



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

Annual Report 2022
Charity Number 1134259

**The Annual Report on the proceedings of the
Parochial Church Council
and the activities of the Church
To be received by the Annual Parish Meeting on 24 April 2023**

Received and adopted by the PCC on the 13 March 2023

Rev Philip Venables, Chairman

Lyndon Wright & Les Jones, Churchwardens

Legal and Administrative Information

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

We are a Church in the diocese of Blackburn of the Church of England, with two worship centres, the Parish Church (St. John's) and Clayton Brook Community Church. Each worship centre has a group of ministry co-ordinators who are responsible to the Parochial Church Council, which keeps one set of accounts. This Annual Report covers the activities of the Parish during the year 2022, referring to the parish as a whole with its two congregations and including the parish accounts.

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

Correspondence Address: Mr Lyndon Wright
42 Clover Field
Clayton le Woods
Chorley PR6 7RR

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

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

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

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

The Parish of St John the Evangelist PCC Report

The vision of the Church is as follows:

We Seek Revival through: -

Speak Out

Reach Out

Gather in for Christ

During the year 2022 the following served as members of the PCC:

Rev Philip Venables	– Vicar & Chair
Lyndon Wright	– Churchwarden SJ
Les Jones	– Reader & Churchwarden CB
Kathy Bigio	– Reader
Gill Lancaster	– Reader & Diocesan Synod Rep
Deborah Green	– Deputy Churchwarden SJ
Ed Lillie	-Secretary, non-PCC member
Chris Woolham	-Treasurer
Irene Flack	-Deanery Synod Representative
Alison Wynne	-Diocesan Synod Representative
Chris Wynne	-Deanery Synod Representative
Nick Brake	
Stuart Cross	
Chris Dawson	
Anne Harris	- resigned November
Paul Haslem	
Gill Menhennet	
Susan Parkinson	
Gaynor Simons	
Julie Summers	
Val Whittle	
Bryn Williams	

Throughout 2022 the PCC met six times, either in person or on zoom. A co-ordinator report from each church was given at the meetings and a report from the various PCC teams as applicable. The Standing Committee met three times.

Electoral Roll report 2022

After deletions and additions, the total number of people on the 2022 electoral roll was 171
141 resident in the parish and 30 non-resident
134 from St John's and 37 from Clayton Brook

Vicar's Report for 2022

The year began with a **confirmation** group of four adults and two teenagers. It was a delight to have them all together in one group discussing matters of faith and life.

A small group of us met a number of times with a professional consultant to move the **reordering** of St John's forward. It helped to clarify our vision. It also helped to clarify the enormity of the task. Since then we are increasingly clear on what we need in the way of drains and heating—two big issues—even if we are not there yet. I am grateful to the hard work put in by a few. 2023 might yet be the year the work begins.

This year saw the **deaths** of several present or past church members: Barbara Watchhorn, Beryl Wrightson, Anne Owen, Sue Mackintosh, Donna Briggs and John Barnes. Two of these were a long way short of their 'threescore years and ten', which was very sad indeed. On a happier note, we celebrated with great joy the **marriages** of Pete Kemp and Kayla Burslam and also of Rachel Cross and Nick Shelley.

In the spring I attended a diocesan course called 'Launchpad', aimed at helping parishes to get **youth ministry** off the ground. By the end of the year we had a new youth group launched at Clayton Brook and a restructuring of our Tuesday Pathfinder group to cater for young teenagers. This ministry is not easy, but it has been wonderful to see it get off the ground.

In the summer we held our annual women's **garden party** in the Vicarage garden and this year we took advantage of the marquees to hold a men's event—beer and pies. Both were with a guest speaker. It was encouraging to see people gathering again like this. We also put on a magnificent tea at Clayton Brook to celebrate the **Queen's Jubilee**. It, too, was well attended. When, sadly, the Queen died a few months later we had a moving and well attended memorial service at St John's.

It was sad, as we knew it would be, to say goodbye to **Paul**, Katie, Eleanor, Sophie and Charlotte. We had a lovely farewell event for them and look forward to hearing news of their travels in the inflatable kayak. Paul's ministry here was much appreciated and he is much missed. A big thank you, too, to **Alison** in her role as vicar's PA, helping to get a number of things up and running again.

Our support for mission outside the parish continued. We enjoyed visits from both **Alf & Hilary Cooper** and **Alex & Kate Phillips**.

Two new initiatives at Clayton Brook have been a great step forward and encouragement. We had a trial run of **café style services** and have now stuck with these permanently. It has been striking how much we gain by sitting round tables rather than at a safe distance from one another in pews. We also started the **warm welcome** initiative and it has been so good to see people popping in to church on a Monday again. Thank you to all those willing volunteers.

In November I returned to **Uganda** and was privileged to serve again in that vital and fascinating country. I came back an hour or two before **Christmas Adventure**, which was a wonderful event again this year.

Finally, once again this year I am so very grateful for a **team** of wardens & assistants, treasurer and PCC, who have been so supportive and engaged together. I feel very privileged to have them. Likewise our Sundays team of leaders, preachers, musicians and others. A challenge, therefore, for 2023—that less be done by the few and more by the many, and all for the glory of God.

Philip

St John's Churchwarden Report 2022

Our prayer diary started the New Year strongly with varied topics to focus our hearts and minds upon.

Towards the end of January face masks were no longer mandatory however still advisory in shops and church settings.

In March we held a confirmation service for members of our church family which included Ade & Pat Brown, Lily Barton, Eliana Maloney.

We were able to resume serving coffee after the service which has developed over the year and it is so pleasing to see so many of our church family staying and sharing fellowship.

The reordering group has continued to meet and agreed a detailed Project Implementation Document. Bryn has been working hard in identifying heating sources and more recently in exploring the drainage from the downstairs toilet. We pray for a successful outcome in early 2023. I understand that progress seems slow but remain prayerful that work will commence in 2023

We had a great family Maundy Thursday meal at Clayton Brook which was well attended and enjoyed by everyone.

We celebrated Thy Kingdom Come in May with prayer evenings at both churches.

Ladies and Men's evenings took place in June on the vicarage lawn how posh we were.

Marian Fraser was the speaker for the ladies evening which I was informed was very moving and inspirational.

The men had a great evening with pies, pasties and the odd bottle of home brewed beer, together with an interesting speaker.

In July we were able to resume parish visiting off Moss Lane. The weather was kind to us and I know the feedback was positive and encouraging for those involved.

Sundays in August saw an explosion of different food items which were served after the services, what a joy.

On the 8th of September the country was in mourning for the death of our beloved Queen Elizabeth. The tributes and in particular the coverage on television was spectacular and fitting for our loyal Monarch.

Church family life continued as later in the month we had a social evening at the Halfway House.

Our Harvest Festival provided us with an abundance of produce going to Living waters and gift envelopes to Open Doors.

We have maintained a strong provision of food items each week in continuing support of Living Waters, thanks to everyone for their contribution.

In November we were aware of Interviews for the vacancy left by Bishop Julian. We await news of an appointment in January

Christmas Adventure arrived once more towards the end of November. Nick, Jen and the team provided a successful afternoon which was enjoyed by everyone, our numbers in excess of 250.

December was consumed with Christmas services allowing both Church Schools and family to enjoy fellowship with one another.

Our Carol Service was again a joyous celebration of song and scripture followed by a warm drink of mulled wine.

Operation Christmas Child was steered once again by Gill Lancaster and we were able to send 111 boxes in support of Samaritans Purse International Relief.

Our Crib Service on Christmas Eve was buoyant with families, many of the children in suitable costumes which only added to the sense of family.

As this will be my last Church warden report, can I take this opportunity to say, it has been a joy and privilege to serve. I will continue to enjoy fellowship with my Church Family and offer support whenever needed.

- Lyndon Wright, Church Warden

Clayton Brook Churchwarden Report 2022

We started 2022 with a strong desire to encourage people to return to church services and groups in the aftermath of the pandemic. God continually blessed us as we opened up more and more for outreach events. We held 2 prayer breakfasts during the year, with speakers from The Samaritans and Chorley Street Pastors. We support both of these organisations as part of our Mission support. They both gave us an insight into what is going on in our communities, things that surprised and shocked us. We welcomed new faces to our weekly Growth Group as we studied the sermon series throughout the year.

On 28th February we met to pray for the war in Ukraine, to seek God's protection for the terrified civilians and an end to the hostilities. We met every day to pray until Easter and then we continued to meet on Monday and Friday mornings. In May, a Ukrainian family, escaping the conflict, came to live in the home of a church family. They opened their home to provide a place of comfort and safety. They shared their strong faith with us and taught us a lot about trusting God in every situation. During March we learned that Chorley Street Pastors planned to restart their patrol on Clayton Brook after many years absence, due to a lack of volunteers. This is an amazing outreach and we support them by meeting in church before the patrol starts to pray for divine appointments and protection.

On Maundy Thursday our two churches came together to share a meal and fellowship together.

In July we visited a number of streets on the estate. We met a lot of people and talked to them about their lives and invited them to join us on Sunday mornings. We told them about the café style church we had started, deciding to continue it through the summer months. It was so successful that we have adopted this style of service going forward.

Our children's Sunday group, King's Kids, has grown and God has provided amazing leaders to teach the children. A new young people's group was launched in November, CY, who meet on Tuesday teatime to enjoy a meal, fun and bible reading.

With the increase in energy and food costs we responded by opening the church to our community every Monday from early November. Warm Welcome provides a warm space and a listening ear along with free food and drink. We have been blessed with old and new friends and hope to continue this group throughout 2023. I thank the Lord for his provision of volunteers from both churches that has allowed us to maintain this service throughout the winter and, hopefully, into the summer months too.

After years of prayer we received an answer! In December we welcomed teachers and children from Clayton Brook School into church for sessions on the Advent Wreath (Reception class), Why do you follow God? (Year 3) and two Christmas Services for KS2 children. This was a wonderful celebration for everyone and we thank God for his answer to our prayers

As we reflect on 2022 we know that God has guided our plans. We pray that He will guide us as we serve him at Clayton Brook Community Church during 2023.

- Les Jones & Gill Menhennet

Deanery Synod Report 2022

I have only been a member of the Deanery Synod since our church's last AGM, so cannot report on earlier events in 2022, but this is what I can tell people about the events I attended. On 15th July there was a social event, a barbecue, held at St Laurence's Rectory which I attended in order to get to know a few people and introduce myself as a new synod member. This was a very relaxed time, with lots of good conversation, good food and even passably good weather!

4th October 2022 – Chorley Deanery Synod Meeting

The meeting was held at All Saints' Church in Chorley where Archdeacon Mark explained to us about The Vine community, preaching from John 15 about how vines need to be pruned to grow better and stronger. We were challenged to 'prune' ourselves, maybe by changing a few habits to make more time for God. We also need to have strong roots to grow successfully; the root is prayer and abiding in The Lord.

The main keywords to describe the Vine community are Abiding, Growing and Bearing Fruit.

Members are invited to make some changes or commitments, between themselves and God, in order to abide, grow and bear fruit. The community is there to support us but does not keep any records of what we have vowed privately with The Lord. The website is below for anyone who is interested:

<https://www.blackburn.anglican.org/the-vine-community-main-homepage>

Mike Print then talked about the Deanery Mission scheduled for 5th – 7th May 2023 [which will be the Coronation weekend].

We then heard from Rosemary Lyon, who had been to the General Synod, about the 'net zero' target for carbon emissions which the Church is trying to implement. We were reminded that, to be a member of a PCC a person needs to be a communicant church member and on the electoral roll, and finally told there is support for churches wanting to introduce contactless giving.

The meeting was concluded by Father Neil of St Laurence's, the Area Dean, with comments about how we were able to fully celebrate Christmas this year, although rising fuel prices, etc, may pose different challenges.

Finally, Amy Bland and Jordan Bentliff led us in Compline.

- Irene Flack

St John's Junior Church Report 2022

Junior Church

2022 began with a large Junior church group which we soon able to split into JC and bubbles. We are so grateful for all the leaders and helpers who help to run these groups and who give of their time so sacrificially.

As before the bible story is taught as engagingly as possible with the children often participating in reading different parts or taking part in a drama. The message is consolidated with questions, prayer and a related activity.

Bubbles continues in the basement. Again we use props and visual aids so that the children can take an active part in the lesson. We enjoy singing simple worship songs together and try to incorporate a messy activity at some stage of the session. Our continuing desire is to introduce all the children to our great and awesome God and encourage each child to trust Jesus for the forgiveness of their sins and for the gift of eternal life.

Pathfinders

The Sunday Pathfinder group continues in the vicarage 3 weeks out of 4. We open the bible to engage with the chosen passage and try to keep the young people on topic (!) as a lively discussion follows.

The Tuesday after school Pathfinder club continues to be well attended with the same format of fun, food and fellowship. In October we re-jigged the timetable dividing the young people into 2 groups of years 6-7, and 8-9 for their bible discussion while sitting down for tea altogether at 5pm. This is a rewarding ministry and we crave your prayers for all the young people and children in each of the groups. We pray that each one grows in faith and in faithfulness to Jesus.

Thanks be to God for his inexpressible gift.

- Caroline Venables

Clayton Brook Junior Church Report 2022

We commenced the year with Sunday Kings Kids in full swing as we left Covid and lockdowns behind.

Our teaching plan continued with The Life of Christ up until the summer break, and from September onwards we went back into the Old Testament, teaching Creation and then continuing with some of the early Genesis lessons.

We continued to run only one combined age Kings Kids group, primarily because we sadly said goodbye to a number of leaders /teachers across the year.

Our numbers have been similar to previous years, averaging 12 each week.

Highlights of our year included a presentation of our teaching and work / crafts to the adult church, our ongoing sponsorship and contact with Justine from Ghana (through Compassion) and ending the year with a well attended Christmas party.

We were delighted to commence a new group in November, named CY, aimed at School Year 6 and upwards. We have a wonderful group of 10, supported by a fantastic team of leaders. Each Tuesday we provide dinner, bible teaching and games, and we look forward to seeing faith grow and develop.

Also in November we were able to host a Connect evening for a group of local churches youth.

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

- Stuart Cross

Worship group St John's 2022

The Worship Team meet every Wednesday in church to practise the songs for each Sunday. This year we embarked on a new venture, "Easter Praise" which was similar to the Christmas Carol Service format. The Worship Team led the music and Carolyn did a wonderful job conducting the choir again. We have also welcomed some extra singers when needed which is a great help, especially during holidays/illness etc. We finished the year with our usual Christmas Carol Service which was again a great success with Carolyn leading the choir and Stewart playing the trumpet with Peter on the Organ. After the service, Mulled Wine and Mince Pies were enjoyed by all. We pray that as we meet together each week, we will "Sing and make music in our hearts to the Lord giving thanks to Him".

Worship group Clayton Brook 2022

The start of the new year saw a flautist joining our dedicated team of musicians which comprises of 2 guitars, an accordion, drums, keyboard and vocalists. We continue to meet faithfully each week to practice a mix of modern and traditional songs ready for the Sunday morning service, we've also enjoyed teaching the congregation 5 new songs this year.

We've also introduced a new resource to the congregation 'Worship Lyric Video' which we play whilst we are having tea & coffee before the morning service begins.

During the year we have continued to celebrate members birthdays with our special birthday song and during the summer we had the privilege of playing and singing at a members wedding held at St Johns. It was such a wonderful occasion to be a part of.

Psalm 92 reads, It is good to praise the Lord and make music to your name, O Most High, proclaiming your love in the morning and your faithfulness at night. As a team we pray that we are encouraging our congregation to come together to do just that; sing the truths of our amazing God.

St John's – Prayer Report 2022

During the year intercessions were offered each Sunday for people in church and those watching on line. Thank you to everyone who does this important ministry. The prayer chain remains faithfully active for urgent or emergency prayers. An increasing number of prayers, over 60, have been requested during the year. Thank you to every member who prays so fervently. Tuesday evening parish prayer meetings were held once a month in church and then in the Vicarage. Small prayer groups continued to meet regularly, in person or by zoom. The church prayer diary is continuing to be produced monthly. which contains prayer suggestions for both churches for people involved in services, groups, meetings, activities, events, training courses, missions we support, the re-ordering of St John's church, sick & bereaved, care homes & housebound, clergy, churchwardens, ALMs, our bishops and the Diocesan Vision prayer. This ensures everything and everyone is covered in prayer. The prayer diary was emailed out to our congregations and with copies also available in church.

Clayton Brook Church – Prayer Report 2022

At Clayton Brook we are a praying church. Ever since the Ukraine war began we have been praying for the people in that country and their nation. To begin we met every morning Monday to Friday for one hour. We now have carried on Monday and Friday mornings for one hour. We also have a WhatsApp group where we can put needs on and pray for situations as they arise each day. This is not just for people in our church but other people and situations as they arise. We have the Prayer Chain also that a lot of us are on as well. I have a prayer group that meet for an hour each week, again for all people not just Church people to be prayed for but any needs as they arise. As prayer co-ordinator I feel it is important to be able to gather together, and pray for each other when the needs arise. Help us Lord to keep praying the needs of others in Jesus's name Amen,

- Julie Summers

St John's – Pastoral Team 2022

We don't have a pastoral team as such, at the moment, though it would be great gain to have one. Many are involved in pastoral care, however, as we should be. It is possible that some people get missed, but we endeavour to ensure that that is not the case.

Clayton Brook Church – Pastoral Team 2022

The Pastoral Team met on 4 occasions during 2022 (21 January, 8 March, 26 April, 18 October) to appraise and update the pastoral needs of the congregation. As a result FG was welcomed into the Pastoral team to specifically focus on the needs of the unaccompanied children in church. Since the Covid restrictions were lifted we have been thrilled to welcome new visitors to church and new volunteers to serve on Sundays. We have been focused daily on being familiar with our church family members' situations through the Pastoral team WhatsApp Group and have provided prompt pastoral care according to needs, eg. Prayer, visits, meal train, encouraging words and messages, shopping, lifts and general loving support. Since the McColl's store was taken over by Morrisons Daily, we could no longer have our mini booklet stall in the store but since reaching out pastorally to our community through our Warm Welcome scheme, we have made friendships with our visitors and plan to continue contact with the friends made. Our other key priority in 2022 was for each other so have been focusing on our own needs as a team, encouraging and praying for each other and caring for each other during periods of sickness. This remains a priority for the coming year. We thank God for his provision and care throughout 2022 and look forward to another year of providing pastoral care with his loving guidance.

- Gill Wright

Fabric & Finance 2022

We do not now have a fabric & finance team, but churchwardens and coordinators at both churches keep a good eye on the buildings and most jobs are now up to date - Philip

Clayton Brook Community Church Fabric report 2022.

This year was our Church of England quinquennial building inspection. This included the five yearly wiring inspection, also the annual portable appliance test (PAT).

I am pleased to say that the building is in good order. The few areas which need repair or update are in the repairs book for this coming year 2023.

The grounds are kept in very good order by our contracted groundsman who also repairs the potholes each year. During the summer a team of volunteers cut the long hedge down to 1 meter. Well done and thank you team. We also give thanks to a church family who removed all the tree trunks and branches etc. This help from church families saved quite a lot of money for us. Thank you again.

As the building is used by different community groups, we are always keeping a watchful eye on toilet, drains, loose tiles etc. We endeavour to keep the building in good condition. This allows the users of Clayton Brook Community Church to be safe to enjoy their visits to our church.

-- Leslie Jones. & Gillian Menhennet, Clayton Brook Church Wardens

Communications 2022

For the past few years we have not had a functioning team (although lots of good communication does happen!). It would be a great advantage to have one, so please speak up if you are interested.

Social & Outreach Team 2022

We met five times in the year. The activities we discussed and/or planned are mentioned in my vicar's report, so I won't repeat the information here.

Mission Team Report 2022

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

In January Brian Jones gave a talk on the work of Street Pastors in the 9:30am service, and did the same at Clayton Brook at the 11am service in March. A prayer breakfast held in March with Tracy Berry speaking on the work of Operation Christmas Child. A second prayer breakfast was held in November with Brian Jones talking about the work of Street Pastors with input from Irene Flack. This year monetary harvest donations were directed to Open Doors, and food donations were taken to Living Waters food bank. In October/November we took part in Operation Christmas Child (OCC) supplying 111 shoeboxes (including those online) to children in Central Asia (our current all time record!), and Clayton Brook was used as a processing depot for OCC once again for one week in November with volunteers helping from both churches. In November we held services at each church dedicated to World Mission with Philip Venables preaching at both services, and to the Suffering Church with Gill Lancaster preaching at both services. During the services this year we held focus spots on the work of the mission team and mission fund, and showed video clips on the work of Open Doors, Crosslinks (series of 6 video clips), prison ministry during National Prisons week and Operation Christmas Child. We had visits from CMS partners Alf and Hilary (Chile) in June, and Crosslinks partners Alex and Kate Phillips (Asia) in July, each preaching at both churches, and Mark Simpson (Wellfield Church) attended a prayer meeting in July.

The mission team met twice during the year. In January we updated our Diary of Mission Team events (held between 2015-2021 – available upon request) overviewing all the activities that had taken place over the past 6 years. Gill Lancaster wrote Gazette articles to highlight mission team activities and the mission fund in February, and gave her annual demo on how to pack a shoebox in October. Kathy Bigio provided articles for the launch of OCC and the harvest appeal in October, and a feature highlighting Clayton Brook as an OCC processing centre with photos in December. David Barlow continued writing articles for the gazette each month highlighting the plight of persecuted Christians worldwide, and throughout the year newsletters from our overseas partners were published in the Gazette.

During the year we had five applications to the Mission Fund and gave £200 to International Aid for Ukraine, £550 to Samaritan's Purse for Ukraine Relief Fund, £300 to Crosslinks for Alex and Kate, £300 for Philip's Ugandan mission trip, and £200 to Street Pastor work. We also made year end donations of £650 to Living waters food bank, £500 to Open doors, and

£500 to Barnabas Fund. Susan Parkinson continued to collect stamps for the Leprosy mission. Sue Lillie continued to display mission information on the noticeboard at Clayton Brook.

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

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

Beehive Report 2022

Numbers at the Beehive have been pretty steady between 20 and 35 children with their parents/grandparents/carers each week. We now have 3 extra helpers who just come to help without children which is greatly appreciated. We have a group of very willing and committed Mums/Grandparents who help run the Beehive each week.

Highlights of the year were:-

- APRIL Easter Party with various crafts and this year we gave every child an Easter Story Book
- JUNE We had a special Jubilee Celebration with a picnic.
- JULY We had a wonderful trip to Windmill Farm which was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone. We also had our Leavers Party this month.
- OCTOBER We had a special Harvest Morning with Party Food.
- DECEMBER We had our usual Nativity Play which was enjoyed by all and we finished the year with our Christmas Party when every child got a book from Father Christmas.

In November we increased the price of our Sessions to £3 a week in order to cover the rent for the room which had previously been increased.

God has richly blessed us this year and provided for all our needs, Praise His Name!

Parish Gazette 2022

The gazette continues to maintain its content and quality and produces 14 or more A4 pages per issue. It is a good source of communication and information for the parish. The gazette was emailed out to over 120 people each month. These copies have been produced in colour and are greatly appreciated by many. Several large print copies are produced each month for church members who prefer larger print. For those who are not on email copies are distributed either by post or by pushing through letterboxes. Thank you to Susan Parkinson for helping with this task. The Parish Gazette is also available on the church website and there are a few printed copies in church each month. Thank you to everyone who has contributed articles throughout the year.

Safeguarding Report 2022

The Safeguarding Team which oversees safeguarding policy and practice within the parish met May 2022

The team consisted of the Vicar, Curate, two Safeguarding Children's Champions, Adult Safeguarding Champion, the Disclosure and Barring Service Administrator and the Parish Safeguarding Officer.

The team's terms of reference remain as follows:

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

In May the Safeguarding Team revised the safeguarding self-audit.

1. Safeguarding Policy

It was agreed that as there were no changes to the Diocesan Safeguarding Policy the PCC will continue with the current Parish policy for a further 12 months.

2. Risk Assessments

Activities in both worship centres reviewed risk assessments, work continues to centralise documents in SharePoint.

3. Electronic communications/Internet policy

Ongoing.

Safeguarding Officer attended September PCC. Promoting completion of safeguarding training for PCC members, confirming no changes to safeguarding policy for another year.

St John's and Clayton Brook have registered for the Diocese of Blackburn Safeguarding Dashboard and Hub. This will be a central register helping to manage safer recruitment and people management for all our training requirements.

Treasurers Report – 2022

Thank you to all those who have contributed financially over the past year, particularly in light of the cost-of-living crisis that we currently face. The PCC is especially grateful to those people giving regularly either via the Parish Giving Scheme, by standing order or envelope, with a substantial number also gift aiding their donation. This allows us to claim an additional 25% from the HMRC (over £20,000 in 2022) which goes a long way to pay our bills. Thanks to everyone who does gift aid their offerings and donations and to Marion Barlow, for her very efficient work in making the claims.

Unrestricted Income

Planned giving reduced by 3.9% over 2022, however, total giving of £95,211 was up by over 11% compared to 2021. As in previous years over 98% of our income comes from our congregation in the form of weekly giving, donations and gift aid.

We had budgeted a deficit of almost £13,000 in 2022; however, thanks to careful management of expenditure and an incredibly generous response to the sermon series on the grace of giving, we ended the year with a small surplus of £3,201. This leaves us with unrestricted reserves of £29,913 at 31 December 2022.

The PCC have agreed a deficit budget for 2023 of some £11,700 which would leave unrestricted reserves of around £18,200 at 31 December 2023.

We anticipate that finance will continue to be a test of our faith. However, we worship a generous God and praise Him and our congregation as we have always been able to pay our bills.

Expenditure

The largest areas of expense were again:

- Our Parish Share to the Diocese of £71,834 (2021: £69,914). The Parish Share paid for Philip and Paul, together with support for ministry in many of the more deprived areas of the Diocese.
- Utilities and services were £18,023 (2021: £19,572) covering electricity, gas, oil, water, Council Tax, and insurance. Steps were taken last year to secure gas and electricity supply at prices before the large increases which we have seen over the past year.
- Repairs at Clayton Brook were minimal again this year, with major expenditure at St Johns, noted below.
- Ministry and outreach spend was £3,770 (2021: £2,739).
- Finally, even in these challenging times, the church remains committed to giving 10% of its unrestricted income to charity which this year amounted to £11,600 (2020 £10,100).

Whilst the refurbishment work at St Johns was delayed, a further £9,394 (2020: £62,448) was spent on the major repair to the church west wall, addressing the dry rot in the roof, and remedial roof works following the Quinquennial inspection. This leaves £408,982 (2021: £410,722) in the restricted St Johns Refurbishment Fund. Thank you to those who continue to give to this Fund.

During the year the Love Fund continued to help people in the parish who were suffering hardship; thank you to those who contributed £1,636 during the year. £2,075 was distributed to help people in need, leaving a balance of £2,793 (2021 £3,232) at the year end. Other restricted funds amounted to £9,169 at the year end, the largest balance, £3,249, relating to the Energy Cost Support Grant which was distributed to all parishes by the Blackburn Diocesan Board of Finance from the national Church.