

# Christ Church Willaston Annual Report 2023





# 2023 Annual Report of the Parochial Church Council of Christ Church, Willaston

## Aims and Purposes

Christ Church PCC has welcomed a new Priest in Charge in 2023 when Reverend Gordon MacLeod joined the church, and together with Reverend Gordon, the PCC has had responsibility of promoting in the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission of the church pastoral, evangelistic, social, and ecumenical and additionally the PCC has been responsible for the maintenance of the church and the churchyard. In 2023, the PCC saw major leaps forward in the Church Reordering Project which continues under the Reordering Project Group, and a newer Reordering Project Fundraising Group. Both groups are moving the Reordering forward and there is renewed hope that work might commence in September 2024.

## Objectives and Activities

The PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship at our church and to become part of our parish community at Christ Church, and maintains an overview of worship throughout the parish, making suggestions on how our services can involve the many groups that live within our parish.

Our services and worship put faith into practice through prayer and scripture, music and sacrament. In particular, we try to enable ordinary people to live out their faith as part of our parish community through:

- Worship and prayer; learning about the gospel; developing their knowledge and trust in Jesus.
- Provision of pastoral care for people living in the parish
- Outreach work

To facilitate this work, it is important that we maintain the fabric of the Christ Church and its surroundings.

## Achievements and Performance

### Worship and prayer

The PCC has worked closely with Reverend Gordon and Father Lyndon in offering a range of services during the week and over the course of the year, that our community find both beneficial and spiritually fulfilling.

The church continues to welcome new people to our **9.00am Parish Eucharist (Holy Communion)** service and our **All-Age Worship**, held each Sunday after our 9.00am service is slowly encouraging more families and young people into our church so that they can enjoy a more outgoing worship with contemporary hymns and songs.

**Morning Prayer** provides a quiet, intimate, and reflective environment for worship, and there are two Morning Prayer services, one each **Monday at 9.00am** and one on the **first Wednesday in each month, at 10.30am**. Both services are seeing an increased number of people attending.

**Bi-monthly Choral Evensong** provides a popular and joyous worship opportunity and initially it was attempted to offer services on the same Sunday of every other month to establish a pattern, but a couple of other churches changed their arrangements which made regular Sundays more complicated. Scirard Lancelyn-Green, who conducts the choir has commitments at Thornton Hough and Chester Cathedral, and Colin Porter has a variety of commitments in Liverpool. However, both the above brought their choir with them, and the services are very popular. For 2024, it is anticipated that once a regular pattern of service can be settled, Choral Evensong will continue.

At present there are 103 parishioners on the Church Electoral Roll. The average weekly attendance was 61(36 at the 9.00am service and 25 at 10.30am service), but this number increased at festivals, and special services. The Church Electoral Roll figures are in line with the 2022 figures and in respect of average weekly attendance figures, the figures show a pleasing increase of around 20% on 2022.

There are several festivals and special services held throughout the year and these are well attended and provide a springboard for newcomers to start attending regular Sunday services. For 2023, we saw good attendance at Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter Sunday Services.

Advent Reflections were held by Fr Lyndon and were well attended.

At Christmas the annual **Nine Lessons and Carols** service was well attended and we thank all those who contributed, with particular thanks to the Hadlow Green Singers for their wonderful choral talents. **Christingle, Midnight Mass, and Christmas Day** services were all well attended.

As well as our regular services, we enable our community to celebrate and thank God at the milestones of the journey through life. Through **baptism** we thank God for the gift of life; in **marriage**, public vows are exchanged with God's blessing; through **funeral services**, friends and family express their grief and give thanks for the life that is now complete in this world and commend the person into God's keeping.

## Deanery Synod

There have been two Deanery Synod meetings in 2023, they have been well attended and we have had some good presentations and discussion.

### May 2023

Zarah Ross from Faiths4Change who introduced the topic of developing a route map to achieving Net Zero Carbon targets by 2030 with a focus on what is practical in different churches, and in their activities throughout the week. Zarah drew our attention to sources of information to meet the national Church's targets and to share experience with other churches and faith communities across Wirral.

### October 2023

Synod met for an update on the *Casting the Net Wide* Vision and Strategy work taking place across the diocese. This was led by Harriet Roberts and Jon Pocock from Church House. The work that had been coordinated by Harriet Roberts over the last year can be found in the *Casting the Net Wide* report at:

<https://d3hgrrlq6yacptf.cloudfront.net/5f20800211eb6/content/pages/documents/casting-the-net-wide.pdf>

Harriet outlined what had been done – and why - and the conclusions.

Jon Pocock (Strategic Programme Director) is tasked with leading implementation of the next stages of the Vision and Strategy. He outlined what resources are available to do this a timetable through to the spring of 2024. He also asked for church parishes to continue to pray for this work, to share what they are doing, and to celebrate achievements.

## The Church

The interregnum, ably covered by Fr. Lyndon Bannon, for which we are very grateful indeed, came to an end on the July 28<sup>th</sup> when Rev. Gordon MacLeod was appointed and licensed as part-time Priest-in-Charge on that date, at a very well attended service.

Since taking up his position, Rev. Gordon has re-established links with Weatherstones Care Home and monthly services have been held there since October, attended by Rev. MacLeod and several members of the church congregation.

Similarly, the clerical link with the local Church of England primary school was re-established and Rev. Gordon visits for school assembly on a Tuesday during term-time.

Successful School Harvest and Christmas services were held in the church.

Additionally, Rev. Gordon sits as a Foundation School Governor and on the Advisory Group of the Johnson Recreation Ground.

Home Communion visits are provided by Rev. Gordon to those who are sick, upon request and the consent of the person. Rev. Gordon also provides pastoral care visits to those in need. We continue with a service pattern of two services on a Sunday morning, both traditional and contemporary, with occasional Evensong services.

Clerical links have been established with the Methodist Church, as we start to forward plan for reordering later in 2024.

In respect of other activities within the church, a rota has enabled the church to be open on a Saturday morning for private prayer.

Some of our groups meet in church and elsewhere on a monthly basis, including Men's Group and the UpLIFT Ladies' group. Both activities are arranged and organised by Fr. Lyndon Bannon and his wife, Claire, to whom we give particular thanks for a varied schedule and enjoyable events held throughout the year.

Other groups meet elsewhere in the parish, *Mothers' Union* and the *Knit and Natter* group meet at the Methodist Church and the *Home Group* meets twice a month at Helen Heath's house in order to explore the Bible in a relaxed format and atmosphere.

Willaston C of E Primary School meet in church as previously discussed. It is good to see the link between school and church being re-established, with thanks to Rev. Gordon for his work in this matter.

Maintenance to the organ reservoir now has a dedicated fund to assist in any associated costs of keeping our wonderful organ in a good state of repair. Mr Mike Smith and Mrs Chris Smith held a Garden Party in June 2023 to raise funds for a new digital piano and raised £722. Thanks are given to Mike and Chris for opening up their home and garden and providing refreshments for a very well attended event. We also thank our resident organist Prof. David Speechley for his ongoing service and commitment to the upkeep of the organ.

The Scout Hut is in a state of disrepair and there are ongoing discussions between the PCC and the previous occupants to decide the way forward.

Church grounds continue to be maintained by an external gardening service and also topped up by volunteers during the summer months at '*Gardening Parties*' on a Saturday morning.

## Operations and Maintenance

Mr Mike Smith continues to guide us in compliance with current health and safety and fire safety standards, for which we owe him a debt of sincere gratitude.

The regulatory fire safety documentation and processes for the church building (in its current pre-reordered arrangement), are now almost complete, with most of the documentation having now been signed off by Rev. Gordon.

The only outstanding issues for the current pre-reordered arrangement are:

1. Recognising that we still have significant outstanding corrective actions associated with the fire safety risk assessment of 2012. These actions relate to works that we will address in the reordering of the building. Such works will remain overdue until completion of the Reordering Project or at least a phase 1, if split into a two phased project.
2. An emergency evacuation of the building must be carried out, documented, reviewed, and assessed.
3. Fire safety training still needs to be sourced and implemented for authorised persons, (wardens, sides people, fire marshal and deputies).
4. Discussions regarding the fire safety roles and responsibilities of individuals - clergy, wardens, sides people, fire marshals and their deputies still need to be discussed with the individuals concerned.
5. Awareness of, and the use of, risk assessment in relation to the number of people in the building at our high-capacity services and events, in excess of our designated occupancy capacity needs to be formally embedded in both our management of the event or service, as well as by the leadership team. Formal discussion prior to the event must take place, so that adequate supervision can be put in place, who know what to do when in an emergency, as well as having the necessary documented risk assessment for the event.

In addition to the tireless work of Mr. Mike Smith, the church is indebted also to Mr Bill Hardman and Mr Chris Brown-Bolton for their continued dedication to the forward progression of our Reordering Project, which is covered below.

## Reordering Procurement Group

The PCC's *Reordering Procurement Group*, Bill Hardman, Chris Brown-Bolton, Andy Smith, and Mike Smith continue their dedication to the progression of our Reordering Project. We are currently raising the funds to enable construction to commence. Chris Brown-Bolton is at present applying to various Trusts and Fund Organisations and is organising local fundraising, assisted by a fundraising subcommittee of five other members from the PCC.

Our Quantity Surveyor is currently in negotiation with the contractor to arrive at an updated contract sum in the event that we will be able to raise sufficient funding to proceed with a Phase 1 of construction works in September 2024 (Phase 2 to complete the project would be started as soon as we have the funding).

Following receipt of satisfactory AV tenders from local AV installers, we met them on site, and their recommendations differ from those given to the PCC some time ago, so we have applied to the Diocese for a variation to our faculty in order to accommodate their requirements

and recommendations. This variation has been approved by our architects, but we now have to await approval from the Diocese.

## Reordering Fundraising

As of December 2023, the Reordering Fund stands at £316,736. (Please refer to the Financial Statements for further breakdown and details). We are making the following applications for Grants to assist us in the funding of the Reordering project.

### Grant Applications

- **National Lottery Fund:** *Declined* because of overall pressure on their fund
- **Lord Leverhulme's Charitable Trust:** Application made
- **National Churches Trust:** Application made
- **Benefact Trust:** In advanced preparation
- **Garfield Weston:** Application in preparation

Grant aid is not immediate and timescales for decisions vary from body to body from two months to six depending on the number of meetings of their Boards. Additionally, when resources are under pressure their criteria toughen adding to the likelihood of a negative answer.

### Events

At the end of 2023, it was decided to hold a series of monthly fundraising events to help us add vital funds to finance the potential project. The events listed below are aimed at raising awareness with the public of the benefits of securing a legacy of a sustainable place of worship and amenity for the whole community. The events will commence in March 2024. The ideas we have pursued have come from those offered to us by PCC members and these continue to come forward. So, the list is not exhaustive by any means.

March 2024 – *Multiply your Money* (sort out your spare change, double it and donate it)

April 2024 – *Give and Bake Sale*

May 2024 – *Pentecost Service on the Green* with refreshments at the Memorial Hall afterwards

June 2024 – *Open Garden Event* with refreshments and 50/50 raffle – tickets will be sold at £1 per strip. A winning ticket will be drawn, and the proceeds will be split 50/50 between the church and the charity of the winner's choice. We may also offer a prize for the winner themselves.

July 2024 – *Cream Tea* (variation of our Give and Bake Sale, with Strawberries and Cream Teas being offered also, perhaps outdoors if the weather is fine)

August 2024 – *Family Fun Day*

September 2024 – *Promises' Auction*

October 2024 – *Halo and Light Party* (involving the school perhaps)

November 2024 – *Murder Mystery Evening* at the Memorial Hall

December 2024 – *Carols on the Green* with refreshments available in the Memorial Hall

Jan 2025 – *Twelfth Night Twilight Cheese and Wine Evening*

Feb 2025 – *Valentine's Ball* at Brook Hall Hotel (possibly in conjunction with Willaston CofE PTA, to be discussed)

Mar 2025 – *Pound for Pound Collection* – Just give a pound, it soon adds up!

### Corporate donations etc.

Willaston is an affluent village which may not always work positively for us when we ask outside agencies for financial support. However, the fact that Christ Church is reinvesting its funds and efforts into facilities which will have a huge community impact should attract attention from those who do not normally appreciate our wider role in the village.

In our working lives we will have made contacts and know of companies and individuals that regularly make charitable corporate donations.

Additionally, we have a number of people who have had baptisms or weddings with us or who have an historical reason to think kindly of Christ Church or of Willaston. These past connected persons could be contacted and asked to make a donation.

We have already made face to face requests to local businesses / organisations to test the waters and see what we may achieve in the way of local corporate donations. To date we have had pledges of goods that we may use as prizes in raffles.

It is clear that we need to continue our fundraising efforts well into the new year, particularly if the reordering project has to be split into two separate projects – one for the reordering of the main church body and the other for the reordering of the rear rooms to form a second, smaller meeting room.

### Pastoral Care

Some members of our parish are unable to attend church due to sickness or age. Rev. Gordon MacLeod has been available to visit all church members who have requested it, and to celebrate communion with them either at their homes or in hospital. He has also undertaken visits to members of bereaved families. and for this we are extremely grateful.

We have a group of volunteers who continue to keep in touch with those who are sick or unable to get out for any other reason, in order that they may maintain contact with church life. Two members of this group have been able to undertake home communion visits.

### Mission and Evangelism

Our mission at Christ Church continues in helping those in need as a demonstration of our faith. During the year, the church raises money for charities such as *Christian Aid*, and we encourage parishioners to donate to the local Food Bank (a box is in situ at the back of the church for donations). We also collect donations, gifts, and presents for *Wirral Ark*, *Teams4U*, *Save the Family* and the *Children's Society*.

The parish magazine is distributed monthly, with the exception of January & August, to all parishioners who subscribe. Copies are also available in church. The magazine keeps our parishioners informed of important matters concerning our church and community, both locally and more widely. It goes without saying that our very grateful thanks are extended to not only Mrs Susan Schwab, Parish News Editor, who works tirelessly to produce this excellent publication, but also to all the volunteer distributors.

## Ecumenical Relationships

The church is a member of *Neston & District Churches Together*. We take part in a number of joint services for *Christian Unity*, *World Day of Prayer*, *Christian Aid* and *One World Week*. Each year, we hold a joint service with Willaston Methodist Church on The Green at Pentecost and in 2024, this will be combined with a Soup & Hot Dog Lunch in the Memorial Hall after the service for those who wish to attend.

## Fellowship

The church makes every effort to create opportunities to meet with the wider community by way of special services (Christmas, Easter, Ascension Day, Pentecost), as well as organising several events in the church in an effort to encourage people to view the church as a community hub.

In 2023, we held an “organ” and an “organ and guitar” recitals during the past year and thank Mr Daniel Wakefield, Dr Colin Porter, and the internationally famous guitarist Dr Ignacio Lusardi Monteverde for entertaining evenings that were testaments to their experience, skills, and dedication.

Planned for 2024 is an Open Day, inviting members of the wider community to visit us and discuss our plans for reordering. Our programme of planned events will also contribute greatly to ensuring that the church is seen as a focal point within the community, and we hope will be attended not only by regular churchgoers, but also, new faces who have not visited Christ Church before.

Fellowship is also offered by way of groups and gatherings away from the church which encourage people to join us in Christian belief and some people who attend these groups are not regular churchgoers.

## Home Group

Home Group meet every first and third Wednesday evening each month. It is an informal meeting that starts with a cuppa and fellowship together. We explore a bible passage or some verses of scripture, and then talk about it sharing our own thoughts and interpretation. We share our experiences and what we have learned from the passage and how to apply it to our daily lives. We end with a short time of prayer together.

We have spent most of the last year completing the Bible Society Course called Lyfe which was divided up into 6 topics with six sessions each Still Lyfe, Word Lyfe, Spirit Lyfe, Just Lyfe, Real Lyfe, and Whole Lyfe. This was a course that everyone could contribute to and learn from.

Planned for 2024 is a short course that was created by the Diocese of Blackburn *Generosity Gift and Grace*, and we hope to utilise the Chester diocesan course reflecting on the themes for the vision for our parishes.

All are welcome to join us and enjoy a time of fellowship, exploring our Christian faith, the Bible and sharing and learning off each other.

## Men's Group

Men's Group, guided by Fr Lyndon Bannon, continues to meet on the second or third week of each month, alternating between a Tuesday / Thursday evening, with the 'pattern' of meetings being one month a meeting in church, then the next month, a pub/social. However, in order to



appeal to more people, we have introduced a slight change to the meetings in church, with these now beginning with a short 'said' prayer of either Evening Prayer (BCP) or Night Prayer (Compline), lasting around 30 minutes. This aspect of the evening is open to women, too – although we'd never turn anyone away from any aspect of our meetings – including our pub visits!

The group remains 'fully open' to men of all ages, and differing backgrounds, as well as being open to men who don't live in the parish, as well as to men who do not attend church. There is no expectation for people to attend every meeting – simply people come to what they want to, and they will stay home when they don't!

We currently have an email notification list of some 22 members with attendance at each meeting being usually between 8 – 15 men. We are indebted to Alan Roberts, who ensures an email reminder is sent ahead of every meeting.

Last year saw Fr Gordon present his inaugural talk, as well as an excellent night along Dale Street in Liverpool.

Our 2024 programme will see further talks as well as planned pub visits to places such as Heswall, Birkenhead, Chester and Bromborough. We have even planned a Saturday Brewery Visit to Azvex and Carnival Breweries on the Liverpool Waterfront. Details of all Men's Group meetings can be found in a printed programme, which is available in church, or on the church website.

We will take this opportunity to thank Fr Lyndon for his work with Men's Group and for continuing to plan a varied and enjoyable programme of annual activities.

## UpLIFT

UpLIFT stands for *Ladies in Fellowship Together* and is hosted by Claire Bannon. The group is now heading into its ninth year having been formed in May 2016 in order to provide a space for both members and non-members of the church to come together for a time of fellowship and friendship.

The group meets monthly on the second or third Thursday evening and is free to all who wish to come and only charges for tickets or materials as an event requires. UpLIFT is open to all ladies whether they are Christians or not. We usually participate in a very wide variety of events including walking, theatre visits, craft activities and meals together.

Since the last APCM, the group has had a very interesting talk from the Merseyside and Cheshire Blood Bike Service. In May the meeting welcomed the Owl Man and his beautiful owls into the churchyard on a fabulous sunlit evening. This was followed in June by a gorgeous evening walk from Parkgate to the Harp Inn (and back!) The group came together for a shared supper in the church grounds in July and met in Pollard's Inn in August. As autumn came, there was a visit to The Vue cinema at Cheshire Oaks to see '*My Big Fat Greek Wedding 2*' and then spent an evening in church with Rev. Gordon in October. In November, the group went to Chester Cathedral for the turn-on of their *Christmas Tree Festival*. The year closed with the joint Advent Carol service in December.

For 2024. UpLIFT will have a range of activities booked and planned for the full year ahead, details of which can be found on the church website or by speaking to Helen Heath or Claire Bannon.

Thanks are sent to both these ladies for their contributions and help in organising and running the UpLIFT group and providing a varied and enjoyable programme of annual events.

## Mothers' Union

Mothers' Union is a global Christian movement working with people of all faiths and none to develop communities, strengthen families and advocate for change. Our four million members are active in 83 countries and work tirelessly to build a future where everyone thrives. Mothers' Union membership is open to both women AND men who support our Aims and Mission.

### Our Mission is to:

- Strengthen communities.
- Help the most disadvantaged
- Shape how we advocate for the rights of families
- Build supportive, loving relationships
- Develop our own relationship with God

Each year the AGM, kindly hosted by Anita Mitchell, reminds us that we are part of a great worldwide charitable organisation whose branches are found in many churches across the continents. We continue to support MU as it seeks to bring help and support to disadvantaged and vulnerable families here and around the world. On Mary Sumner Day in August, we were pleased to welcome our new Priest-in-Charge, Revd Gordon MacLeod, to our Summer Afternoon Tea which was kindly hosted by Jan. Viv, our Branch Leader, represented our branch at the Annual Gathering in September at York Barbican and at Choral Evensong at York Minster; afterwards the Archbishop of York gave his enthusiastic support and encouragement to the gathered Mothers' Union members from around the UK and beyond. In December, we welcomed MU members from around the Deanery of Wirral South to an Advent Service and Festive Tea. A collection was taken for the MU Christmas Appeal for work in Tanzania. Thanks go to our Branch Committee, our speakers, and all Branch members for their invaluable support during the year. Many thanks go to our Knit and Natter group too for continuing to meet and provide items for local worthy causes.

We thank Viv Ley, who is a tireless branch leader, continuing to involve and evolve Mother's Union as a forward-thinking group supporting the local community.

## Parish Magazine

Our parish magazine continues to be distributed monthly, with the exception of January & August, to all parishioners who subscribe, as a printed magazine. Copies are also available in church. The magazine keeps our parishioners informed of important matters concerning our church and community, both locally and more widely, acting as outreach. We are extremely grateful to the village contributors who make their submissions each month as it keeps many informed and interested in their activities, and contributions are welcomed. Willaston CofE Primary School's excellent use of their space in this year of change to alerting the village of their progress is a good example. Gratitude is also due to all of the volunteer distributors who deliver come rain or shine and to Viv Ley who maintains the organisation of the volunteers and distribution.

## Website and Social Media

The Christ Church website was completely revamped in 2023, given a new domain name and was designed with a view to reaching out to the wider community and those who do not come to church with a fresh, modern approach to worship. The website focuses on integrating the church with the village community and includes details and information about all of our church activities, groups and events held throughout the year. It is hoped to launch the website in 2024 and, in addition to the new website, it is planned to recommence use of social media, in particular Twitter / X and Facebook. These have not been updated or used since 2021 and will again help to reach a wider audience.

## Volunteers

A tireless number of volunteers work exceptionally hard to make the church a vibrant and friendly place of worship and it is hoped that as the church moves forward with its reordering plans, that the church will also become a lively community hub, reaching out to the wider village population.

Particular thanks must be given to the flower arrangers, cleaners, gardeners, hospitality, salespersons, RPG, fundraising group, finance team, social media and web hosts, school foundation governors, the churchwardens, the PCC and last, but by no means least our dedicated and hardworking leaders, Rev. Gordon and Fr. Lyndon, all of whom have worked tirelessly without complaint and without whom, the church would be very much the poorer. The time and skills employed by this marvellous team on a rotated basis ensures the smooth running of the church and all of the services throughout the year.

Special thanks go to Prof David Speechley and Mrs Christine Smith our talented organist and pianist who give of their time and expertise on a weekly basis. We are truly indebted to them both.

## Wardens' Report

From the outset, the churchwardens extend sincere gratitude to all those who have generously dedicated their time and expertise to maintain the appearance of our church and churchyard throughout the year. Whilst it is impossible to name each individual, please know that your contributions have not gone unnoticed. Thank you all for your unwavering support!

Throughout the year, regular Saturday gardening parties have helped to ensure the tidiness of the churchyard. Our strategy includes grassing over graves to facilitate easier access for visitors and maintenance purposes, particularly with regards to mowing.

Special mention must be made of the efforts invested in embellishing the church grounds at Christmas time and throughout the year, including the planting of bulbs and flowers in tubs at the front, as well as the maintenance of the Coronation flower tubs and the War Memorial flower bed, for which we are grateful to *Follyfield Nurseries*.

To maintain the churchyard's upkeep, a gardener has been employed for regular grass cutting during the growing season and trimming of hedges later on to ensure a neat appearance. Plans are underway to hire a replacement gardener soon.

The churchwardens are proposing to repeat the Rogation and Harvest "*Beating the Bounds*" walks held two years' ago in May and October, which foster a sense of community and tradition within the parish.

In February 2023, adverts for the position of a new part-time Vicar were circulated and following interviews in March, the Rev. Gordon MacLeod was invited to take up the post, and

very happily for the church, he accepted. The Rev. Gordon MacLeod is from the Isle of Arran and brings with him a wealth of experience from the Liverpool Diocese, including work with the elderly, vulnerable, and youth.

Special recognition is extended to David Cumberland and Ruth McElroy for their tireless efforts as PCC representatives during the appointment process.

Preparations for the arrival of the Revd Gordon and his wife Tanya were carried out and the churchwardens offer heartfelt thanks to all who assisted in cleaning and decorating and the Vicarage and tidying the garden.

The Licensing Service for the Rev. Gordon MacLeod in July 2023 was a joyous occasion. It was lovely to welcome guests from the parish and diocese, non-churchgoers, business representatives, as well as many from further afield. The churchwardens express gratitude to all involved in its organisation and the subsequent reception, held at Willaston Memorial Hall. It is important of course to record profound indebtedness to Fr Lyndon Bannon and his wife Claire for carrying the church through the protracted period of interregnum, and that for so many years and in so many ways they continue to support us.

The churchwardens also extend grateful thanks to the many visiting clergy and lay readers who helped on occasional Sundays and with baptisms, weddings, and funerals during the vacancy.

Throughout the year, a series of fundraising concerts and events have significantly bolstered our financial reserves. Heartfelt thanks go out to the visiting musicians, as well as to Prof. David Speechley and Mrs. Chris Smith, whose dedication and talent have enriched both our events and regular services.

Bi-monthly Choral Evensong services continue to be a highlight, with gratitude extended to Prof David Speechley for making the arrangements, Dr Colin Porter the visiting organist, and the talented visiting choir for their contributions.

In March 2023, the church faced challenges due to storm damage, necessitating remedial work and scaffolding in the chancel area. Thankfully, the costs were covered by insurance, albeit resulting in some service rearrangements.

A generous donation from a parishioner enabled the clearing and levelling of the overgrown NW area of the churchyard, while Mike Smith and Lindsay Parkes' efforts in replacing roof lighting have enhanced the church's interior.

Correspondence and meetings with the Scout Leadership have continued, with assurances being given by them concerning the demolition of the Scout Hut.

In conclusion, the Churchwardens look forward to the continued growth and prosperity of the church community.

## Parochial Church Council – the P.C.C.

The current PCC comprises of 16 active members and regular meetings are held monthly, usually on the first or second Monday evening of each month. Current Members who have served at any time since 1<sup>st</sup> January 2023 to the date of this report are:

### ***Ex officio members:***

- Priest in Charge: The Revered Gordon MacLeod
- Assistant Priest: The Reverend Lyndon Bannon
- Warden: Mrs Viv Ley Warden and Representative on Deanery Synod
- Warden: Dr Martin Woodhead (Vice Chair)

### ***Elected members (12 plus 2 co-opted):***

- Mrs Helen Heath, Representative on Deanery Synod
- Mrs Ruth McElroy, Representative on Deanery Synod
- Miss Sarah Ayliffe (until December 2023)
- Mr Chris Brown-Bolton
- Prof David Cumberland
- Mr Bill Hardman (co-opted)
- Mr Tim Ley (Treasurer)
- Ms Jane Murray (Secretary) (from April 2023)
- Mrs Jean Porter (from April 2023)
- Mrs Susan Schwab (from April 2023)
- Mr Andy Smith (co-opted)
- Mr Mike Smith
- Prof David Speechley
- Mr Paul Spivey
- Mrs Kath Walker (until April 2023)

## **Structure, governance, and management**

The Parochial Church Council is a corporate body established by the Church of England. The PCC operates under the Parochial Church Council Powers Measure. The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. At Christ Church the membership of the PCC consists of our Priest-in-Charge, Assistant Priest, Churchwardens, and members elected by those members of the congregation are on the electoral roll of the church. The PCC members are responsible for making decisions on all matters of general concern and importance to the parish, including deciding on how the funds of the PCC are to be spent. The full PCC met monthly during the year, with almost full attendance and dealt with all aspects of parish life.

## **Administrative information**

Christ Church is situated on Neston Road, Willaston. It is part of the Diocese of Chester within the Church of England.

The correspondence address is: -

***Christ Church, Neston Road, Willaston, Cheshire CH64 2TL.***

The PCC is a body corporate (PCC Powers Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2011) and a charity currently excepted from registration with the Charity Commission.

Approved by the P.C.C. on 15<sup>th</sup> April 2024 and signed on their behalf by:



**Reverend Gordon MacLeod,  
Priest – In – Charge,  
Christ Church.**