed to this area of mission together with youth work.

Overall, for 2024, we are currently forecasting a deficit of £16,000 and for 2025 a deficit of £23,000 (with energy costs forecasted at the same as 2024 given no better information). On these current forecasts, our reserves will reduce to £35,000 at the end of 2025 which is more or less in line with 3 months of costs.

Whilst we are in a significantly better position than where we were 18 months, we still need to grow in numbers, both financially and in those coming to know and worship Jesus, and to grow spiritually and missionally. The PCC thank everyone for their generosity, help and support in getting us to this improved position.

	2023 Actuals	2024 Latest Forecast	2025 Latest Forecast
Giving Income	£ 122k	£108k	£106k
Other Income	£ 22k	£ 19k	£ 19k
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>£ 144k</b>	<b>£127k</b>	<b>£125k</b>
<b>Total Costs</b>	<b>£146k</b>	<b>£143k</b>	<b>£148k</b>
<b>Deficit</b>	<b>(£ 2k)</b>	<b>(£ 16k)</b>	<b>(£ 23k)</b>
<b>Reserves</b>	<b>£74k</b>	<b>£58k</b>	<b>£35k</b>

Figures per Management Accounts

# Treasurer's Report

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## Notes to Finance Headings

### *Income*

*Giving* – the largest portion of our income continues to come from what each of us gives to our churches. This includes claiming of tax relief known as gift aid. The PCC thank you for your continued generosity.

*Rental of Buildings* – Just over half is from the rental of Church House. The rest is from renting rooms in the Vineyard or one of the churches for concerts, etc.

*Weddings & Funerals/Other* – Virtually all of this is generated from fees charged for and donations from weddings and funerals, including costs such as energy and cleaning.

### *Expenditure*

*Staffing costs* – these costs are for our Parish Administrator, our Children and Families' Leader and our cleaning staff, all on part-time basis to support and lead us in the mission of the parish.

*Common Fund* – This contributes towards our clergy and the running of the Diocese and the Church of England. This value is half of the suggested amount for our parish.

*Energy Costs* – these are slowly reducing but we do not expect to go back to 2022 levels.

*Maintenance/Other Church Running Costs* – These are the costs of running St James', St Luke's and The Vineyard to be used for the glory of God, and include maintenance, insurance, admin, etc.

*Local Mission* – Our local outreach in the form of Youth, Children's and Schools work, START course, Messy Church, Whitfield Café and services/baptisms

## Grants

Andy Hackett

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In 2023, £300 was raised in grants. These funds are restricted solely for the usage they were given. Knowing church funds are increasingly tight and seeing that funding was still available for community work, the grant applications secured enable Whitfield Community Café (grants of £300) to be sustainable into the future, enabling this ministry to grow and expand further to help those who are struggling in our community.

Further, Derby Diocese gave us a grant of £1,750 towards high energy costs incurred over the winter of 2022/23.

Below is a table showing the source of grants received, the amount and for which area of mission:

Source of Grant	Amount	Mission Area
Derbyshire County Council	£ 300	Whitfield Community Café
Derby Diocese	£1,750	All Areas



# PCC Report

Suzanne Gregory

Post	Name	Term Length
Incumbent	Chris Neilson	Ex-Officio
Curate	Vacant	Ex-Officio
Warden	Hilary Collard	2023-2024
Warden	Martin Galvin	2023-2024
Deanery Synod	Heather Kindleysides	2023-2026
Deanery Synod	Vacant	
Deanery Synod	Vacant	
PCC	Andy Hackett (Treasurer)	2022-2025
PCC	Kate Cahill	2022-2025
PCC	Vacant	2022-2025
PCC	Mari Brown	2021-2024
PCC	Tracey Fellows	2021-2024
PCC	Jean Burston	2022-2024
PCC	Elaine Richardson (Lay Chair)	2023-2026
PCC	Sheila Humphrey	2023-2026
PCC	Joanne Swindells	2023-2026
PCC	Ann Williams	2023-2026
Secretary	Suzanne Gregory	2023-2024

The Parochial Church Council is a corporate body established by the Church of England. The PCC continues to identify, evaluate and monitor risks facing the Council's operations.

Whitfield PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. It also has maintenance responsibilities for the Churches of St James the Great, Hollincross Lane and of St Luke's, Fauvel Road; Church House, Fauvel Road and The Vineyard, 18-20 Charlestown Road, Glossop.

Day to day management is delegated to the incumbent, however during vacancy this is transferred to the Churchwardens. In addition, stipendiary members of staff take responsibility for church administration and children and families work. All other members of the leadership team are volunteers.

As the PCC has ultimate responsibility for a wide range of matters affecting the parish, individuals with expertise relating to compliance with health and safety, child protection and other legislation are consulted whenever necessary.

The PCC generally meets every two months. The appointment of PCC members is governed by and set out in the Church Representation Rules. Members are either ex-officio or elected at the AGM. This table shows the current PCC.

## PCC Members who finished their terms and/or stepped down

The following PCC members stepped down between April 2023—2024: Michelle Howard

The following PCC members have finished their term: Hilary Collard, Martin Galvin, Mari Brown, Tracey Fellows, Jean Burston and Suzanne Gregory.

We would like to express our thanks to the Churchwardens and everyone who has served on the PCC this year.

# PCC Report

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## **Main items discussed in PCC during 2023**

- **Gas and Electricity:** Explored different options with different companies in order to secure the best deal for each of the buildings.
- **Finance team:** A finance team was approved by the PCC.
- **Appointment of Deputy Warden:** This was approved by the PCC.
- **Policy reviews:** The Health & Safety and GDPR policies were reviewed and approved by the PCC. The Vineyard Risk Assessment has been reviewed and updated and Fire Risk Assessments have been produced for each building.
- **New Incumbent:** Interviews took place and the new incumbent was appointed.
- **St. Luke's Building Fund:** Donors were contacted and given options for how they would like their donation to be used.
- **Safeguarding:** The Church of England's document 'Promoting a Safer Church' continues to be adopted as the safeguarding policy for Whitfield Parish. Risk assessments were reviewed and updated for all groups, events and/or activities.
- **Leading Your Church Into Growth (LYCIG):** A group from Whitfield Parish attended the conference.
- **Service Patterns:** These were reviewed and approved.
- **Rental Policies:** These were reviewed, updated and approved.

# Safeguarding Report

Tracey Fellows

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*'The Church will take appropriate steps to maintain a safer environment for all. In order to do this we must be obedient to Christ who placed a child in the midst of his disciples and encourages us all to be childlike in our faith (see Matthew 18.1-5). So we must practise fully and positively a ministry to all children, young people and adults, and respond sensitively and compassionately to their needs in order to help keep them safe from harm.'*

(Justin Welby - Archbishop of Canterbury taken from Parish Safeguarding Handbook 2018)

It is important to promote a culture of openness and accountability to safeguarding here in Whitfield Parish; remembering that safeguarding is 'Gospel Work' protecting the young and vulnerable and that it is not just a tick box exercise. This is an ongoing process in Whitfield Parish worked through 2023 by the following:

- Overall responsibility for safeguarding at the beginning of 2023, during the parish vacancy was held by the churchwardens with the day-to-day co-ordination and oversight offered by the Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO). The new Priest-In-Charge was provided with a handover and update following the licensing service when overall responsibility was transferred from the wardens. All safeguarding posters have since been updated to reflect the correct details.
- The PSO has reported regularly at PCC meetings where safeguarding is a regular item on the agenda. During which, in September, the annual adoption and implementation of the House of Bishops' safeguarding policy called 'Promoting a safer Church', and the most recent Parish Safeguarding Plan, were adopted and approved once more.
- The commitment to safer recruitment through; ongoing renewal of existing and expiring DBS certificates and applications for new DBS checks and completion of safeguarding training.
- Face-to-face training was provided in August for those who struggle with the online style of training. It is anticipated that this can be an ongoing annual provision in summer for any who require Basic and/or Foundation safeguarding training for their role within Whitfield Parish. Anyone who volunteers is required by Derby Diocese to complete safeguarding Basic safeguarding module. Grateful thanks are offered to members of the refreshments and AV teams who have completed this training when the Diocese explained that it also applied to their role!

The PSO was invited by the Diocesan Safeguarding Team to participate with a small group of PSOs to trial an additional feature for the parish dashboard which is the software used by Derby Diocese to meet the requirements set out in the Parish Safeguarding Handbook. This has been going well and should help to provide password protected, up to date information about safeguarding training and DBS status for all involved as a church officer in any church roles. Timely reminders can then be provided to those in need of updates before they expire. If successful, the Diocese plans to roll out this additional feature of the parish dashboard to all parishes within the Diocese.

All PSOs were invited to a Safeguarding Sunday service held in Derby Cathedral in November. Those who attended were commissioned during the service for this vital role. I attended and also had the opportunity to meet members of the Diocesan Safeguarding Team in person which was an enjoyable experience, rather than a face on a screen or a voice on the phone. The Diocesan Safeguarding Team has been a source of constant support throughout 2023 and I am grateful for the team's input, as well as the cooperation of those in the parish who join me in acknowledging the need for a culture of safeguarding within our churches.

# Deanery Synod

## Heather Kindleysides

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Since being elected as representative for Whitfield at the AGM 2023 I have attended two meetings with Michelle. The thing that struck me and something that I enjoy most is the opportunity to network with and hear the stories from other parishes. This has led me to realise just how blessed we are in Whitfield.

We heard stories of success from parishes who have opened their churches to young people (eg. Dinting Vale - TNT and Messy Church) and the local community, some have moved forward in becoming Eco churches (eg. Glossop) as well as stories from churches in vacancy (some for extended periods) struggling and distressed, and others discovering gifting within the laity.

Whitfield was blessed in so many ways, by the support from the Diocese and Deanery during our vacancy, including the whirlwind appointment process, to the support we have with Safeguarding from Tracey, who has gently guided us down the right path ensuring that Whitfield is a safe and welcoming place for all, but especially children, young people, and vulnerable adults.

The Deanery Synod may seem to be 'just another meeting' but I have begun to look forward to these opportunities to share and would encourage anyone to become a representative from Whitfield, the networking benefits are huge.

# Fabric Report

Charlie Bishop

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2023 was a year of two halves indeed. In the first half, due to financial circumstances, little was done except for routine maintenance.

In the second half, as funds became available, we were able to undertake some improvements.

**The Vineyard:** The main downstairs room and stairway were decorated and an additional trolley table provided.

**St. James':** The outside railings (side, front and over the boiler room) were repainted DIY style. Also, the maintenance team of Jan, Kate and Charlie, having been thwarted by the rain, turned indoors and repainted the vestry/ kitchen areas. No quinquennial work was outstanding. However, a bush growth over the front porch needed removing and the gutterwork repointing. Also, in the torrential rain, the downspout adjacent to the boiler room continued to overflow and damage the stonework. A solution was eventually found and successfully repaired.

**St. Luke's:** The porch roof was confirmed as sound and the inner porch walls replastered and painted DIY style. Although some damp spots remain, the area is much more inviting. Heating problems prevented the far room and church being heated at the same time. After much investigation, it was discovered that the pump was only operating at a third of its capacity, so we were warm for Christmas.

At the third attempt by specialist drainage companies, the blocked disabled toilet was fixed!

Outside, the torrential rain led to blocked drains and overflowing downspouts on the south side, this has now been resolved. Inside, to the right and left of the nave at the altar steps, debris was noticed. This turned out to be caused by shifting coping stones on the roof, both sides have been repaired and repointed.

Funds allowed the vestry outer wall with the stained glass projection, to be fully repointed. Following this, the inside was redecorated and a new carpet fitted.

# Mission Action Plan Report

Jean Burston

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First of all, I'd like to thank everyone for their support of the Mission Action Planning Team from the moment we started in January 2023. The MAP prayer was incorporated into our all our services and people have listened to our communications and been very positive about what we have been doing.

Here is a review of what our team has been doing from January 2023 – December 2023:

1. The Parish MAP team first met on 13th January 2023 and agreed to meet fortnightly. The team comprised of Zoe Bowers, Paul Kiddy, Andy Hackett Laurie Gill from St Luke's Church and Ann Williams, Michelle Howard, Hilary Collard and Jean Burston from St. James' Church.
2. Bob Jackson, a retired Archdeacon who lives in Eyam, attended our first meeting and recommended that we look at the Derby Diocese MAP Leader's Toolkit and, after reading through it, we decided that we should use it.
3. The MAP process consists of five stages:
  - Explore the purpose and character of the church God is calling us to be
  - Reflect on our journey towards God's calling so far
  - Discern the areas in which God is now calling us to grow and meet His call
  - Prepare how we will make the changes God requires of us
  - Journey toward making the changes that God requires.
4. As we have worked through the process, our team has regularly given updates to the PCC and they have always been very supportive and approved our actions. In addition, we have kept the three congregations informed with regular communications.
5. A MAP resource wall was created in both Churches and, as well as the MAP prayer being used in all services, a bookmark version of the prayer was given out as well.
6. A Thursday evening prayer meeting started in St. James' on a Thursday evening as well as the regular Monday morning prayer meeting in St. Luke's Church so that the MAP process was covered by prayer.
7. In April we had an Agape meal in the Vineyard and the whole Parish came together.
8. We looked at the 8 characteristics of God's church as stated in the MAP Toolkit and used them as a basis for the sermons and Growth Group studies throughout the summer term 2023.
9. In May the team created a 'Moment in Time' exercise to take a snapshot of where the parish was. As we wanted a wide range of views, the MIT form was given to all the members of the Parish; to our young people, to the Church schools, to the Volunteer Bureau to be used by the community and to the groups who used any of the Church buildings. Feedback was given to the parish at the Joint Service on 25th June and various members of the MAP team gave feedback to the schools, the community groups and the groups who use the Church buildings.
10. The team agreed that we should also use the 3 Health Check surveys in the MAP Toolkit to assess what people thought about our Parish in more detail.
11. At the end of the Joint Service on June 25th all members of the congregation were asked to complete the **Spiritual Health Check survey 1**. A more detailed **Spiritual Health Check survey 2** was given to Growth Group Leaders and in-depth **Spiritual Health Check survey 3** was given to the members of the PCC. Feedback was given to the Parish at the Joint Service on 30th July.
12. Our new Vicar, Rev. Chris Neilson, was appointed in September 2023 and he became a member of the MAP team.

At the end of July the team arrived at Stages 2 and 3 of the process – Reflect and Discern. Consequently, the team didn't meet from September to December 2023 to give each member of the team time to pray, reflect and discern the areas in which God is calling our Parish to grow and meet His call.

The MAP team would like to thank everyone for their engagement, encouragement and support as we've worked together through the MAP process as a Parish.

Proverbs 16 verse 3: *Commit your plans to the Lord, and your plans will be established.*

# Children and Families

Heather Kindleysides

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As 2023 raced to a close, my second and final year as Children and Families Leader for Whitfield also ended. During our vacancy the work continued and the arrival of Chris in the summer has reinvigorated the ministry with great plans afoot for working together across Glossopdale, Growing Faith in our churches and community.

This year the volunteer base has increased again, and we all know this ministry could not happen without them, so to them I offer my heartfelt thanks.

I have again opted to divide my report into two parts: work with our church families (Kingdom Kids) and outreach.

**Kingdom Kids**, was extended to run in both churches with two devoted teams of volunteers this year. We have continued to use Roots on the Web and Blackburn Diocese resources to provide a rich and diverse programme to encourage the Children's Growing Faith. Responding to requests from the congregations, the Kingdom Kids now begin by worshipping with the whole church family before leaving for their own session and return to share the final part of the service. A dedicated Kids Zone is available in both churches for those children who would prefer to stay in church.

**Outreach activities** continues to be well attended, with **Newbies** developing into a supportive group for carers and children from zero to three years, with families having their children baptised in church as a result. Responding to the request to continue during the summer, we opened the session up to older siblings and used a themed resource '**The Big Summer Holiday Bucket List**' exploring different Bible stories using storytelling, craft activities, songs and themed light lunch etc. I invited different volunteers to support me each week and I think they enjoyed it as much as the children.

**6:30 Kids** continues to be lively and attracts kids from the whole of Glossopdale but particularly Whitfield. Conversations with families at pick-up and drop-off and through WhatsApp communication has strengthened the perception of church as a caring, supportive community.

My work with our **Church Schools** continued with the support of Reverend David Mundy until Chris' arrival in summer 2023, when Chris took an active role in building relationships with the school communities. Both schools came into the churches for their Easter services and concerts, and we saw a big increase in parental engagement at their Harvest and Christmas services due to Chris' presence.

**The Family Easter Peg/Egg Hunt** in Howard Park was a huge success again and saw over 100 children queuing up to collect their Easter goody bags.

Finally, the simple **Family Nativity** was supported by a very special angel this year, with Chris donning an oversized gown (but sadly no sword) to deliver the Christmas message to a variety of shepherds, sheep and kings.

# Youth Work

Steve Fellows and Duncan Edge

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## Roots

We meet every Sunday evening from 7:00 to 8:30pm during term time. We have a good core group of young people, including some with additional needs. The team consists of: Angela, Sandie, Duncan and Steve. Chris (Vicar) is now overseeing this group.

The evening starts with tuck shop and games upstairs including table top games, table tennis, pool and table football. We then all pack up and go downstairs for active games and fun. Between 8 and 8:10pm we then settle down for drinks and snacks and have discussions on certain topics and try and bring Biblical input, followed by a closing prayer.

This is a very rewarding time to get to know the young people and equally for them to get to know us. It's fun, interactive and a joy to be involved in.

## Sunday Morning Youth

At the moment there is no provision for youth Bible study on a Sunday morning.

# Missional Giving

David Woodward

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The purpose of the Mission Team is to expand our vision beyond our local parish responsibilities, to the larger community and wider world.

For the year 2023, the PCC accepted our recommendation that the four main mission partners should be: Embassy; Dave Maguire (in Romania); Open Doors and Tear Fund. The mini-partners are Stephen Bell (in Croatia); Glossopdale Street Pastors, The Message Trust and the Bishop's Harvest Fund.

The Mission team meets three times a year to pray for our mission partners and discuss recommendations to the PCC for the allocation of the parish mission tithe. 70% is allocated to our main mission partners, 20% to our mini partners and 10% via discretionary grants. From 2023, recommendations to the PCC on the allocation of discretionary grants have been dealt with by the Finance Team.

News and prayer requests from our main mission partners were forwarded to Growth Group leaders, to encourage prayer and special interest in one or two of the partners.

In 2023, there was a special collection for Stephen Bell to help him to pay for unexpected medical bills and a grant from the discretionary fund was added to this. In February 2023 collection boxes at both churches raised funds for the Open Doors' Syrian Earthquake appeal. There was also a special collection, sent to the Bishop's Harvest Fund. A donation was sent to the UCB from the discretionary fund.

The work of Tear Fund and Open Doors was highlighted in short videos shown in the services. In 2023, we were helped by a visit from Sid Williams who preached at both church services and told us about the progress in setting up the Embassy Village in Manchester. Also, Trevor Green from Open Doors came to lead an all-age service, to inspire our involvement in supporting the millions of persecuted Christians round the world.



# Growth Groups

Suzanne Gregory

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Growth Groups remain a key part of our church and everyone is encouraged to be part of one. The aim is that through Growth Groups we become:

- Closer to God – through prayer, exploring the Bible and sharing experiences of God in our day-to-day lives.
- Closer to one another – having fun, being friends, eating meals, sharing problems and caring for one another.
- Closer to others – praying for our community, inviting friends or getting involved in other out-reach events.

Our Growth Groups are all led by members of the congregation and we are very thankful for their time and commitment. During 2023 we had eight groups meeting regularly. Each group meets weekly or every other week, some in person and some online via Teams.

We have followed along with each of the sermon series, starting with Philippians back in January 2023 and finishing with 'Prayer and People' during the autumn term. Each session there is the opportunity to dig deeper and explore, through the notes and questions provided by the different preachers.

As we move into 2024, we would encourage you to join a growth group. You will find information in both churches about the groups that meet – you will always find a warm welcome! Our groups really are safe places to ask those difficult questions and walk together on our faith journeys.

## In our Community

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### **Coffee Pot: *Cynthia Jones & Gill Booth***

Our aim, as always, is to share time with our church family and to reach out to our friends and community. We thank all who come to share Thursday mornings with us. Thank you to those who faithfully come to serve, cook and wash-up. We could not manage without you!

We have been able to support the Earthquake relief, Stephen Bell and The Message Trust. We have also donated £400 toward the heating etc at St. Luke's. We have purchased a microwave oven for the church kitchen and new table cloths for the tables in the back room.

We ask for God's blessing for the coming year and for those seeking to know more about Jesus to find the help and fellowship they need.

# In our Community

Continued...

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## Grace Kitchen: *Sandie Mann, John & Ann Midwood*

*"Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with your; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you."*  
Isaiah 43:1-2

We are happy and blessed to report that Grace Kitchen continues to grow and thrive and we wish to thank the 2023 Team and all those who have helped in any way. Many thanks to our team: Martin Galvin (team leader), Jo Galvin (cook), Sandie Mann, Judith & David Woodward, Mari Brown, John & Ann Midwood, David Leigh, Liz Strek, Catherine Cowley, Carol Shehadeh (cook), Ben Ronson, Barbara Hastings-Asatourian and Chris Burlison.

As a Warm Space, the doors open at 10.00am each Wednesday, warm drinks and biscuits are provided.

Currently, each week we provide 47 bags of food, helping support 8 families and 12 people who live on their own. The bags contain a note of blessing from the church. We pray over the food before it's bagged up and occasionally we give out 'Word for the Day', blessing cards and encouragement cards, which have been well received. The bags are supplemented from a stock of tinned and dried goods, bought via a grant from the Derbyshire Foundation obtained in 2020.

Food that is coming to the end of its shelf life is provided by, and collected from Aldi, the Co-op, M&S and Lidl. The food is collected each Tuesday morning and evening and each Wednesday morning by various members of the Grace Kitchen team. We would like to express our thanks to Duncan Edge, who has been doing the M&S pick up on his days off, and we will him well as he recovers from his recent surgery.

Our clients enjoy either a sandwich or a hot bowl of soup and roll, followed by a piece of cake. We provide coffee, tea, juice and jugs of water.

During the autumn, a Computer Club was set up with the assistance of PC Refurb and this operates between 12 noon and 1.30pm each Wednesday upstairs in The Vineyard. All are welcome.

We have contact with Gill Cross at 'Bellies not Bins' in Hadfield, as we sometimes have a surplus of bread and pastries, so we are able to pass them on to her. In addition, we share cake and pastries with Whitfield Community Café.

In the kitchen each week we are helped by Bakery College student, Ben Ronson, who has become a valued member of the team.

At Harvest time, the church family supported Grace Kitchen by donating boxes of cereals. During December, we again had a festive lunch for our clients and this was paid for from the donations we had received during 2023. In addition, we drew down some grant money to buy boxes of Christmas biscuits and chocolates to make up hampers. These were supplemented by generous donations from church members.

Volunteer Barbara, was involved in delivering a Christmas lunch, prepared by the landlord of the Surrey Arms, to local people who were alone and/or unable to prepare hot food, and several Grace Kitchen clients took up the offer.

Please pray for Grace Kitchen: new volunteers will be very welcome.

*"The harvest is truly plentiful, but the labourers are few. Therefore pray for the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into His harvest."* Matthew 9:37-39

# In our Community

## Continued...

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### **Whitfield Community Cafe—Jo Galvin**

February 2nd: We had a visit from Carol Wilson from the Fire Service. She gave a talk on how to keep safe in the home and offered free fire alarms and installation. Three people took her up on this offer.

February 9th: Ruth Bennett suggested we have a collection for the earthquake victims in Turkey. We sent £57 via Christian Aid (thanks Ruth for your excellent suggestion).

March 30th: We held an auction at The Vineyard to help to provide funds to support ourselves. We collected £342, a huge amount for such a small group of people. It was decided beforehand that whatever we made, we would donate half of it to a Whitfield children's group (as we are a Whitfield based café). We chose a kick boxing children's group that met out of Pure Vibes, they were trying to raise money for a defibrillator for the area. We gave them £177, they were thrilled and shortly after bought the defibrillator.

April 6th: We held our Easter Café, which we served scones with clotted cream and jam. Judith Moore gave an excellent talk to explain why we eat chocolate eggs at Easter. We used the money raised from the auction to cover the costs. We handed out 'Why Easter?' booklets to everyone as well as a palm cross when they left.

May 4th: I applied for a grant towards the cost of celebrating King Charles' coronation. I had hoped for £100, but was totally shocked to receive the full amount of £300 from councillor Jean Wharmby. Our entertainment was provided free from The Fab Choir. They really were brilliant and managed to get the whole café singing along. We gave handouts of the commemorative souvenir gospel 'Crowned King'.

May 14th: We took up a collection for Christian Aid and delivered the unopened envelopes to Chris Nudds, who organises the Christian Aid collections in Glossop each year. I received a thank you note saying that we had collected £133.34 and that overall the total collected in Glossop was £3000.

June 10th: We helped to host a Fun Day on Whitfield Rec. with the rest of St. James' and St. Luke's churches. Free biscuits and drinks were served to the children of Whitfield.

June 22nd: We held a plant sale at the suggestion of one of our café users and took £120 to support the café.

December 7th: We had our annual Christmas party. The entertainment was supplied by a small group of members of Glossop Brass Band. They played traditional Christmas carols and songs. An anonymous donor covered the cost of the band. Everyone agreed that the music was lovely and just right to create that Christmas feeling. The food was delicious. We paid for it mostly from donations and the events that we had held during the year. Approximately 60 people attended.

Café attendance has increased once again to an average of 32 people per week in 2023. Thank you to the team, who are totally committed to Whitfield Café and work extremely hard to serve local people. Without them this ministry would be impossible, they are all without exception, Super Stars!

Team: Jo Galvin (team leader) Judith Moore (deputy team leader) Marilyn & John Butterworth, Ruth Bennett, Ashley Oldham, Bee Oliver and Ellie Moore.

