St. Matthew's Church, Reading

Annual Report

Year Ended 31st December 2025

Registered Charity Number: 1148083



Annual Report

Welcome to the Annual Report of the mission and ministry of St. Matthew's Church, Southcote Lane, Reading for the year 2025.

Under the Parochial Church Council (Powers) Measure 1956, the PCC is required to co-operate with the vicar in promoting in the parish the whole mission of the Church - pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. This report describes how this has been achieved during 2025. Further details of the activities of the PCC and of the various ministry areas of the church can be obtained by contacting those named in each report.

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Trustees' Report for the 2025 APCM

Membership
Members of the PCC are either ex-officio, elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) in accordance with the Church Representation Rules, or co-opted onto the PCC. During the year, the following served as members of the PCC:-

Vicar:	The Revd. Rudy Tan (1st October 2025)
Churchwardens:	Chris Everett
	Erick Nwanshi
Deanery Synod Representatives:	
	Brian Day
	Mary Day
Elected Members:	Chisom Umeh (Treasurer)
	Gwyneth Rudman
	Steve Rudman
	Zoe Ferguson
	Liberty Umeh
	Alan Chandler
	David Horne
	Abigail Fryer-Saxby

Co-opted Members: None
Non-Voting Members: Lynn Everett (PCC Secretary)
Amy Cadle (Safeguarding Officer)
The PCC held meetings in January, February, March, April, May, June, July, September, October and December. (Extra ordinary meeting in Jan)

Standing Committee and Finance Committee
The Standing Committee is the only committee required by law and transacts the business of the PCC between its meetings, subject to any direction given by the council.

If there is an urgent need to approve expenditure which cannot wait for a scheduled meeting, a Standing Committee can be convened to approve up to £500. In 2025 the Standing Committee consisted of:

- Rudy Tan, Vicar (from October 2025)
- Erick Nwanshi, Mary Day, Zoe Ferguson and (as of 18th May) Alan Chandler.

Any approvals made by a Standing Committee must be reported to the next PCC meeting and will be minuted.

The Finance Committee had the following membership:
Rudy Tan, Brian Day, Alan Chandler, Steve Rudman and Chisom Umeh.

Review of the year

The PCC met 11 times since the last APCM.

The following items were included in the business of the PCC during 2025

- Rudy Tan was appointed as our new Vicar. His licensing service on 1st October was a well-attended and really joyful occasion.
- The hub had a steady 50-60 people attending each Friday until June. Then we launched a food bank where many attended for free food and a chat.
- Ladies toilets were decorated...Thank you to Chris Everett
- The light bulbs were all changed in the church and the globes were cleaned. Thank you to Chris and Erick for your hard work.
- We launched 'buy a brick for £20 to raise £5K for the heating during the winter. This has been well received, thank you to everyone who has helped keep the church warm. We raised over £5K once gift aid was added.
- Church Christmas Dinner was a huge hit and enjoyed by all. A special thank you to the potato peelers and Katie Hinton for all your help on the day and everyone who washed up. These events can't happen without your support.
- The parents of two young girls came and blitzed the grounds with the company they work for as a thank you for looking after their daughters in the cookery school. Thank you so much to Demetra and Cody.
- The organ and new light bulbs were paid for and fixed by the Wednesday 10.30am communion congregation, thank you to everyone who contributed.

Financial Review

The PCC is responsible for the financial affairs of St. Matthew's Church. Across the past three years, voluntary income has steadily declined, reaching £79,328 in 2025. Although our costs have remained stable, the continued fall in income resulted in a deficit for 2025, placing added pressure on our unrestricted general reserves. These reserves now stand at £41,737, a level that requires careful monitoring as we look ahead. We are very thankful to the generous hearts of the congregation of St Matthew's who continue to give sacrificially towards the mission and ministry of St Matthew's. Below are the key figures for the year 2025 compared with the previous two years.

	2025	2024	2023
	Actual	Actual	Actual
Voluntary Income	£79,328	£101,240	£103,401
Total Income	£119,521	£176,066	£158,345
Total Resource Used	£133,854	£159,707	£156,983
Net Income/ (Deficit)	(£14,333)	£16,359	£1,362
Unrestricted General Reserve	£41,737	£45,034	£41,202

As we look ahead to the coming year, we will continue to monitor our costs closely while encouraging increased voluntary giving to support the ministry of St Matthew's. We are working to rebuild our unrestricted general reserves. However, with church expenses rising nationally, this will be a challenging task, and we will need to navigate it together as a church family.

Reserve Policy

The PCC has a policy of keeping three months running costs in reserve to cover unforeseen circumstances. We will be hard pressed to meet this goal at the end of 2026, unless we can increase voluntary giving and/or fundraise to support general expenditure items such as energy costs and staff salaries. This is something the PCC will need to address over the coming months.

Basis of Preparation

The accounts have been prepared using the accrual accounting method consistent with last years' accounts.

Health and Safety

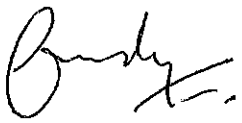
A report on health and safety is considered at each PCC meeting. Accident books and First Aid kits are located in both Church and Hall and the First Aid kits are inspected regularly and refilled if necessary.

Safeguarding

A report on safeguarding is considered at each PCC meeting. This takes account of all vulnerable or potentially vulnerable users of our facilities and participants in our activities. A safeguarding agreement is included in the documentation issued to all hall users.

The PCC would like to thank Jan Ball who served as a Church Warden for a number of years until stepping down in May 2025 and, everyone who has worked so hard during the year to help support the mission and ministry of St. Matthews.

Signed on Behalf of the PCC



Rudy Tan, Vicar

Vicar's APCM Report for 2025 (Presented at the 2026 APCM)

1. Introduction

It has been a joy and a privilege to begin ministry among you since my licensing in October. St Matthew's is, as the parish profile beautifully puts it, "a small, urban, outreach minded church family that punches above its weight."

The profile told me what St Matthew's had been doing, and there was a lot going on. Sunday services at 10am and 11.45am, a midweek communion, SouthTots, Kidz Church, holiday clubs, the cookery school, the Hub, Street Pastors, REInspired, Southcote Alive, the parish nurse, the men's group, the Pantry, and more.
But what struck me most was not the list of ministries. It was the people who make them happen.

I am grateful for those who remained faithful through the interregnum, and for those who have joined us since. The profile suggested there might be two congregations worshipping in the same building. What I have discovered is one church family with different worship preferences but the same heart, a church where love spills naturally from one gathering to the other. I can sense God's smile over St Matthew's.

These first months have been a season of settling in, listening deeply, and learning the heartbeat of this parish. Advent and Christmas gave me a glimpse of what St Matthew's does so well: warm hospitality, generous service, and a willingness to welcome those who might not otherwise step into a church. Jacob Griffiths brought together a wonderful choir for our Carol service, and Lynn's Christingle service welcomed over 130 people, most of them not regular worshippers.

I have been encouraged by the honesty of the conversations I have had, conversations about hopes, concerns, and the long memory of this parish. They have helped me appreciate both the blessings we enjoy and the areas where we long to grow in unity, confidence, and mission.

St Matthew's is a church with deep roots, wide partnerships, and a heart for its community. As we move into 2026, I am excited to build on what God is already doing among us.

2. Worshipping Life

10am Informal Service

Our 10am congregation continues to grow in warmth and welcome. The alternating pattern of Service of the Word and Family Communion offers a rhythm that is accessible to newcomers and families. The contemporary music led by Martin Carrick, Jacob Griffiths and

others is a real blessing. The A/V team that Abbie Fryer-Saxby oversees makes the entire service possible and accessible, and for Stephen Rudman, David Horne and Chris Everett for their preaching ministry during the interregnum.

A special thanks to Anne Bingham, whose own worship preference is more traditional, yet who faithfully serves as sacristan at this service. Several new people have found a home here, and a number have given their lives to Christ, for which I am deeply grateful.

11.45am Eucharistic Service and Wednesday Communion

Our more traditional services continue to provide a faithful, prayerful anchor for many. I am thankful for Jane Somner for organising our intercessions, and to Brian and Mary Day for making sure we had clergy cover before my arrival and your continued work in making sure that we're covered when I'm absent.

Thank you also to people like Jane Somner, Mary Day and Anne Bingham who take communion to those unable to attend in person.

3. Children, Youth and Families

Kidz Church

Under Lynn Everett's leadership, our children's ministry continues to flourish. I often hear how much the children enjoy Kidz Church.

SouthTots

SouthTots remains a vital relational bridge into the community, with around 18 children attending weekly and even a waiting list at times. Abbie Fryer-Saxby and her team do an outstanding job.

4. Community Outreach

The Church Hub

What began as a warm space grew into a weekly gathering of around 60 people, offering food, friendship and support. Over the year, 1,733 meals were served, which is an extraordinary act of love, and a huge achievement for all involved.

Although the format has changed since I arrived, it continues to evolve into a Thursday morning food bank where people stop for a hot drink, collect what they need, and encounter the love of Jesus. I'm touched by the incredible efforts of people who take food for the supermarkets and make them available to share with the community for free. Some of the people who were part of the Hub continue to engage with church in various ways.

The Training Room

The development of the cookery school under Lynn continues to open new doors for confidence building, nutrition education, and pastoral conversations with children and families.

5. Partnerships

St Matthew's continues to "punch above its weight" through its many partnerships:
• Southcote Alive – Café Alive, Walk of Witness, Carols in the Square • RE Inspired and School Links – Assemblies, church visits, creative RE sessions • TORCH – Including the new Parish Nurse for Southcote and Coley • Local Street Pastors led by Mary Day and Nanda Bielec – Supporting the pioneering local initiative • The Pantry – Weekly low cost food provision • Transform Reading and Churches Together – Contributing to the wider Christian witness

These partnerships extend our reach far beyond what we could do alone.

6. Buildings and Finances

Our wardens and volunteers are very diligent in looking after our building so that it continues to serve the parish well and offer significant potential for mission.
Financially, we are not where we would like to be. Yet I remain grateful for the sacrificial generosity of this church, and committed to working with the PCC to steward our resources wisely. Special thanks to Chisom Umeh our treasurer, and to our finance team Brian Day and Alan Chandler who help process our financial transactions, and Stephen Rudman.

We are also thankful for Lynn Everett's fundraising, which enables several of our ministries to continue with external support.

7. Gratitude

My heartfelt thanks go to:
• Chris and Erick, our wardens, for their steady leadership • Lynn and Karen, for their dedicated ministry • Mekedez, who keeps our church clean • Amy Cadle, our Parish Safeguarding Officer, for her careful oversight, commitment to process and due diligence to ensure that St Matthew's remains a safe place for all • Chisom Umeh, our Treasurer for her dedication where she somehow manages to be a new mum and our treasurer at the same time! • Stephen Rudman, for chairing the PCC during the interregnum • Our lay leaders, volunteers, PCC, and ministry teams • Every member of St Matthew's, for your welcome, faithfulness, and partnership in the gospel – a huge thanks to everyone who played their part in making church work – we cannot do this without each and everyone of us. Only the Lord knows the full extent of all that everyone does for him at St Matthew's.

8. Looking Ahead

St Matthew's sits in a parish of around 15,000 people, a place of challenge, opportunity, and incredible diversity.

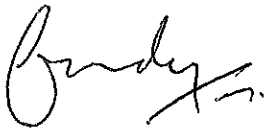
As we look ahead, please know that your wellbeing is a priority. We matter more to Jesus than what we can do for Him. I believe God matches our passions with the gifts He gives us. When we serve from passion, we rarely run out of steam, and when we do, it is a sign to rest and protect that passion.

As I prayed about coming to St Matthew's, the Lord kept drawing me to the parable of the lost sheep in Luke 15. It struck me that going after "the one" could also be a way of thinking about reaching 1 percent of our parish. This was echoed when Stephen Rudman told me that some on the PCC had been asking, "What if we simply aimed to reach 1 percent of our parish?" If our parish has 15,000 people, then 1 percent is 150 which is a modest and faith filled goal.

Who are the 1 percent? They are the people you meet through our ministries, the people you see in your daily life, those exploring faith, those who have begun attending recently, and the family and friends you pray for.

And when the shepherd finds that lost sheep, he brings it home. St Matthew's is not merely a venue for services or ministries. It is home. It is a home for the lost and a house for the presence of the Lord, where those who are searching can encounter Him.
We already see the Lord doing this.

And if we reach 150, and there are still lost sheep in our parish, then we go after the next 1 percent, and the next, until the Lord calls us home or returns in glory.



Rudy Tan, Vicar

Report on the Electoral Roll (ERICK)

The Church of England requires a complete renewal of the electoral roll every 6 six years, and 2025 was the year for the renewal. 88 people signed onto the electoral roll which was one more than than we had on the electoral roll in 2024.

Applications for membership of the Electoral Roll can be made at any time during the year and application forms are available in the Welcome Area. Forms should be completed and handed to a member of the Clergy, to the church office or to me.

Erick Nwanshi, Electoral Roll Officer

Deanery Synod Report

Deanery Synod is a forum where parishes from across Reading can come together to discuss issues and opportunities that transcend our parish boundaries. It is a forum for sharing ideas, addressing common challenges and linking into the wider mission of the Diocese.

Report for 2025

Deanery Synod meets four times a year.

At the February meeting children and young person (CYP) work continues to remain a high priority. Rev'd Mike Smith (Area Dean) continues to encourage parishes in their CYP work, building on the good work with schools through REinspired.

In small groups the highs and lows of 2024 were discussed. Major themes emerged; lack of volunteers, financial problems, mission initiatives etc.

The Deanery Leadership Team intends to review the long term patterns of mission and ministry across the Deanery.

Synod was asked to be mindful of those affected by the current challenging conversations about safeguarding in the church. Particularly to pray for victims of abuse.

At the April meeting a Community Engagement Manager and a coordinator from Reading University talked about the principles of volunteering.

Rev'd Mike Smith presented the draft Children Young People Deanery Plan which is based on the vision of churches engaging with CYP across all age ranges with trained and equipped volunteers and employed ministers, working with schools and other partners to disciple young people across Reading. At the end of the discussion Synod committed to ensuring CYP and families remained a high priority, the establishing of a Leadership Team. The obtaining of a clear baseline of the number of children in our churches and in the Deanery including schools. This was agreed.

July meeting - Rev'd Nick Hill explained that Reading has eleven of the most deprived parishes in the Berkshire Archdeaconry, and that there is hidden deprivation within parishes that appear to be affluent. The Estates Ministry Network aims to be an advocate for those who are deprived, with a vision for a vibrant Christian worshipping community across all areas.

Mark Burton (Lay Chair and treasurer) outlined the decline in church attendance, adding that Reading Deanery always pays its full share allocation. The proposed 2026 Parish Share Scheme demonstrates an average of 4% increase allocation with a 2% minimum and 6% maximum.

The Rev'd Paul Cowan, the new Associate Archdeacon of Berkshire was introduced at the September meeting. He spoke and answered questions.

Work continued on identifying a CYP leadership team, establishing a clear baseline of the number of children in our churches and schools in conversation with REinspired. The facilitating of an apprenticeship scheme for training professional youth workers.

Rev'd Nick Hill presented his paper on mapping deprivation. He reminded people that Reading is the poorest deanery in the Oxford Diocese. It was hoped parishes could submit data by the end of January 2026.

At the November meeting, the Parish Share Scheme with a few minor reductions was approved. St.Matthew's Parish Share rising by 2% in 2026 to £50,084.

The Area Dean said the Diocese was offering high quality CYP training to incumbents with fewer than 6 children in their churches. There are other training courses in the pipeline.

Mary and Brian Day, Deanery Synod Representatives

Churchwardens' report

Churchwardens – what do we do?

2025 began with ongoing challenges as we continued through the interregnum period, alongside the departure of some long-standing members of the church for personal reasons. Even so, we remained steadfast. There was a strong and shared belief that we would see the interregnum through, and with that confidence we knuckled down and focused on the work of the church.

It is fair to say that it required determination, patience, and a willingness from several people to step up, steady the ship, and keep us moving in the right direction - even when the

journey felt a little rocky. In the areas of personnel and spiritual strength, St Matthew's has truly been blessed.

As the year unfolded, we saw the strength of our congregation expressed in very practical ways. Volunteers took on additional responsibilities, ministries continued to function with commitment, and our worshipping life remained at the heart of everything we did. The PCC worked diligently to ensure that essential decisions were made thoughtfully and prayerfully, even in the absence of a full-time incumbent.

We also witnessed encouraging signs of growth and renewal. New faces joined us, long-standing members found fresh ways to contribute, and our partnerships within the wider community continued to deepen. These moments reminded us that God's work does not pause during an interregnum - if anything, it becomes even more visible through the faithfulness of His people.

Financially and operationally, we remained cautious but hopeful. Careful stewardship allowed us to maintain stability, while still supporting the ministries and outreach that define St Matthew's. Our safeguarding, governance, and compliance responsibilities were upheld, but not without its challenges. In terms of grounds maintenance, we also managed to get the following done:

- The outside cross was given a professional clean
- The brickwork housing for the outside light was rebuilt, and the light reinstated

Looking back, 2025 was not simply a year of "holding on." It was a year in which St Matthew's demonstrated resilience, unity in the face of adversity, and a deep trust in God's timing. It is a blessing to have now come through this challenging period with our new vicar, Rudy Tan, at the helm. As we move forward, we do so with gratitude for all who have served, all who have prayed, and all who have kept the life of this church vibrant and faithful.



Erick Nwanshi & Chris Everrett, Wardens

Family & Children's Report from Lynn

2025 was a very difficult year for me as I nursed my dad who had COPD and Lung Cancer. I could have filled a whole bucket with my tears during the year. I am truly thankful to the church for allowing me the time I needed to look after my dad full time towards the end of his life. It was my greatest pleasure to spend every day with him making sure he had the best of care.

I came back to work as our new Vicar took up his position in St Matthews and have enjoyed working with Rudy and finding a new way of doing things. I love working at St Matthews and serving the community as well as the congregation. You are all very dear friends to me and I want to say a huge thank you for your love and support, especially as my mum also has terminal cancer.

- I became the church secretary (no one else wanted the position) in the middle of the year to help the PCC.
- We have a new tradition in St Matthews, a yearly wreath making evening which sees over 40 people coming along to make wreaths and table decorations. It's a lovely relaxed evening with carols playing, drinks and nibbles for all and thoroughly enjoyed by everyone.
- As a church family we ended the year with a Christmas dinner which was such a wonderful time. I would like to say a big thank you to the potato peeling team and to all those who helped make the day happen so smoothly. Nothing can happen without such willing volunteers of which St Matthews has many. I loved the way the church family, young and old, the community and the hub families all came together and shared a meal to celebrate the birth of Jesus.

Kidz Church Report inc Family services/times.

I would like to say a huge thank you to Liberty, Rose, Zoe, Sylvia and Sharon who all help on a Sunday morning in Kidz church. Amy and Cindy have also stepped in to help when it has been needed.

We all love being with the children, teaching them how special they are and loved by the one who gave everything for each of them. It is such a blessing and we are thankful that God has given us the littles ones of St Matthews church who are tomorrow's leaders.

Family times took place twice a month instead of weekly. It's a time to all connect and learn something as one big family. We also had several all age services which is a special time to worship with the children as well.

Youth Report

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the youth for being so patient with us during the interregnum. They have had to join kidz church during this time and have had only a handful of sessions of their own with no complaints. I am in no doubt that they would love to have had more youth sessions but it was not possible due to not having a youth worker.

They have gained more skills by learning to help on PA/AV which has been a blessing to the church.

Please do pray that we can invest very soon in a youth worker.

St Matthews Church HUB

We had a great start to the year by providing families with a homemade dinner and pudding every Friday evening. The relationships that have been built are encouraging and very valuable.

During my fathers illness we had to stop running the Friday evening meals as the work load was too much for me, it's not easy cooking for 60 people every week. We decided to collect more free food to hand out instead. During this time Marks and Spencer had a cyber attack which became the biggest blessing to St Matthews. The chapel was like a Marks and Spencer food hall, it was amazing. We also had one week with the biggest amount of flowers you could imagine, it filled the whole of the foyer. We were such a blessing to the community during this time and have made many more contacts of families who come and collect free food. As the Friday evenings stopped the food collections took off which involved many hours of work. To not lose contact with those who we have made connections with we started having a coffee time during the food collections.

To date God has provided £76,028 through fundraising to run the hub/food bank.
PRAISE GOD.

St Matthew's Cookery School

This was the second year of running our Cookery school. We held a good number of lessons with children and some adults and managed to come to the end of the waiting list which was good news. We had a special time of cooking with two young boys who planned, peeled and prepared all the food to make a 3 course meal for 30 people.

Two very proud exhausted young lads who prepared, cooked and fed 30 people. They chose two starters, roast beef and two deserts. Both refused to wash up after the meal. ....





A typical session lasts 2 hours over 4 days where we cook as well as have a lot of fun and learn more about Jesus along the way. We also ran a few 'bake off' sessions where families competed against one another before the judge arrived to cast the verdict. We laughed a lot, especially the adults. They are special family times.

God is blessing this ministry with the finances to run one day a week. We have run for two years and have the funding to run for 2026.

God has provided £48,030 through fundraising to date. PRAISE HIM WHO IS WORTHY.



Lynn Everett

RE Inspired report

REinspired enables Christians from local churches to share their faith with pupils in neighbouring schools. The organisation is now over 20 years old and is used by churches in various parts of the country enabling them to work with schools, both primary and secondary in making Christianity 'come alive', supporting and enriching Religious Education in schools. It is not there to change what pupils believe but to develop their understanding of the Christian faith. As our Project Director Julia Jones said 'it's a bridge into a huge community on our doorstep. The sessions are based on the local education authority RE Syllabus. New changes to the syllabus this year has meant updates to sessions plans and increased workload for Julia and her team!

St.Matthew's Church has been working with Southcote Primary School for over 13 years, a small team of ecumenical volunteers deliver seven sessions during the academic year.
We start the year with Noah, presenting the story through Godly Play and then retelling it with the help of a large parachute! We go into school for this one as the children are four to five years of age. The other six sessions, one for each year group, are held in church, a first for some children who may have never stepped inside a church. The other sessions are delivered through storytelling, Godly Play, re-enactments (The Last Supper and The Baptism of Jesus), craft work, videos etc. Sessions include Christmas, Easter, Prayer, Commitment to God and with Year 6 Death, Funerals and the Christian Response. A really special one.
It is a privilege and we give thanks to God for being able to share our Christian Faith with over 600 children, staff and parents during the year.

We have a small team at St. Matthew's, it would be great to have more people join us. They take place on a Friday morning. Drop in on one of our sessions. We'd love to see you.

Mary Day



Southtots report

We have had another wonderful year at Southtots. Our numbers have stayed consistent throughout the year with the majority attending each week being regulars. We have also welcomed newcomers and the interest in coming along is still very much there. We usually have around 16 children each week and sometimes a few on the waiting list.
At the end of July 2025 we said goodbye to our helper Julie Bullock who had been on the team since the beginning of Southtots in September 2022. We thanked her for her dedication and help in the running of Southtots.
We celebrated our 3rd birthday in September with our annual visit from the Pop Up Play Village. The children absolutely love it when the Play Village comes along. They bring everything they need for the session, set it all up and pack it away themselves! It gives the children the opportunity to experience different toys, mostly all related to different role plays in the community. It is run by a lovely couple Erica and Frank who are also Christians.

We have had to say goodbye to a few regulars who went onto school. It is so wonderful to see how the children grow, develop and become confident little people.
We continue to be able to take the time to get to know the adults and share our faith journeys and be able to encourage the parents/carers along the way. They all tell us how much they enjoy the Bible story each week!

At Easter and Christmas we give the children a Christian book explaining all about why we celebrate these events.
Throughout the year we were also able to hold a number of Blessings tables at the end of the session. A blessings table is where we would put on a table a lot of toys and books etc that we had been given but didn't need at Southtots. The parents/carers could then help themselves and take what they wanted, all for free.

We would love to welcome more people on team so if you can give one or more Friday mornings to Southtots in term time then we would love to hear from you.
I am continually grateful to all the amazing volunteers we have at Southtots and I thank God for the provisions and blessings He has given and continues to give us.





Abbie Fryer-Saxby, Southtots Leader

Southcote Street Pastors Report

Street Pastors in Southcote began about three years ago, after a local Secondary Head requested our support. Following our training, a small group of us started heading out at school leaving time, given the area's two secondary schools, two primary schools, a preschool, Coronation Square and Southcote Parade shops.

Although our numbers are few, just four of us now, we try to be present when we can, once or twice a week. This has made connecting with the children a bit of a challenge, but gradually more come over for a chat. Before Christmas, several wanted to talk about their mock exams, last week one of us was asked for a favourite bible verse. Some just for a lollipop!

We've also spoken with school staff, parents from St. Matthew's Church, and the lads who hang out in the Square, one was even cooking on a BBQ for his mates! We've attended the Over 50s Club Fete and watched a police organised football match in the Square for the children. Sometimes, people stop us in the street just to ask who we are.

We especially enjoy Tuesdays when we can visit ' The Pantry' in Southcote Family Church. A lovely opportunity to share a hot drink (has been particularly welcome in the cold weather!) and chats with people whilst they wait for help with the food donations. We meet the Parish Nurse, Communicare and Karen and her volunteers. Not long ago, a man stopped us on our way back from The Pantry and asked us what we were doing in Southcote! It transpired he worked in the night economy in Reading and valued the work of Street Pastors.

We take part in various training sessions, recently attending a talk on 'County Lines'.

We never know who we'll meet, whether it's a quick smile, a hello, or a proper conversation, but we trust in the Lord and sense His presence with us.



Mary Day, Street Pastor

Safeguarding Report

Safeguarding often goes unnoticed by many people, but it is always there continuously working in the background, keeping our congregation and church a safe place to worship.

We have spent a lot of time updating the Parish Dashboard and Hub, trying to get all the volunteers paperwork in one central place to make it easier for us to continue carrying out DBS checks efficiently.

All the volunteers who help with kids church, Southtots, youth, creche etc. and even PCC members have to have up to date DBS checks every three years. They also need to complete basic, foundation and domestic abuse safeguarding training, which is provided from the diocese online.

We have been following the diocese guidance for safer recruitment for new volunteers and are very thankful for all their time and commitment.

If you are reading this and thinking I haven't done my training yet, here is the information you need.

https://oxford.anglican.org/safeguarding-training/

Please let me know when you have completed any new training, so that I can update our records. Please email safeguarding@st-matts.org.uk

Part of my role as safeguarding officer, is to report any incidents or concerns to the diocese safeguarding team and on the occasions that I have had to this, I have followed the guidance given by them.

Lastly, as a church family, we are all responsible for safeguarding one another, so if anyone ever has a concern please contact me in confidence on the safeguarding email address safeguarding@st-matts.org.uk



Many Thanks

Amy Cadle, Safeguarding Officer

Statement of Financial Activities
Year ending 31st December 2025

	Notes	Unrestricted 2025 (£)	Restricted 2025 (£)	Total Funds 2025 (£)	Total Funds 2024 (£)
Incoming Resources					
Voluntary Income	2a	76,828	2,500	79,328	101,240
Other Ordinary Income	2b	19,582	–	19,582	18,572
Material Income	2c	430	20,181	20,611	56,254
Total Incoming Resources		**96,840**	**22,681**	**119,521**	**176,066**
Cost of Charitable Activities					
Clergy Expenses	3a	4,613	–	4,613	3,236
The Church and Services	3b	9,115	–	9,115	15,339
Other Parish Expenses	3c	39,622	23,065	62,687	66,623
Payments Outside the Parish	3d	43,201	–	43,201	48,238
Development and Maintenance	3e	3,586	–	3,586	5,160
Other Operating Expenses	3f	–	10,652	10,652	21,111
Total Resources Expended		**100,137**	**33,717**	**133,854**	**159,707**
Net Incoming / (Outgoing) Resources		(3,297)	(11,036)	(14,333)	16,359
Transfer Between Funds		–	–	–	–
Net Movements in Funds		(3,297)	(11,036)	(14,333)	16,359
Balances Brought Forward (1 Jan)		45,034	39,188	84,221	67,862
Balances Carried Forward (31 Dec)		**41,737**	**28,152**	**69,889**	**84,221**

Statement of Financial Position
Year ending 31st December 2025

	Notes	Unrestricted 2025 (£)	Restricted 2025 (£)	Total Funds 2025 (£)	Total Funds 2024 (£)
Fixed Assets	5	10,401	–	10,401	12,245
Current Assets					
Debtors & Prepayments	6	2,955	–	2,955	3,619
Bank & Cash Balances		31,323	28,151	59,474	72,070
Total Current Assets		**34,278**	**28,151**	**62,429**	**75,689**
Creditors: amounts falling due within 1 year	7	(2,941)	–	(2,941)	(3,713)
Net Current Assets		31,341	28,151	59,488	71,976
Net Assets		**41,742**	**28,151**	**69,889**	**84,221**
Parish Funds	8				
General Reserve		**41,737**	–	**41,737**	**45,034**
Restricted Funds:					
Training Room Fund		–	17,421	17,421	12,090
Jubilee Fund		–	952	952	984
Warm Hub Fund		–	9,779	9,779	26,113
Total Parish Funds		**41,737**	**28,151**	**69,889**	**84,221**

The attached notes form part of these financial statements.

Approved by the PCC on and signed on their behalf by





Rev. Rudy Tan (PCC Chairman)

Ms Chisom Umeh(PCC Treasurer)

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF READING, ST.MATTHEW
Notes to the Financial Statements
Year ending 31st December 2025

1. Accounting Policies

1.1 Basis of preparation

The Financial Statements have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations and in accordance with the the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and with the Charities Act 2011.

The Financial Statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant notes to these accounts The accounts include all transactions, assets and liabilities for which the PCC is responsible in law. They do not include accounts of church groups that owe their main affiliation to another body nor those that are informal gatherings of church members.

The accounts have been prepared using the accrual accounting method.

There are no material uncertainties about the PCC's ability to continue, and so the going concern of accounting has been adopted.

The accounts are presented in pound sterling and rounded to the nearest pound.

1.2 Incoming resources

All incoming resources are included in the Statement of Financial Activities when the charity is entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy. The following policies are applied to the particular categories of income:

- Planned giving, collections and similar donations are recognised when received.
- Tax refunds are recognised when the claim to HMRC is submitted.
- Grants and legacies are accounted for when the PCC is entitled to the use of the resources, their ultimate receipt is considered reasonably certain and the amounts due are reliably quantifiable.
- Interest as and when accrued by the payer.

All incoming resources are accounted for gross.

1.3 Resources expended

Expenditure is accounted for on an accrual basis. The diocesan parish share expected to be paid over is accounted for when due. All other expenditure is generally recognised when it is incurred and is accounted for gross.

1.4 Funds accounting

Restricted funds comprise (a) income from endowments which is to be expended only on the restricted purposes intended by the donor and (b) revenue donations or grants for a specific PCC activity intended by the donor. Where these funds have unspent balances, interest on their pooled investment is apportioned to the individual funds on an average balance basis.

Unrestricted funds represent funds of the PCC that are not subject to restrictions regarding their use. Such funds include income funds which are to be spent on the PCC's general purposes and overall running of the church.

Designated funds are general funds set aside by the PCC for use in the future. Project funds are designated for particular projects for administration purposes only. Designated funds remain unrestricted and the PCC will move any surplus back to general funds.

1.5 Fixed assets

Consecrated Land and Buildings and Moveable Church Furnishings Consecrated and beneficed property is excluded from the accounts by s10 Charities Act 2012. No value is placed on moveable church furnishings held by the church wardens on special trust for the PCC and which require a faculty for disposal since the PCC considers this to be inalienable property. All expenditure incurred during the year on consecrated beneficed buildings and moveable church furnishings, whether maintenance or improvement is written off as expenditure in the Statement of Financial Activities and separately disclosed.

Other Fixtures Fittings and Office Equipment

Low value equipment (less than £1,000) used within church premises is written off in the year of acquisition. Capitalised electronic equipment used within the church premises is depreciated on a straight-line basis over a period between three and ten years.

1.6 Current assets

Amounts owing to the PCC at the end of each year are shown as debtors subject to provision for amounts that may prove irrecoverable. Bank balances are all short term deposits with the Building Society or at the bank.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF READING, ST.MATTHEW
Notes to the Financial Statements
Year ending 31st December 2025

2. Incoming Resources

	Unrestricted 2025 (£)	Restricted 2025 (£)	Total Funds 2025 (£)	Total Funds 2024 (£)
a. Voluntary Income				
Tax recoverable on gift aids	10,620	2,500	13,120	16,869
Planned giving	54,945	–	54,945	61,068
Collections at services & church programmes	10,983	–	10,983	5,623
Donations	280	–	280	17,680
Total Voluntary Income	**76,828**	**2,500**	**79,328**	**101,240**
b. Other Ordinary Income				
Chapel/church income	1,133	–	1,133	559
Church hall income	14,758	–	14,758	12,853
Photocopying & printing income	5	–	5	250
Fees collected on behalf of diocese	247	–	247	241
Fees for PCC	3,440	–	3,440	1,853
Parish share rebate	–	–	–	2,621
Organists fees	–	–	–	195
Total Other Ordinary Income	**19,582**	**–**	**19,582**	**18,572**
c. Material Income				
Warm hub donations	–	7,681	7,681	31,384
Training room donations	–	12,500	12,500	24,600
Charitable donations	430	–	430	270
Total Material Income	**430**	**20,181**	**20,611**	**56,254**
Total Incoming Resources	**96,840**	**22,681**	**119,521**	**176,066**

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF READING, ST.MATTHEW
Notes to the Financial Statements
Year ending 31st December 2025

3. Cost of Charitable Activities

	Unrestricted 2025 (£)	Restricted 2025 (£)	Total 2025 (£)	Total 2024 (£)
a. Clergy Expenses				
The Ministry	4,613	–	4,613	3,236
Total Clergy Expenses	**4,613**	**–**	**4,613**	**3,236**
b. The Church & Services				
Church cleaning	1,138	–	1,138	10
Church flowers	28	–	28	105
Church yard	–	–	–	52
Electricity	4,219	–	4,219	11,647
Insurance	1,258	–	1,258	795
Regular maintenance (church)	710	–	710	365
Upkeep of services	1,762	–	1,762	2,248
Water rates (church)	–	–	–	116
Total Church & services	**9,115**	**–**	**9,115**	**15,339**
c. Other Parish Expenses				
Children's ministry	562	–	562	1,340
Music ministry	586	–	586	88
Youth ministry	53	–	53	465
Total Other Parish Expenses	**1,201**	**–**	**1,201**	**1,893**
Lay staff				
Salaries	23,014	21,000	44,014	42,946
Staff development	–	–	–	94
Staff IT facility	–	–	–	291
Personal expenses of lay staff	65	–	65	186
Total Lay Staff	**23,079**	**21,000**	**44,079**	**43,518**

3 Cost of charitable activities (cont'd)	Unrestricted 2025 (£)	Restricted 2025 (£)	Total 2025 (£)	Total 2024 (£)
Church hall running costs	6,836	1,600	8,436	11,142
Mission within the parish	1,499	–	1,499	2,652
Administration	1,565	–	1,565	1,175
Audit and accountancy fees	300	–	300	–
Bank fees	7	–	7	2
CLI licence	972	–	972	926
Depreciation charge	1,379	465	1,844	1,844
Gifts	314	–	314	335
Other ordinary parish expenses	423	–	423	424
Photocopying & printing costs	1,248	–	1,248	1,756
Telephone & broadband	797	–	797	796
TV licence	–	–	–	159
Total Other Parish Expenses	**15,340**	**2,065**	**17,405**	**21,211**
d. Payments Outside the Parish				
Charitable donations	905	–	905	1,921
Fees to diocese – payment	288	–	288	608
Parish share	42,008	–	42,008	45,709
Total payments outside the parish	**43,201**	**–**	**43,201**	48,238
e. Development and Maintenance				
Hall/garden maintenance & redecoration	3,202	–	3,202	3,345
Other expenditure	385	–	385	1,815
Total development & maintenance	**3,587**	**–**	**3,587**	**5,160**
f. Other Operating Expenses				
Training room expenses	–	1,667	1,667	12,440
Warm hub expenses	–	8,985	8,985	8,671
Total other operating expenses	**–**	**10,652**	**10,652**	**21,111**
Total resources used	**100,137**	**33,717**	**133,854**	**159,707**

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF READING, ST.MATTHEW
Notes to the Financial Statements
Year ending 31st December 2025

4 Staff costs

	2025 (£)	2024 (£)
Wages and salaries & NI	44,014	42,946
	44,014	42,946

The average number of employees during the year was 2 (2024:2).
Trustees (PCC members) received no remuneration during the year (2024: none).
During the year, 1 trustee (PCC member) was reimbursed expenses amounting to £1,911 relating to maintenance works performed. During the year, 1 trustee (PCC member) donated £10,000 to the church to further its ministry.

5 Fixed assets

	Church equipment (£)
Cost as at 1 January 2025	23,831
Additions	–
Disposals	–
Cost as at 31 December 2025	23,831
Depreciation as at 1 January 2025	11,586
Charge for the year	1,844
Disposal	–
Depreciation as at 31 December 2025	13,430
Net book value as at 1 January 2025	12,245
Net book value as at 31 December 2025	**10,401**

6 Debtors & Prepayments	**2025 (£)**	**2024 (£)**
Trade debtors	2,237	1,180
Other debtors	–	1,467
Prepayments	719	972
Total debtors & prepayments	**2,955**	**3,619**

7 Creditors	2025 (£)	2024 (£)
Trade creditors	360	558
Other creditors	1,564	1,536
Accruals	1,017	1,618
Total creditors	**2,941**	**3,713**

8 Parish Funds

The movements in funds during the year were:

	Balance Brought Forward (£)	Incoming (£)	Outgoing (£)	Balance Carried Forward (£)
General Reserve	44,734	96,840	(100,137)	41,437
8a Designated Funds				
Kidz Church Gift	300	–	–	300
Total Unrestricted Funds	**45,034**	**96,840**	**(100,137)**	**41,737**
8b Restricted Funds				
Training Room Fund	12,090	15,000	(9,670)	17,421
Jubilee Fund	984	–	(32)	952
Warm Hub Fund	26,113	7,681	(24,016)	9,779
Total Restricted Funds	**39,188**	**22,681**	**(33,717)**	**28,152**
Total Parish Funds	**84,221**	**119,521**	**(133,854)**	**69,889**

8a Designated Funds

The Kidz Church Gift is a designated fund used to support the children's church that runs alongside the Sunday morning service.

8b Restricted Funds

Restricted funds include the Training Room Fund, which supports the ongoing running of the training room and its cooking-based activities that serve both the church and wider community, contributing to wellbeing and early mental-health support for children and adults, and also covering a proportion of staff wages and other training-related costs. The Jubilee Fund is used to meet expenses for families experiencing hardship. The Warm Hub Fund represents donations received specifically to provide warm hubs, including staff costs and capital improvements, for people within the parish who are struggling to keep their homes warm.

The PCC has a reserves policy of holding three months of running costs to cover against unforeseen circumstances; in 2025 this amounted to £43,060.

Independent examiner's report to the Trustees of Parochial Church Council of Reading, St. Matthew

I report to the trustees and members of The Parochial Church Council of the Parish of Reading, St Matthew, (charity number 1148083) on the accounts for the year to 31st December 2025.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the accounts. I have carried out my examination under section 145 of the 2011 Act. In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

An independent examination does not involve gathering all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently does not cover all the matters that an auditor considers in giving their opinion on the accounts. The planning and conduct of an audit goes beyond the limited assurance that an independent examination can provide. Consequently, I express no opinion as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view, and my report is limited to those specific matters set out in the independent examiner's statement.

Independent Examiner's Statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe:

1. accounting records were not kept as required by section 130 of the 2011 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities.

I confirm that there are no other matters to which your attention should be drawn to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed: Rachel Belshaw Dated 5th May 2026

Rachel Belshaw, MA ACA CTA

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DIOCESE OF OXFORD
Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire