**St Aidan’s Church**

**Skelmanthorpe**

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**Annual Report & Financial Review for year**

**ending 31st December 2024**

The Parish Church of St Aidan is situated on Radcliffe Street, Skelmanthorpe HD8 9AF within the Deanery of Kirkburton and Almondbury, of the Diocese of Leeds, within the Church of England

[**www.staidanschurch-skelmanthorpe.org.uk**](http://www.staidanschurch-skelmanthorpe.org.uk)

**Facebook: St Aidan’s Church, Skelmanthorpe**

**Parochial Church Council** (**PCC)**

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representative Rules.

St Aidan’s PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the Priest- in- Charge (Vacancy) in promoting the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, social, and ecumenical. It also has maintenance responsibilities for the Church building.

The PCC is a charity excepted from registration with the Charity Commission.

All Church attendees are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC

**Committee members**

Revd Evelyne Barrow (Associate Priest), Revd Canon Joyce Jones (Associate Priest)

Trevor Langley & Carole Senior (Churchwardens + Deanery Synod)

Gary Firth (Deanery Synod)

Geoff Wrigglesworth, Mike Townsend, Ruth Sherrin, Jackie and Russ Clarkson and Janice Holmes

a) Chair – Trevor Langley – Churchwarden (Parish Vacancy)

b) Vice Chair – Carole Senior

c) Treasurer – Geoff Wrigglesworth

d) Secretary – Ruth Sherrin

e) Standing Committee - Revd Evelyne Barrow, Revd Canon Joyce Jones, Trevor Langley, Carole Senior, Geoff Wrigglesworth, Ruth Sherrin

e) Electoral roll Officer – Ruth Sherrin

**Other Officer posts**

Parish Giving Officer – Trevor Langley

Data controller, Compliance Officer and Disability Officer – Carole Senior

Safeguarding Officer – Janice Holmes

Environmental Officer – Mike Townsend (Resigned position due to ill health December)

Health and Safety Officer –Steve Razzell (appointed)

**PCC Report**

We have been so blessed during yet another year of vacancy to have The Revd Canon Joyce Jones as an Associate Priest here at St Aidan’s. She has played a major role in the delivery of ministry, taken on the job of organising the worship rota for the three parishes (Scissett, Clayton West and Skelmanthorpe), as well as leading worship. Joyce has actively helped to maintain our links with our church school and local residential and care homes; besides keeping us in line at PCC meetings. We are grateful that we are a far cry from the norm for parishes in vacancy. Between them Joyce, Revd Sarah Farrimond, our other Associate Priest Revd Evelyne Barrow, Karen Campbell (an ordained member of our congregation) and Pamela Fisher our Occasional Preacher have kept us afloat.

In October it was exciting to interview three strong candidates for the vacant post here in the parish and we look forward to 2025 when The Revd Katrina Robinson-Brown will be licenced and installed as our new Priest in Charge

Church surveyor David Barker practising from AHR, Huddersfield undertook a Quinquennial inspection for us in the autumn. He was impressed that the church roof was now totally watertight following the relining with lead of the roof gulley by A B Rooftech. The lead has been marked with Selecta DNA just in case it gets stolen! His report highlighted various minor defects which we will need to tackle over time but in general the church building is in a good state of repair. Internally the walls need attention and decorating.

In January Equinox Tree Services surveyed and maintained the trees in our grounds

The replacement electric heating has proved disappointing and very expensive to run but there are ongoing discussions in the hope that we can find a solution to this chilly problem.

The private church grounds have looked superb thanks to the loving care of Mike Townsend, but due to health issues Mike has had to resign from his post as Environment Officer. In 2025 members from the village U3A gardening club plus members from the congregation will care for the gardens. The lawns will continue to be mown by Jonathan Woodcock (The Garden Barber)

A Faculty to place a seat in memory of Ken and Margaret Fisher was granted. The rather splendid seat donated by their family was positioned in the memorial garden in the spring. The church memorial book has been repaired and updated. A replacement Purple Altar cloth purchased. Organisations run by the state could apply for a portrait of King Charles 111 following his coronation and the portrait much larger than we expected eventually arrived for display in the church

Our Treasurer, Safeguarding Officer and Synod representatives report regularly to the PCC, (their reports are filed separately). Church of England Policies are regularly reviewed and implemented.

You will see from the school report that strong links continue with the church. The PCC organised a Harvest Experience which saw 150 children plus staff visit us over 2 days.

Socially we have enjoyed ‘Murder Mystery’ and ‘Call My Bluff’ evenings and a ‘thank you’ tea party held in June for the volunteers from the charity shop was a piece of cake!

The monthly coffee morning continues to attract an average of 80 folk who join with us for hot drinks and homemade cakes. The church buzzes with lively chatter as friends and neighbours spend an hour or so catching up with the news and views of the day. This relaxed occasion would not be possible without lots of behind the scenes organisation and we as a PCC wish in particular to thank Pat and John Britton plus all of our unsung coffee morning movers and shakers.

The charitable work of the church continued with support given to the Barnsley Women’s Refuge; Christian Aid; The British Legion; The Welcome Centre; Shelter; The Church Army; Yorkshire Air Ambulance; Community Pantry, The Children’s Society and this year we were able to donate toys to the Yorkshire Aid Convoy heading for Ukraine

The PCC were invited to partake in a Barnabas Missional Investment project called Re-Weave, which had been especially prepared for the Eastern section of the Almondbury and Kirkburton Deanery. A subcommittee was formed to engage with the programme which will in time help us as a church to become more confident in our mission, leadership, future, and witness in a rapidly changing world, and will result in a parish system revitalised for mission.

**Ruth Sherrin**

**Worship**

St Aidan’s has continued to celebrate Holy Communion each Sunday at 10.00 with an all age service on the fourth Sunday. Worship has been led by myself, Revd Evelyne Barrow, Revd Karen Campbell and Revd Sarah Farrimond in the absence of an incumbent. We are grateful to Jude for playing the organ or keyboard at some these services, and to those who have provided recorded music when no in person organist is available, as well as visual support. Congregants from St Aidan’s have continued to be invited to join with Clayton West and Scissett each Tuesday morning at 9.15 for a mid-week Eucharist over Zoom which became Morning Prayer from Autumn 2024.

We have continued joint events with the Methodist Church starting with the annual Covenant Service and then the Remembrance Day Service, with the Brass Band in church, as well as services at Pentecost and the end of August, and Carols at the Triangle.

At Easter congregants were invited to Holy Week evening meditations at Clayton West. A Tenebrae Service was held on Maundy Thursday and a Stations of the Cross service on Good Friday.

An All Souls Service was held at the end of October to remember those who had died, and was attended by several bereaved families.

Messy Church has continued to offer worship to adults and children once a month.

Services have been held regularly at Longroyds and Pilling House and Home Communicants are visited on a monthly basis.

Christingle was celebrated in church this year with children from the school attending and good relationships continue to grow with school. School services to celebrate Easter and Harvest and to send off school leavers were held in church.

Following the success of the nativity in church last year, this was repeated with a new donkey, following the death of Jeremiah, and was well attended and much appreciated. The school choir were part of the Carols by Candlelight service. A Midnight Communion was held on Christmas Eve and an All Age Communion on Christmas Day.

There have been five infant baptisms, one baptism of a child 5-10, and one adult baptism this year. There has been one wedding and thirteen funerals this year. Nine of the funerals were held in church and four at a crematorium only. There were two burials of ashes with no service in church.

**Revd Canon Joyce Jones**

**Financial Review**

The detailed financial position for the year to 31st December 2024 is set out in the annual financial statements. Our financial position remains healthy.

The charity shop continued to contribute considerably to the General Fund and other receipts were at a similar level to the previous year. Our coffee mornings continue to be a success and thanks to Russell for increasing the membership of the monthly draw. A garden seat for the memorial garden was donated by the Fisher family in memory of Ken and Margaret. A grant was received from the Liberal organisation and used to enhance the heating controls.

Charitable donations included £600 to the Children’s Society and £475 to Christian Aid. £20000 was paid to the diocese for our Parish Share. Electricity costs remained high for our heating and lighting but a saving was made on our insurance premium this year as we changed our insurer from Ecclesiastical to Aviva through Trinitas.

A Quinquennial inspection was undertaken this year giving a reasonable state of health of the building and no major repair works recommended. Repair costs included tree survey and pruning £720, various electrical repairs £1150 and heating controls £440. Other expenses included £676 for a new altar frontal.

After transferring £10000 to the New Project Fund the balance on the General Fund stands at £7691.

Following the installation of the new electrical heating system The New Project Fund will go towards the costs of re-plastering and decoration of the church building and any further enhancement required to heating the church. Before this work could commence major roof repairs costing £7800 were carried out to stop water ingress in the roof valley. The fund balance stands at £25657.

**Geoff Wrigglesworth**

**Charity Shop**

The charity shop has had an excellent year, not only financially but socially. We raised funds for the church and made donations to three charities of £500 each, The Welcome Centre, Kirkwood Hospice and Yorkshire Aid Convoy. We held a very successful afternoon tea party in church for our volunteers, without whom the running of the shop would not be possible. Our willing “band” turn out whatever the weather for their “shift”. Sometimes it has been quite daunting when faced with large amounts of donations but we continue to be grateful that clothes, bric-a-brac etc keep rolling in. We have sent certain items to auction and Dave Millman has removed bric-a-brac items we have been unable to sell, some of which have gone to other charities. We have a regular rag man who buys unsold stock and surplus books are bought by World of Books.

A big thank you to everyone who has contributed their time and effort. As always, if anyone would like to help, please don’t hesitate to volunteer.

**Judith Wrigglesworth**

**Friends of St Aidan’s Church Monthly Draw**

At the beginning of 2024, we had 92 members in our Fund Raising Scheme.  By 31st December 2024, we had 100 members.  The Scheme has been in place for several years now and is a solid provider of Church funding.

There are quite a number of subscribers who contribute, but who do not attend church.  We welcome all those who support us; after all, it is a church for the community, and our village.

The Accounts show a net contribution to church funds of £750.

The Scheme itself raised £1170 and paid out in monthly cash prizes the sum of £420.   We are very grateful to those who continually support us in our aim to provide a place for prayer, worship and friendship in our village.

**Jackie and Russ Clarkson**

**Safeguarding**

The PCC have reviewed and adopted the following policies: -

· Promoting a Safer Church, House of Bishops – 2017, Safeguarding Policy for children, Young People and adults.

· St Aidan’s Safeguarding Policy and Summary. Our Safeguarding Policy, together with information on whom to contact if you suspect or are a victim of abuse is on our website and also displayed within the church.

· Policy for The Recruitment of ex-offenders.

Members of the PCC and Churchwardens are required to obtain the Basic Safeguarding Awareness certificate as well as the Safeguarding Foundations certificate. From the 01.01.25 the Raising Awareness of Domestic Abuse Training certificate is recommended for PCC members and is required for Churchwardens.

All members of the PCC and the Churchwardens have obtained the Basic Safeguarding Awareness certificate and the Safeguarding Foundations certificate and the Raising Awareness of Domestic Abuse Training certificate.

Volunteers in a role which involves work with children, young people or vulnerable adults are required to obtain the Basic Safeguarding Awareness certificate as well as the Safeguarding Foundations certificate.

All volunteers working with children, young people or vulnerable adults have obtained the Basic Safeguarding Awareness certificate and the Safeguarding Foundations certificate.

As Parish Safeguarding Officer I have completed all the training required for this role albeit my Leadership course must be refreshed before August 2025.

Safeguarding training courses including Basic awareness, Foundations and Leadership should be refreshed every three years. Additional pathways like Safer recruitment and Domestic Abuse Awareness also require refresher training on a three-yearly cycle. Refresher learning is required to keep knowledge and skills up to date.

As Parish Safeguarding Officer it is my responsibility to ensure that training is monitored and kept up to date.

Safeguarding is a standing item on our monthly PCC meetings and a full action plan is sent out prior to the monthly PCC meeting to aid discussion and approval of the PCC. A summary of outstanding actions to update the PCC is also provided.

The Parish Safeguarding Dashboard is a useful tool to promote Safeguarding to PCC members.

The care and protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults involved in Church activities is the responsibility of the whole Church.

Along with thousands of churches from across the UK, St Aidan’s Church Skelmanthorpe took part in marking Safeguarding Sunday 2024 together.

**Janice Holmes**

**2024 Electoral Roll**

**Persons Registered 92**

Households 69

Non resident 19

Living in parish 73

Male 30

Female 62

In 2025 a new roll for the parish will be prepared

**Ruth Sherrin**

**Synod**

(The Huddersfield, Almondbury and Kirkburton Deanery)

Meetings were held on zoom, at Armitage Bridge Church and Huddersfield Parish Church in January, April, July and September. The January meeting set the tone for the year, with a discussion on the future of the Deaneries. Many issues were brought up and suggestions for encouraging each other within the parishes. We were asked to return to the next meeting and explain what the number one key issue was for our PCC and also with a piece of good news of what was happening.

The April Meeting was chaired by + Smitha, who spoke enthusiastically about our area and her hopes for mission. We broke into groups to discuss challenges in the parishes and report back. We broke into groups again and were asked to discuss good things that were happening. This was a revelation, encouragement and challenge to all of us.

At the July meeting, Revd. Jude Smith spoke about Barnabas and Church revitalisation. This is an initiative to give congregations confidence to assist them to succeed in their missions plans and the self-help tool Compass was to be rolled out in October.

The Revd. Canon Debbie Plummer came to speak about climate change and becoming an eco church at the September meeting

Throughout the year we received updates from Diocesan and General Synod. We were reminded that we could apply for laity vacancies or vote for these, as appropriate. Use of the Common Cup was re-emphasised and the compliance with Canon Law.

Huddersfield held a prayer walk and visited every church in the deanery. All in all there has been a note of optimism and a desire to move forward in all our parishes.

**Carole Senior**

**Fabric, Ornaments and Furnishings - 2024 Log Book**

January

* Gas supply disconnected by British Gas

February

* Fire extinguishers checked by Firesolve.
* Five yearly electrical checks undertaken by JT Electricals.
* Gas supply capped off outside church.
* Emergency lighting checked and tested by JT Electricals

March

* Fire extinguisher training provided by Firesolve to three PCC members.
* Meeting held with Dunphy’s regarding the heating system.

April

* Vestry and Sacristy reordered.

May

* Radiator in the vestry swapped with the radiator in the kitchen. Work completed by Dunphy’s at no cost.

June

* Valley gutter lead replaced by A B Rooftech.
* Electrical issues arising from the five yearly inspection resolved by JT Electrical.
* Donated Memorial bench installed in the memorial garden.

July

* Purple altar front ordered and obtained from J&M Sewing.

October

* Quinquennial inspection by David Barker

November

* Memorial book upgraded and updated. This has taken place over a period of months painstakingly by James Littlewood.
* A Wi-Fi connection installed in the pulpit. The Heatmiser App was signed up enabling control of the heating system remotely.
* Graham Bailey cleared all of the gutters. In addition he addressed some of the more straightforward external issues (2.01, 2.02, 3.01, 3.02, 3.03, 3.06, 3.07) raised in the 2024 Quinquennial report.

December

* Two radiators with faulty switches repaired by Dunphy’s.

Throughout the year the alarms and emergency lighting have been tested regularly by church members.

The grounds maintained by Mike Townsend, church members and the grass cut by Jonathan Woodcock (The Garden Barber).

The fabric and ornaments are accounted for and appear in a reasonable condition.

Following re-plastering of the problem areas the church will need decorating it is looking very tired

**Trevor Langley**

**Messy Church**

Messy Church has struggled to attract new members this year but with a willing band of helpers (including clergy), and a small loyal group of children monthly sessions on the second Saturday of the month have continued

At Messy we have lots of fun activities for parents and children to do together. Then there is time to worship God before everybody shares food.  It’s a chance to find out more of God’s stories and grow together as God’s people.

Activities might be art, or games, the worship might be traditional or modern, or a mixture of both.

The best thing is; we don’t have to be perfect when we come to church that’s one of the reasons it’s called Messy

**Ruth Sherrin**

**Babies and Toddlers Group**

In 2024 the number of children attending Toddler Group varied vastly – from 1 to 15 per session (averaging around 6 children).

Parents, grandparents and carers have always been supportive and complimentary about their experiences of Toddler Group, which is extremely reassuring for the helpers.

The Christmas Party, as always, was a great success and all that attended thoroughly enjoyed it and we thank Santa for making it special.

Through the winter months we have provided monthly sessions and numbers are improving. We are hopeful that this trend will continue when we return to weekly sessions in the spring of 2025. We thank everyone for their support.

**Dot Gott and Anne Dyson**

**St Aidan’s CE Academy**

At St Aidan’s CE Academy, we continue to be led by our Christian vision of Love, Laugh, Learn, Live, to help guide all the decisions we make to ensure that everyone in our school community flourishes. Our wonderful school continues to be very proud of its links with St Aidan’s Parish Church and this partnership remains a key priority for us and is central to our vision for the future enrichment of our school.

St Aidan’s CE Academy has built upon its successes of previous years and continued to thrive during 2024. As ever, 2024 was an extremely busy year which has seen many successes and developments in school. Ali Walshe has continued with her secondment as Acting Headteacher, a role that has been extended to August 2025.

School were thrilled to be given the opportunity to attend several events at church last year.

In March, the whole school attended a wonderful Easter service at St Aidan’s Church, which was led by the Revd. Canon Joyce Jones and our Collective Worship Group. Each class contributed a song, poem or drama piece which told the Easter story. It was a fantastic celebration and pupils enjoyed singing and signing our worship songs in church.

In July, our final St Aidan’s Award Collective worship was combined with our Year 5 Leavers service at church. This was a beautiful and poignant send off for our pupils, who were presented with a commemorative Bible and a wooden cross by school staff and Trevor Langley.

In October, our wonderful friends at St Aidan’s Church created an amazing Harvest Journey at church for all pupils in school to attend. This was an incredibly enriching opportunity for pupils to learn about the importance of harvest to Christians, and to take part in some fun and creative activities. Our Harvest service in church a week later was really special, and it was clear how much the pupils had taken from their experiences. The feedback from the church volunteers was equally positive and it was clear how much everyone had gained from this special event.

Our school choir were invited to sing at the Christmas Carol service which was a lovely community event. December also saw our very special advent and nativity worships in school. Our youngest pupils performed their version of “Whoops-a-Daisy Angel” to parents and carers in our school hall and our oldest pupils performed a very special nativity performance in Church – with very special guests Jellybean the pony and Martha the donkey. This was a truly magical and uplifting performance from our pupils who shared a beautiful version of the Christmas story and filled the church with their beautiful singing.

It was so lovely to have the support of the church community, who provided refreshments for pupils and their families at the end of the service. The comments and feedback from all who attended were over-whelmingly positive and it was a fabulous way to end the Autumn Term.

Trevor and Ruth Mary continue to be an invaluable source of support and advice to school and to the Collective Worship group and to Miss Ford. Their time and dedication to the group and to the wider school is immensely appreciated by all. The worship group’s passion, confidence and understanding in planning and leading inspirational acts of worship is flourishing under their stewardship.

Miss Ford continues to do an excellent job as RE subject lead and is also chair of the MAT RE network which enable her to support and guide colleagues from other schools regarding their practise.

School continue to work closely with Lee Talbot, our Diocesan advisor, who has been a fantastic support to Ali Walshe and to the wider school. Ali has taken part in several training events run by the diocese and has planned staff training and monitoring of RE and Collective Worship in school with Lee. Ali has also continued to be actively involved in the Pyramid church Heads network, the Church School Partnership as well as regular training via the Diocese, including attendance at the annual conference in Leeds.

Each member of our school community is lovingly celebrated as a unique child of God. We work closely with other schools in our Multi Academy Trust (MAT) Learning Accord and use each other’s experience and expertise to help us to reflect on our achievements and support us to keep striving to improve. Our MAT currently has 12 schools which allows us to continuously share good practise and support one another.

We receive exemplary support from our Academy Improvement Officer, Paul West; regular CEO visits from Elaine Watson; half-termly headteachers meetings, subject leadership guidance as well as regular learning walks, joint INSET days and staff meetings. All of which impact positively on school improvement and school performance whilst being mindful of individuals and their mental health and well-being.

Our school’s vision and values are at the heart of every decision we make and help us to ensure that our school is rooted in genuine kindness and an all-encompassing acceptance of all. We strive to ensure that the lives of everyone in our school community are unequivocally transformed. In the past 12 months we have:

- Hosted a Hand to mouth experience day for the whole school. The focus was “Myself and who I am”

- All pupils experienced a RE-linked trip or visitor this year to enhance their understanding and broaden their knowledge. For example, Year 5 went to visit the Holocaust Centre at Huddersfield University as part of their learning about Judaism and Reception children have visited the 3 churches in Skelmanthorpe to learn about their similarities and differences.

- All pupils are taught about courageous advocacy and how to change the world for the better. Each class has been named after a different inspirational person and pupils share this knowledge during a special worship for the rest of the school and their families. Pupils are encouraged to do something that is a ‘change for good’ e.g. organise litter picks, charity events or write letters to inspire and challenge.

- Continued to build our links within the local community and beyond: projects with Saint Aidan’s in Zimbabwe, Staincliffe Juniors, links with an orphanage in the Ukraine as well as schools within our Pyramid and MAT.

- Charity fundraising, including raising nearly £2,000 for Yorkshire Air Ambulance

The school continues to be popular and has a positive reputation in our community. We work hard to safeguard this and promote the excellent practice at school through our website and Facebook pages. We strive to enrich our communication with parents and the local community and love being able to share the vast array of curriculum experiences, visitors, school trips and curriculum developments with our community in this way.

We constantly strive to deliver a broad, balanced and rich curriculum to ensure that pupils have an opportunity to shine in different areas and subjects beyond the core maths and English. Our development of spirituality through the introduction of “windows, mirrors and doors” has supported a deeper love of learning and is helping our pupils to develop a strong sense of reflection and resilience.

We have also continued to develop the partnership with Staincliffe Junior School in Batley. The pupils have produced several joint collective worships. This was such a wonderful experience for all and we look forward to planning many more in the future.

Pupil behaviours and attitudes continue to be of a high standard and all pupils are aware of and try to follow our school rules of Be Kind, Be Respectful and Be Responsible at all times. There is an increasing number of SEND pupils and those requiring additional SEMH (Social, Emotional and Mental Health) support but these all well managed through classroom adaptations, break-out zones and the support of external agencies. We are extremely proud of the inclusive, loving and supportive environment we have created that ensures that all pupils are valued as a unique individual who is given the guidance and resources to achieve the very best that they can. Supporting mental health of our pupils, staff and parents continues to be a high priority and plans are underway to enhance school’s offer in the upcoming months.

The trend of declining pupil numbers in the local area unfortunately continued in 2024 and the impact of which is evident in all local schools. New Reception pupil numbers in September 2024 were lower than we hoped for but we will continue to advertise the spaces to attract new families who move into the area. Falling role numbers continues to have a significant impact on school budget and staffing levels.

Saint Aidan’s CE Academy continues to ensure that our Christian values and vision are intertwined into every layer of school life and are the basis of all decision-making regarding policy, curriculum or environmental changes to our school. We continue to strive to ensure that the vision and values of our school nurture and enhance the experiences of all. We are hugely grateful of the support we receive from St Aidan’s Church and look forward to working in partnership for many years to come

**Ali Walshe**