St George's PRESHUTE



Annual Report 2025

Registered Charity Number 1184256

St George's Church is situated on the western edge of Marlborough on the south bank of the River Kennet. The Parish of Preshute serves the villages of Manton and Clatford, the Barton Park estate, part of the western end of Marlborough and a rural area stretching both north and south. The church is in the Diocese of Salisbury (Deanery of Marlborough) and is part of the Marlborough Anglican Team, with an office in Silverless Street, Marlborough. St George's and the associated churchyard is open every day and anyone is welcome to visit the church for prayer, quiet contemplation or simply to enjoy the wonderful location next to the river.

Aims and Objectives – Making Jesus Known

The Church is the family of Christians meeting together to worship God and to find fellowship together through prayer and learning. Our work is to spread the Good News of our faith by 'Making Jesus Known'.

St George's is well placed to serve the town of Marlborough and most of our mission has a two-fold strategy: to deepen and enrich our own worshipping life and also to find creative ways of making connections with the local community to both introduce the Christian story and deepen engagement with all in the local area.

St George's Parochial Church Council (PCC)

The PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the Team Vicar in promoting, in the ecclesiastical Parish of Preshute, the whole mission of the Church: pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. The life of St George's is within the Marlborough Anglican Team, Marlborough Churches Together and the Diocese of Salisbury in the Church of England.

<u>Membership:</u>

Members of the Parochial Church Council are either elected at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting or co-opted by the PCC due to the functions they perform in the Church (provided the person is willing to be co-opted). The PCC is a charity, and the PCC members are its Trustees and are responsible for ensuring the Church is serving its community. This report shows how St George's engages with the local community.

Incumbent (Team Vicar):	Revd Pete Sainsbury
Churchwarden:	Nicky Huckle
Deanery Synod:	Charles Graham
Members:	Alastair Barr (Treasurer)
	David Beacom (Fabric and Churchyard) Amanda Brown (Secretary)
The other members are:	Katie Dick
	Emily Hurd
	Ian Moody
	Charlie Notton
Ex-officio members:	Heather Lee (LLM)
	Canon Sarah Musgrave (LLM)
	Revd Chris Smith

The PCC has met six times during the year. The most recent approved PCC minutes and past minutes

are on file and available to view in the church or they can be obtained from the Secretary on request. Central to each meeting is the core task of 'Making Jesus Known', as we plan and review services and discuss how we might 'grow' the worship offering.

Regular items of business on the PCC's agenda are a report from the Vicar and the Treasurer, as well as a report on matters relating to the maintenance of the church and churchyard. Our July meeting focuses especially on the fabric of the church. Our ongoing work as an Eco church is also routinely reviewed, and plans for social and fundraising events are made. Safeguarding is also a standard item on the agenda at each meeting, and we hear updates following meetings of the Deanery Synod from our representative.

Other considerations at the PCC meetings in 2025 were the installation of new convector radiators in the church, the laying of a new surface on the path to the church and the installation of new lights in the car park. Policy documents for Health and Safety and Safeguarding were reviewed, and a number of PCC members attended a CPR/defibrillator training session. In addition to routine finance matters, the possibility of accepting donations given through the Ephesian Fund was debated and plans were made for the spring stewardship campaign. Plans for a 'St George's Family Fête' in June 2026 were proposed as a major outreach project, and a sub-committee was formed. A special Saturday meeting was also held in November to give dedicated time and thought to ways in which what St George's offers could be extended and how to use the church space to best effect.

There were 83 names on the Electoral Roll at 31 December 2025. The average number of worshippers each week (excluding festival services) has been approximately 39.

Team Vicar's Report

Perhaps the central part of an annual review of a church's life is gratitude for all that's been good (as well of course as reviewing that which has been challenging or a learning experience).

Let me offer thanks on everyone's behalf, not least mine, to:

- the PCC for six meetings a year plus so much more and similarly, to the standing team
- churchwarden Nicky Huckle for another year of very full service *
- Amanda Brown for being a proactive and capable PCC secretary *
- Alastair Barr for keeping the financial ship steady *
- Mel Rolfe for keeping the church spruce and clean
- David Beacom for coordinating a great deal of work on the church building and churchyard and also for continuing to organise many social and fundraising events
- Heather Lee for her service not only as our licensed lay minister but also her commitment to her role as parish safeguarding officer
- Andrew Brown for much music including with our young people
- Lyn Whatley for her care of our liturgical fabrics
- Tower captain Richard Metters and the ringers
- Amanda Brown and others for their advocating and facilitating of children's ministry
- Sally Cripps and all those who create an attractive church space with flowers
- Marcia Johnson for coordinating the necessary work for the emptying and maintenance of the septic tank

- Ken Martin for behind-the-scenes repairs
- Laurien Carter for record-keeping, as well as coordinating the polishing rota and those who assist her
- Jeremy York for photos, continuity of advice and many other things
- Not least Karolina in the office who helps administrative things run smoothly
- and to all those who do many other things too such as welcoming, wardening, making coffee, reading, leading intercessions, newsletter distribution, all kinds of record keeping, singing... and very much more besides, especially the unseen things
- and to all of you who support all those people!

* Alastair, Amanda and Nicky are all standing back from their roles at the annual meeting. We are very grateful to them for their hard work and we are keenly aware that there are significant roles to be filled.

In 2025, we lost some of our church family – or should I say, we commended them with great hope to our loving heavenly Father. We fondly remember Kay Cripps, Michael Dain, Colin Goldsmith, Paul Lefever and Robin Notton, and continue to encourage and pray for those who mourn them. Funeral ministry is an important part of being an Anglican parish church: there were many other funerals too. My thanks in particular here to Andrew Brown and to those who have served as vergers, including Charles Graham, Lyn Whatley and Stephen Robins.

We have ongoing financial challenges but I'm grateful to you all for responding positively to the second year of my 'One-One-One Challenge', which proposes that we increase our personal financial giving by one percent a year over a few years to get (most of) us to giving 5% of our gross income to the church by the end of 2026.

In general, church community life was healthy, purposeful and worshipful in 2025. Church life thrives when a good number (hopefully the majority) are actively engaged with church life outside of Sundays as well as on Sundays.

Our call as a local church is fairly straightforward and in three parts: the upward, the inward and the outward. The 'upward' is towards God in prayer and worship, the 'inward' is the care for each other and our life as a church family, and the 'outward' is how we face into the local community and go about engaging in outreach. I want to thank you for how you have engaged in this in 2025 and will continue to in 2026. We are quite effective in the first two I think - always work to do, of course! - but we need to give more thought to the third, the outward.

One area for particular consideration is how we can more intentionally engage with families and children, not just via the school but more widely. I will initiate renewed conversations in 2026 and beyond about how we might do that, considering what and perhaps *who* we need to better fulfil this important part of our ministry.

Our reasons for great hope are no less encouraging and clear that they are in more settled times. With great thanks to our loving God.

Every blessing, everyone, and thank you.

Revd Pete Sainsbury, Team Vicar

Team Rector's Report

2025 began well as the Team welcomed 268 Children, 34 teachers from nine schools, including Preshute, to the Life Exhibition. Pete ran a Quiet Morning at the beginning of Lent when we all began to read *Wild, Bright, Hope*. The Maundy Thursday Meal was a well-attended new venture.
Helen Slater began as my PA, Penny took up the role of Children and Families Worker (St Mary's) and Karolina replaced her as Team Administrator. Louise Seddon was licensed in September as an LLM, in a moving ceremony in Salisbury Cathedral.

The Morobo link continued to be a blessing to all sides of the relationship. Could we do more with Mission? Probably.

I'm very grateful to Pete, Nicky and you all for facilitating a sabbatical in 2025. We had a refreshing time travelling in the United States in the summer and *Channel Tides*, my first novel, launched in November.

I enjoyed all my visits to St George's last year and was impressed by the continuous improvements to the approach to the church building. We only get one chance to make a first impression and St George's has markedly improved – well done!

Our partnership in the gospel of Jesus Christ continues and as Isaiah put it: 'Though the grass may wither and the flowers may fall - the word of the Lord stands forever' (Is 40:8).

Revd Chris Smith, Team Rector of Marlborough

Electoral Roll Report

<u>What is the St George's Electoral Roll?</u>
It is your parish church's register of electors. In the same way that being on the civic Electoral Roll allows you to vote in parliamentary and local elections and referenda, joining St George's Church Electoral Roll means that you can vote on Church matters, attend the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) and stand for election to the Parochial Church Council (PCC). Being on the Electoral Roll does NOT make you a "member" of the Church; simply regarding St George's as your spiritual home does that.

<u>How does the Church of England keep the roll up to date?</u>
The electoral roll is fully renewed every six years - this happened in 2025. In the intervening years it is reviewed annually to ensure an accurate, up-to-date record, allowing for the addition of new members and the removal of those who have died, moved, or requested removal.

Additions or removals from the Electoral Roll are approved and managed by the Parochial Church Council (PCC)

Your Church Roll is, together with any notices relating to the roll, displayed on the notice board in the Church porch. Under data protection regulations only names and preferred pronouns are displayed.

Following the Electoral Roll rebuild during January 2025 the number of parishioners on the roll was 83. During the year January to December 2025 no new members have been added and none removed. Therefore, the number on the roll at the end of December 2025 is still 83.

Of the 83 people on the roll 72 people live within the Marlborough Deanery.

David Sims on behalf of Linda Sims (Electoral Roll Officer)

Church Attendance

It is positive to record that, on the whole, the attendance figures at St George's during 2025 held steady. We were saddened by the loss of faithful members of the congregation, but we were delighted to welcome several newcomers.

An average of eight worshippers attended the 8am service of Holy Communion, whilst numbers in the congregation at the Morning Worship and Parish Communion services (2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th Sundays) remained the same as in 2024 with an average of 39. As mentioned in the Music Report, where there is a fifth Sunday of the month, this provides an opportunity to explore different forms of worship and these services in 2025 (Mothering Sunday, Sing Praise, Taizé and a service for Advent) were well attended.

The first Sunday of the month is an All Age Worship service, and attendance figures remained healthy at an average of 40 adults and seven children, even though this marks a slight decrease from 2024.

The Remembrance Sunday service of Holy Communion combined with an act of remembrance at the cenotaph was well attended with 68 in the congregation, with the Last Post played by a trumpeter from Marlborough College.

Turning to our major festival services, the church was once again full for our 2025 Easter Day service of Family Communion (95 adults and 16 children). Our Christmas services were also, in the main, well very well attended: numbers at the Carols by Candlelight service were comparable to last year's, with 137 adults and 13 children in the congregation. The Sing-along Nativity (principally aimed at pre-school children) was more sparsely attended this year, with 14 adults and four children – perhaps a reflection of the changing national demographic. In contrast at the Crib Service on Christmas Eve the church was packed with 125 adults and 44 children. Later on Christmas Eve, in the still of the night, 57 adults celebrated the First Communion of Christmas. Numbers in the congregation on Christmas morning for the Family Communion service were almost exactly the same as last year, with 76 adults and eight children attending.

In 2025 St George's held a service of Choral Evensong in June with a visiting choir at which there were 51 in the congregation. St George's and St John the Baptist, Minal also combined their singers to form a joint choir for a Choral Evensong held in St John the Baptist in July.

The Children's Ministry team continued to meet on a regular basis during 2025 to discuss ways in which St George's can reach out to young families in the parish, and two Messy Church services took place. Discussions are ongoing about the possible provision of a weekday informal service for pre-school children.

There continues to be an online gathering offered each Wednesday afternoon for prayers, which is a helpful mid-week service, and which has a committed following.

Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals

At St George's, baptisms take place as part of a Morning Worship service, giving the opportunity for the

church family to offer a warm welcome to its new members. In 2025 there were two baptisms, and the St George's bells rang out for three weddings during the year. We mourned the loss of several members of the church family over the course of 2025, and our prayers were with the bereaved at six funerals and five thanksgiving services.

St George's in the Community

Revd Pete continued in 2025 with regular visits to Preshute Primary School to lead assemblies and our Open the Book team have been visiting the school on a monthly basis to act out Bible stories with the help of the pupils. As mentioned in the Eco Church report, St George's hosted summer visits to the churchyard from Preshute school's Reception, year 3, 4 and 6 classes for wildlife workshops. To complete the academic year, a Year Six leavers' service was held at St George's, and in the autumn, a Harvest Festival service for children in Year 4 at Preshute Primary School and their families.

The St George's newsletter continues to be circulated to approximately 700 houses in the parish (mostly in paper format, but electronically in some cases) in an edition that covers two months. The six editions in 2025 covered the themes 'Living Water', 'Thanksgiving, 'Our Incredible World', 'Pilgrimage', 'Peace' and 'Hope springs eternal'. Each edition contains a letter from the Vicar, an article on the theme, a children's page related to the topic as well as publicising events in the local community and, of course, the service times. We remain grateful to Rory Brown for typesetting each edition, to Originzone in Swindon for their speedy printing, to Sally Cripps for her work in preparing the newsletters for circulation and to our newsletter distributors for delivering the newsletter throughout the parish.

Visits by the clergy to residential homes - Savernake View, Merlin Court and Coombe End Court in Marlborough - to bring home communion to the residents continue on a regular basis.

Shortly before Christmas, Andrew Brown, supported by a group of hardy singers from St George's, once again led community carol singing in Barton Park and raised over £400 for Crisis at Christmas. Supporters and choir alike enjoyed warming mulled wine and mince pies alongside the carolling!

St George's continues to attract many visitors during the course of the week who come to admire the church and churchyard in its idyllic setting by the river or to seek sanctuary in the peace and quiet of the church. For those unfamiliar with the church, there is a history of the church available to purchase as well as a free walk-round guide.

Amanda Brown

Safeguarding

Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS): During the year the organisation administering DBS checks changed from Access Personal Checking Services Ltd (APCS) to Thirty-one Eight. After the changeover, a data breach from APCS affected two members of our PCC.

Twenty-four people on the St George's electoral roll currently have a DBS Certificate, a process which is administered by the Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO), working with a local document verifier.

PCC meetings: Safeguarding is a standing item on every agenda of PCC meetings. The PSO reports to each PCC meeting.

PSO: Judith Denning stepped down as PSO in January 2025 and Heather Lee was appointed.

Policies: All safeguarding policies are in line with Diocesan and Church of England requirements.

Safer recruitment: St George's is currently updating its processes to ensure that we comply with Church of England guidelines for safer recruitment.

Safeguarding concerns and incidents: No safeguarding concerns or incidents have been reported to the PSO this year.

Training and networking: The PSO, ministry team and all volunteers have completed modules of training as required.

Heather Lee, Parish Safeguarding Officer

Lay Pastoral Assistants

The role of the Lay Pastoral Assistant is to provide assistance with pastoral ministry for the local church. This can involve work with children and young people, the sick, the recently bereaved and the elderly and housebound. They may take communion to those unable to come to church. The Marlborough Team as a whole has a number of LPAs, one of whom works particularly with St George's. The main focus of the work this year has been visiting some of those in the parish who are housebound.

St George's is also very fortunate in that it has a welcoming, friendly and supportive congregation who help one another when needed.

Jessy Pomfret

2025 ACTIVITY REPORT

Open the Book

Open the Book, our amateurish monthly attempts to act out Bible stories, continues to be appreciated by the pupils and staff of Preshute School.

In 2025 we performed stories relating to Christmas, Easter and Ascension, and a few Old Testament favourites: David and Goliath (with our Vicar relishing the role of the latter), Solomon and the baby, and Jonah (yours truly getting swallowed by an MDF whale). From the New Testament we did some of Jesus's miracles and a couple from the Acts of the Apostles. If ever there is an angel involved, Heather Croucher is quick to volunteer for the part.

We try to engage responses from the children, and there is always no shortage of willing helpers to take walk-on parts (shepherds, soldiers etc).
As always, we would welcome enquiries from anyone interested in joining the team.

Charles Graham

Home Group

St George's Home Group meets fortnightly in Manton. We study a varied and challenging programme of interesting texts, expanding our knowledge of the scriptures and growing our faith with much discussion along the way.

Our Bible study is always the focus of our meetings, but we do sometimes have an evening of poetry

and readings with lots of cake.

We would like to record our thanks to Charles, Keith and Alison who do so well in leading us prayerfully through our sessions with such care and humour.

Sally Cripps

Messy Church

Our first Messy Church service of the year was held in Lent on Saturday 5 April and used as its theme 'The Thanksgiving Meal', focusing on the events of Maundy Thursday as related in chapter 22 of Luke's gospel. Five children and nine adults were welcomed to the service by Revd Pete with a lively selection of worship songs, before we all read the Bible passage together. Revd Pete explained about the eucharistic meal that we share in communion services and the children were shown the silver chalice that we use. This was an inspiration to create their very own magnificent, and richly jewelled, chalices and patens! In keeping with the theme of 'The Thanksgiving Meal' the children made beautiful 'stained glass' cards in which to write their own thanksgiving grace to use at home before meals. Another popular crafting activity was creating a miniature Garden of Gethsemane – the results were stunning! The garden was designed to be a focal point for prayer at home, and the children also made a prayer cube to take away with them. To complete the remembrance of the Last Supper, the children braided dough to make a bread 'crown' for baking at home, and they even crushed grapes to make their own 'wine'! Following further joyful singing and a time of prayer, we all enjoyed our very own Thanksgiving Meal where the fine chalices were put to good use complete with the home-pressed 'wine'!

Our summer Messy Church service, held on 12 July with 11 children and 14 adults present, took as its theme 'God 24/7' from the gospel according to Matthew, chapter 28, verses 16-20, which concludes with the words: "And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." As usual, the service began with songs and an explanation of the Bible passage led by Revd Pete. To help the children remember that we are always 'wearing' God's love they made bracelets using beads shaped like crosses. Gingerbread crosses with 'God' and 'Love' piped in icing on them were further reminders of God's ever-present love for us. Other craft activities focused on being Jesus's disciples and spreading the good news: invitation cards were made to invite friends and family to the forthcoming Pet Service, suitcases were crafted and packed with the 'tools' we need to spread the good news, and a globe nightlight was made to help us remember to share the light of Christ with others. In our prayer corner, the children identified places on local and international maps where there are people in need of our prayers. The service rounded off with further singing and prayers before we finished with the customary tea – a well-earned reward for all the hard work the children had put into the crafting.

A key part of the Messy Church service is that families receive a leaflet to use during the afternoon and to take away with the words of the worship songs, the Bible story, explanations of the thoughts behind each craft activity, prayers for use at home and details of church contacts and forthcoming services and events.

The Messy Church services are very much a team effort - huge thanks to Revd Pete and the wonderful team who have helped with Messy Church over the course of 2025. Whilst the numbers attending in 2025 were more modest than in previous years, we feel that it is nevertheless a worthwhile service to offer. Please do help to spread the word to young families you may know!

Amanda Brown

The Flower Group

We have had a year of glorious flowers in our beautiful church. With enormous thanks to those who have given time talents and hard work.

We had three weddings to help and plan for. One was a very special wedding of members of our congregation, Anna and Fin. Amanda Brown arranged the most exquisite flowers for this Scottish themed wedding with thistles and all.

We decorated the church for Easter and, as is our custom, asked everyone who could to bring a posy or vase or bunch of flowers to add to the joyful explosion of spring colour along our window ledges.

Funerals are especially poignant and even more so when they are dear friends from our congregation. With help from the families, we planned some meaningful and fitting floral arrangements.

Thank you again to the PCC for funding the cost of a small token for flowers for each person on the rota. Some of this funding is kindly donated to the flower fund which allows for provision of flowers for various special services and occasions, in particular Christmas, when we have the magnificent floral decorations all around the church inspired by Prue Groffmann - they were perfect in the candlelight. Thank you so much to Micky Graham, Jan Lillywhite, Rosie and Sally Cripps who put these big arrangements together.

The biggest thank you must go to all our volunteers who make our church so welcoming, with no fuss or complaint. There are so many joyous comments from congregation and visitors. We are very fortunate indeed to have you.

Sally Cripps

Music

2025 was another year of much music making at St George's, once again marked by exciting new initiatives alongside well-loved events.

The Junior Georgians sang on Mothering Sunday, Harvest and the Crib Service. Henry Moule was the soloist at the Crib Service in the first verse of *Once in royal David's city*. Our Junior Musicians group continues to grow: they led the All Age services in February and May and on Music Sunday (July). A total of eight children play the recorder, flute, clarinet, violin, cello and piano. My thanks to Heather and Amanda for all their help with both the Junior Georgians and the Junior Musicians.
Meanwhile, The Georgians have enjoyed their year's singing. Services were led on Easter Day, Choral Evensong at Minal in July (the first joint service with singers from St John the Baptist, which will be an annual event), Remembrance and Carols by Candlelight. At a packed Carols by Candlelight, the soloist for *Once in royal David's city* was Georgia Playfair, and the choir carols were *Remember O thou man* (Thomas Ravenscroft), *What child is this?* (Becky McGlade) and *Benedicamus Domino* (Peter Warlock). In addition, the gallery choir sang on two occasions in the year, on Advent Sunday and in the First Communion of Christmas on Christmas Eve. For the sixth year running we extended a winter musical outreach in Barton Park in the week before Christmas. A group of hardy volunteers and enthusiastic local residents assembled to sing carols in Farrar Drive. The rain stopped just in time, and the winter air was filled with the sound of carols and enhanced by the smell (and taste!) of mince pies and mulled

wine. The evening raised over £400 for Crisis – my thanks to all involved.

A new focus was developing the "Fifth Sunday specials". In addition to Mothering and Advent Sundays, we held a Sing Praise service in June, with all the hymns personal favourites chosen by members of the congregation. Another "special" was the Taizé Service in August, which this year saw the launch of the teenage singing group to be called Cantemus: all the singers are former Junior Georgians, and they led the musical chants and refrains beautifully.

The Choral Evensong in June was led this year by guest choir "Opus 2" from Kintbury: we were delighted to welcome them and their conductor, Chris Lambert, to St George's. The organ has been in the spotlight too, as 2025 was designated "Play the Organ Year". Our Organ Discovery Day in May was a great success, attended by 35 keen lovers of organ music, the youngest aged 8. The first part included removing the outer case of the organ to show its inner workings – and even taking out a pipe to blow as a whistle! From St George's we progressed to the College Chapel, before returning to the church for tea and sandwiches. A report and photograph featured in the September edition of *Church Music Quarterly*, the magazine of the Royal School of Church Music.

The church concert, *Serenade for St Cecilia*, in November was a highlight of the year. The large audience enjoyed a varied evening, from Renaissance music to songs from *The Sound of Music*, including a performance by the Marlborough Accordion Orchestra. The concert raised circa £900 for the ongoing work of the church. Huge thanks to all 25 performers, and to the social team for the splendid refreshments and canapés served afterwards!

We were saddened by the deaths of several loyal supporters of St George's music: Paul Lefever died in February – we miss his spirited call of "Encore!" at the end of the final organ voluntary. Kay Cripps and Michael Dain, both founding members of The Georgians, died in February and April respectively. At Michael's funeral, members of the choir sang *Make me a channel of your peace* at the request of his family. In December, we were also saddened to learn of the death of Jonathan Genton, who had sung bass in The Georgians since 2016, most recently in the Minal joint Evensong in July.

The organ, piano and keyboard continue to give good service. All three have been much used, with the keyboard particularly supporting Messy Church, the Pet Service and the Junior Georgians services. We were very pleased once again to be able to help St Michael's West Overton in October with the loan of the keyboard for a fundraising concert.

My thanks as always to Revd Pete, the PCC and all who have supported the music at St George's over the year.

Andrew Brown

Social Committee

We started the year with 38 of us visiting our local Pub in Manton on 16 January for a Pie Night - fantastic food and a lively night was enjoyed by all.

Our next outing was a fundraiser for our 20th annual visit to the Raj Restaurant on 4 February. As usual, we were spoilt with delicious food by Mr Bablu and his wonderful staff. The night was finished off with Irish Bingo and we raised circa £150 for Church funds.

The Six Nations Rugby had by now started and many thanks go to those who hosted a gathering of rugby fans to watch one of the games and enjoy a convivial meal together – we raised £620 for the Fabric Fund. Great excitement and, as usual, the after-match tears and joy were carried on to pre service chats the following morning at church.

St George's Quiz was held in the village hall on 14 March and our continuing thanks go to Julie and Peter Ayliffe who not only organised the quiz but supplied the prizes as well. As usual a full house with everyone enjoying desserts followed by cheese and biscuits with wine, and apple juice from the Marlborough Community Orchard. It was a successful night with circa £425 raised.

The APCM was held on the 11 May and we organised a bring and share lunch which was enjoyed by everyone attending.

We had two well attended Choral Evensongs throughout the year (one held jointly at St John the Baptist, Minal). Both were wonderful evenings and finished off with the congregation being treated to refreshments.

Harvest supper was held in the Village Hall on 4 October and cottage pie, desserts, cheese and wine were enjoyed by everyone. As usual, the night ended with a raffle and the circa £300 raised from the evening being split between the Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution and Robert Cauldwell Trust. Church collections the following day were also split the same way.

Our Autumn Concert, 'Serenade for St Celia' was a fantastic success with circa £900 being raised. It was a Celebration of vocal, choral and instrumental music with some readings and all organised by Andrew Brown. The guests and performers enjoyed wine and canapés after the concert.

The Community Carol Singing just before Christmas was held at Farrar Drive with great singing - many thanks to our hosts, Amanda and Andrew, for very welcome mince pies and mulled wine. Donations to the Just Giving site (including cash donations received on the night) were all in aid of Crisis and this meant that we were able to support 12 homeless people over the Christmas period.

The success of these events is due to everyone who helps, whether it is by cooking, serving, putting out chairs, clearing up, or just turning up to support the event. Our thanks go to all these helpers and the Village Hall committee who allow us to use the Village Hall for these events, free of charge.

David Beacom

Bellringing

Bellringing has grown nicely over the last year, with training continuing well. All services have been rung for, plus weddings and two funeral services. Regular maintenance has been carried out with no problems and we plan a weekly simulator practice to start shortly. Anyone who is interested to learn ringing would be very welcome.

Richard Metters

Ride and Stride

Ride+Stride is a national event that takes place annually on the second Saturday in September. It is a sponsored cycle ride or walk to raise money for county Trusts that give grants for repairs or enhancements to churches. In our case this is the Wiltshire Historic Churches Trust. Half the sponsorship money raised comes back to the participants' church. We at St George's have involved ourselves in Ride+Stride for many years. This year, thanks to a special effort, we had many more Riders and Striders than usual and, with generous support from sponsors, we raised the record sum of £3,441. This ensured us our first victory in the coveted Brooke Cup, which was donated in 2010 by Lord Brooke of Sutton Mandeville, a keen supporter of Wiltshire's churches. Winning the cup earns the church an extra £500.

Our successful team consisted of:
Cyclists: Howard Cripps, Heather Croucher, Graham and Katie Dick, Ian and Lynne Moody, Rob Robertson, Jeremy York.
Walkers: Charles Graham, Heather Lee, David and Ian Sims, Barbara Vernon.
Mobility buggy: Daphne Robertson.
Many thanks to all of them, to our sponsors and to those who manned the church to welcome cyclists from other churches. Can we repeat this success in 2026?

Charles Graham

MARLBOROUGH, THE DEANERY & THE DIOCESE

Diocesan Synod

Does the wider Church matter to you? Are you interested in having a voice? If so, do consider whether you are being called to join our local Deanery Synod or the Diocesan Synod; with each synod meeting three times/year. At the Diocesan Synod, we hear from our diocesan bishop, The Rt Revd Stephen Lake about the Vision and Strategy for the whole diocese, and other wider matters such as Safeguarding, Salisbury Cathedral, and Christian Education within the diocese, with many opportunities to feedback views from our parishes. The Deanery Synod is an opportunity to relate these to our own churches and to discuss matters that need to be fed upwards. Those eligible to stand are over 16 years old and part of an Anglican Church in the diocese.

In March, Bishop Stephen discussed the new Diocesan Vision and Strategy which is not about corporate organisation but about our identity and being part of Christ's mission. The Good News is so important – we really need to make Jesus, the Word made flesh, known. As he said, it's all about a person. Jesus is the Good News; he's everything we need to know about God and relationship is at the heart of God. He also talked of the infectiousness of sin. We are all carriers and contaminators, and we can infect others; but our Saviour came for our healing, not to diagnose but to heal us and save us. Meanwhile the Gospel is also infectious as we share it with others.

The rest of the day was spent exploring how we do this, through creative partnerships in local mission and the idea of 'missional pathways' linking a designated group of churches, schools and communities, coming together in mission and ministry.

We also heard about a new Parish Share system, based on the amount of deployed ministry and the

size of worshipping communities, and reports from the Diocesan Board of Education and the Safeguarding Team.

In June, the Diocesan Synod gathered for the Annual General Meeting of the Diocesan Board of Finance. Over the past 25 years, the Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF) has seen a consistent financial pattern: income – driven largely by Parish Share (around 75%) – has grown steadily and expenditure has been kept just below inflation.

However, despite these efforts, they've regularly reported an annual operating deficit of £800k–£1m.

- To date, this gap has been covered by selling clergy houses – an approach that's no longer sustainable.
- Each sale reduces both future income and capital growth.

As it's clear that incremental changes are not sufficient, bold, strategic steps are being taken towards long-term financial sustainability.

We also had an address by Canon Alan Smith, First Church Estates Commissioner. The Church Commissioners for England oversee the assets committee of the Church of England. The figures for 2026-28 had just been announced and would be £1.6bn for the next three years, the largest sum ever distributed. These are the funds we apply for – in our mission funding bid, for carbon net zero, for racial justice and support for giving and church buildings. This money also funds some of the costs of the Cathedral, Bishop Stephen's house and the stipends of our three bishops.
In his Presidential Address, Bishop Stephen announced the good news that the diocese has secured £5.1m funding from the national church to support and accelerate our diocesan strategy to '*Make Jesus Known'*, through Mission Hubs. Mission Hubs are parishes working well across all ages, who want to establish creative partnerships with churches around them to offer resources, people and expertise. Many of the hubs will focus on working with the missing generations and resourcing and growing new leaders for the church of the future.

In October, Bishop Stephen started his Presidential Address by celebrating the appointment of Archbishop designate Sarah Mullally, who had been a former Canon Treasurer of Salisbury Cathedral, and hence known to many of us.

The major item of business was the DBF budget for 2026. In proposing the budget DBF Chair Jane McCormick and other speakers recognised that it is a budget for transition while we prayerfully navigate change together.

As a diocese we are now clear that the gap between our costs and income needs to be closed. The welcome 10.7% increase to clergy stipends from next April which has been nationally mandated adds to the urgency, as it represents a cost of over £830k each year.

To maintain our current stipendiary presence with 175 clergy posts and the existing support and services provided by the DBF we need to encourage and inspire an increase in giving to Parish Share. With nearly 20 000 people in our worshipping community, each person giving a further £2.45 each week would close the gap. Meanwhile, Synod recognised that many parishes face financial pressures beyond share and therefore an active programme of supporting the local parish 'economy' is being

offered by Anna Hardy and colleagues.

The full guide to the approved budget can be found on the Salisbury Diocese website - search for 2026 DBF Budget Guide.

Sarah Musgrave

Deanery Synod

The Deanery Synod meets three times a year and is made up of clergy and elected representatives from all the churches in the Marlborough Deanery (which covers an area that includes Chiseldon, Broad Hinton, Avebury, Marlborough, Ramsbury and Aldbourne). At present I am the sole lay representative from St George's.

Rev Roger Powell completed his term of office at the end of the year, and his successor is to be Rev Beth Hutton, Team Rector of the Whitton Benefice. Canon Sarah Musgrave continued as Lay Chair but is due to stand down if a successor can be found. Stuart Laing has taken over as Secretary. Nick Swannell is the Deanery Treasurer, and he gives regular updates on the Accounts.

In 2025 the Synod met in April, July and October. A major component of the meetings concerns the partnership with the Diocese of Morobo in South Sudan. Over the course of the year the Synod has approved the sending of money for:

- 12 more bicycles for the clergy,
- the purchase of a grinding machine (there was spare cash in the Deanery Funds which it was agreed could be used for this), and
- 15 sewing machines for the Mothers' Union.

All of these were gratefully received by the people of Morobo.

In addition, there was an Advent Appeal across the Deanery for Bibles to be given to soldiers (on both sides of the ongoing civil war) who have responded to Bishop Data's peace-making initiative by committing themselves to Christ. It raised an excellent £600. Our PCC is committed to supporting the Morobo link, and we donated £500 as part of our giving to Missions and Charities.

The Synod often hears presentations from people outside the Deanery. This year we welcomed Elizabeth Harvey to talk about Diocesan Finance and Stephi Scott, Director of the charity Rural Missions, which offers support for mission in rural parishes. If you would like more details of these presentations, I can happily supply them.

Charles Graham

THE FABRIC, GOODS & ORNAMENTS

Fabric Report

Church and Churchyard tidy up: this happens in April and October and many thanks to all the volunteers who come to help keep our church and churchyard looking pristine. We are also very lucky to have Wiltshire Council cutting the grass for us during the summer and the additional help we get from volunteers is essential. We always achieve a turnout of at least twenty - not sure whether it is the joy they all get from helping in the churchyard or the hot dogs and drinks at lunchtime!

New Path surface: this has worked well and the new handrail and the low level path lights operated by sensors at both ends of the path make it a lot easier to access the church at all times. Those who use prams, walkers or wheelchairs are pleased they do not have to no negotiate loose gravel anymore. Our 'Grab a Weed' incentive (see Eco Church report) has kept paths relatively clear so please, everyone, do continue to remove weeds as you walk past them. A tractor hedge cutter has also trimmed the hedges and bushes in the car park which now gives us additional parking spaces. This hedge cutting also helps keep our new solar lamp standards well charged. Many thanks to our resident blacksmith John O'Hara and team who made and fitted the new lamp standards for our Carols by Candlelight service with very little notice. The total cost of all these works was circa £10,000 which came from Legacy Fund.

The new glass South Porch Doors: these have been fitted for some time, and we are now reaping the benefits of having them keep out the recent cold draughts. The total cost of this work was circa £7,000 which also came out of the Legacy Fund.

Refurbishment of Gas Light: after negotiating with Wiltshire Council we eventually obtained ownership of the gas light situated on the bottom church path. John O'Hara and his team have now refurbished the lamp standard to its former glory and fitted a solar light. This is now available as a bequest for £1,000 including a memorial plaque. Also available are two cherry trees at £800 each and a bench at £1,000, which can be given in memoriam.

The Heating System: this has always struggled to bring the church up to an acceptable level, probably since it was installed in 1935. After looking at various options to upgrade the system the PCC settled on new fan assisted heat emitters in conjunction with the existing boiler which is seven years old. The church now heats up more quickly and to a more acceptable stable temperature. Also, the heating does not need to be switched on for as long as the old system, so we are waiting to see how much more economical the new system has become. Sadly, the increase in gas prices will not help. The cost of circa £20,000 for this upgrade also came from the Legacy Fund, so it is important to keep this in mind when one is making a will to keep our church upgraded and in good condition. To donate a legacy please contact the Treasurer whose details are on our website. During the summer we also had to contend with digging trenches for a replacement gas supply to the church which was carried out expertly and with little disruption by Wales & West.

The Sound System: after over 20 years of good service the sound system broke down just before Christmas and a temporary solution has given us back the use of the microphones. A replacement system will need to be installed, which will also be funded by the Legacy Fund.

The Lighting system: this functions well but we have to bear in mind that it was probably 40 years ago when it was installed. At our next Quinquennial in 2026 we will have to look at an upgrade to improve economy and efficiency. We have also looked at installing solar panels, but this will not be allowed after our Architect checked with the Conservation Department at Wiltshire Council.

Potential Church Hall/maximising usable space/storage: this is an ongoing feasibility study being undertaken by a 'Building Special Committee' who are members of the PCC. This reflects on where St George's is at present and where and what it needs to deliver for the future. There would be grants available for this type of work, but it would also require some of our own funding from the Legacy Fund to secure these grants.

Thefts: of wi-fi router, card reader and nest heating controls. Sadly, this happened over a period of a few months which we find hard to believe. Apart from the expense of replacing these items it was also the inconvenience of waiting to have them replaced.

During the year we also carry out the ongoing maintenance of replacing lights, cleaning windows, joinery repairs, roof flashing repairs, pew repairs, water mains repairs and keeping gutters clear.
Many thanks go to Richard Metters and his team for keeping the bells and tower in such good order. A ringing simulator has now been added as a bellringing teaching aid. It is used through a laptop to assist in teaching bell ringing to young and old, without having to always ring the bells.
As always, many thanks once again to Ken Martin and his trusty tool box for carrying out various essential jobs throughout the year.

David Beacom

Eco Church
St George's Silver Eco Church plaque is still proudly on show in the porch right beside our Ride and Stride plaque.

In 2025 we promoted 'Grab a weed' to try and cut down on pesticide use and you can now look around you and see that there is a distinct lack of weeds in the car park and churchyard. Many thanks to you all and please keep up the 'grab a weed', just leave the picked weed where you found it at the edge of the path where it will decompose.

Eco Church is self-funding and many thanks go to Chris McColl and Bridget Smith for their donations from selling plants from their base in Manton High Street.

Future funding also comes from planting a memorial cherry tree for £800 including a memorial plaque. We still have two available should anyone wish to sponsor one in memory of a loved one. The seven memorial cherry trees will add even more food for the bees, while at the same time making our churchyard more beautiful.

As we encourage our churchyard wildlife we will look at installing trail cams especially down by the river where an otter was spotted. Anybody with this type of experience would be welcome to our team.

Don't forget that, in addition to the memorial cherry trees, we now have twelve memorial benches

throughout the churchyard with some next to the river. Why not come and picnic, rest, read, pray or just contemplate.

We have made three attempts to try and grow Flanders poppies around the war memorial with no success. If anyone has experience of this or wants to take it on as a task then we would be extreme grateful.

The area near the pedestrian bridge has brightened up after dead tree removal and there has been a lot of replanting with elder, willow and hazel trees in this area.

The Remembrance Garden continues to struggle with a family of squirrels who think that our planting efforts are for their benefit. Chilli flakes have been spread around the new plants to see if this will dampen their appetite. Snowdrops, cyclamen, aconites and loads of other plants and bulbs have been trialled so let's hope we see some results in the spring.

Many thanks to Matthew Best for surveying our bird population to see what types of birds frequent our churchyard. The result is that we now have two robin boxes, two spotted fly catcher boxes, seven tit boxes, a tawny owl box and a bat box. Matthew has cleaned out the boxes ready for this year's breeding season and he did notice that the tawny owl has been visiting its nesting box. Please look at the Nature Trail plan at the back of the church to see the location of these boxes and other features of our Eco Church churchyard.

As well as the 'bug hotel' we also have two homes for dormice and two homes for hedgehogs. We also now have a feeding station for hedgehogs - please let me know if you would like to help with hedgehog feeding.

Emily Best writes:

"Last summer we hosted visits to the churchyard from Reception, and years 3, 4 and 6 at Preshute school. We thought about how the Bible tells us that "The Earth is the Lord's and everything in it" Psalm 24:1 and that "God placed people in the garden to care for it" Genesis 2:15. With this in mind we explored the amazing diversity of wildlife that calls the churchyard home. The moth light trap revealed a vast array of species of all shapes, sizes and colours that feed and breed amongst the vegetation at St George's. Marvelling at intricate details on these insects up close was an eye-opening experience for many and led to lots of discussions ranging from God's amazing creativity to life-cycles, habitat needs, evolution and climate change.

We looked for evidence of small mammals such as yellow-necked mice and bank voles; these proved more elusive than previous years. The children and adults were delighted to find evidence of at least two different hedgehogs visiting many areas of the churchyard on each night I'd set up footprint tunnels. Over the course of the two hours each class spent with us we covered many areas on their science curriculum through observations and games such as a modified version of 'musical chairs' to illustrate the effect of habitat loss on insect diversity and abundance. Churchyards, such as St George's, with their old, relatively undisturbed grassland provide an increasingly important habitat for wildlife. The bird boxes around St George's prompted opportunities to discuss local birds and their part in the ecosystem. Year 6 also got stuck into dissecting barn owl pellets from a local farm and identifying

the bones they contained - one group discovered a mole skull in their pellet! The children enjoyed refreshments inside the church and one class got to sing about God's amazing creation. Thank you to everyone who helped welcome and facilitate these visits; I pray they strengthen ties between the school and the church, as well as giving the children the opportunity to experience and enjoy local wildlife and be inspired to look after God's creation."

Our beekeeper, Sandra Rogers, writes on *Beekeeping; chaos, friendship and award-winning honey*:

"In spring, church members and supporters held a planting day to extend the flower bed running down the path and fill it with bee-friendly plants, including lavender, salvias, thyme and other nectar-rich species, transforming the area into a more inviting space for both people and wildlife. It was a very enjoyable day with volunteers from St George's church, both seasoned gardeners and beginners.

The group was successful in securing a gift of free bee-friendly bulbs from the North Wessex Downs Landscape Trust, enabling a second event in late October focused on bulb planting. Our volunteers planted grape hyacinths, chionodoxia, star of Bethlehem, camassias, wild daffodils and additional snakehead fritillaries, chosen to provide early and extended flowering for pollinators and our resident bees of course.

Simon and Angela Baldock kindly planted a crab apple tree in November to replace a failing cherry with a damaged trunk, thanks to surplus funds from donations towards post-service tea and coffee. The crab apple will supply blossom for insects in spring and fruit for birds later in the year, diversifying both the visual appeal and ecological value of the churchyard. Bulbs were planted in circles around the crab apple tree and the existing cherry trees. It will be so exciting to see those come up in spring, protected from over enthusiastic strimming by yellow pegs.

We started the year of 2025 with two hives all treated for varroa mite and insulated to keep the winter bees snug until spring returned. All seemed well but one hive just failed to get going, which might relate to damp conditions in the hive (and a beekeeper who still has a lot to learn.)

The strongest hive went great guns producing two supers of honey (more about this later). I extracted the supers on 24 May and kept the precious honey in food grade buckets until it was time to put it into jars.

Pests and disasters - unfortunately, the wasp numbers hit plague levels this year and this colony was sadly robbed out by wasps and almost completely destroyed. There have been lessons learnt about putting out wasp traps early and ensuring that the colony has a narrowed entrance to assist them to defend against these raiders.

I took the remaining bees in a nuc box to Oli's apiary so that they might re-establish and rebuild with a new Queen. Once again drama struck - one minute there were eggs and brood in all stages, the next minute the Queen seemed to disappear. Following advice from a real beekeeper I took a frame of eggs from the new colony wrapped in damp tea towels and delivered it one evening so that the bees could make a new Queen.

I bought a new colony from a lovely Wiltshire farmer and named them the ginger ninjas because they are so distinctive. This colony has a queen called Bertha – she's quite large and very prolific. They quickly settled in and we set them up in their new home: the Cherry hive. They made excellent honey in

the sections and some lovely cut comb in the late summer. A very kind beekeeper made me a bait hive which Oli and I set high in a tree – so if you see a green box, we are trying to catch a passing swarm.

No beekeeping season is complete without a subplot about the wrong honey jars. The threads didn't match the lids, the competition jars weren't quite right, and there were a lot of emergency messages to other wiser beekeepers asking for help. All these difficulties were eventually overcome just in time for the Kennet Beekeeping show. Oli won the dark runny honey class, and I won best pale runny honey in show and best exhibit and was delighted to be awarded prestigious blue ribbon. The judge commented on my strong flavoured honey and was intent on finding out what my bees were foraging on. My thanks to St George's and for all their planting and to Oli for his endless patience and constant support.





At the Wiltshire bee and honey day, my honey won best in show, earning a large silver shield, and another Blue ribbon, alongside my two Kennet cups. The judge said, "you again!".

In the end 34 lbs of honey were produced, 12 sold at the Wiltshire Bee and Honey Day and 10 went to St George's for their Eco Church funds. We raised £100 which was very pleasing.

Next year we hope to raise our own Queens and expand the number of colonies to four hives if possible. We can't count our hives just yet because April is such a telling month for bees, just before the season kicks off in full blast for swarming in May!"

All the above is only part of creating an Eco Church. Thanking God for giving us the earth we live on extends to the ministry and running of the Church. Sermons, prayers and readings that relate to God's greatest creation are used on a regular basis. We also must ensure, where possible, that purchases are sustainable, and recyclable. These thoughts and practices should also be mirrored in our own lives and homes, to care for God's creation.

Linda Morgan and David Beacom

Churchyard Records

There was one burial in an existing plot during 2025. There were three interments of ashes in existing plots in 2025 and three interments of ashes in two new plots; one was shared for a husband and wife.

The soft and hard copies of the records will be updated to reflect this information. Copies are held by the Churchwarden, the Team Office, the Team Vicar and me. There is a hard copy file of the records kept in the church.

Laurien Carter

Brass Cleaners
Brass cleaning continues to be undertaken every two weeks by a small but diligent group of parishioners. Thank you to those involved – the church brass always looks good.
If anyone interested in becoming a brass cleaner they are welcome to join the team – please let us know.

Laurien Carter

Archives
There have been no significant additions to, or searches of, the Archives over the past year.

Jeremy York

The Dominy and Turner Trust
This trust, associated with St George's is for "the purpose of advancement of religion, relief of the poor, advancement of education and general charitable purposes" of the inhabitants of the parish of Preshute.

This year's return on investment has been consistent with last year's income. Applications for funding will be welcomed by the trustees (vicar and churchwardens) and treated in absolute confidence. Please contact Revd Pete Sainsbury by email at revpetesainsbury@gmail.com or telephone 01672 512364. As the churchwardens' posts will both change at the 2026 APCM, two new trustees will need to be appointed.

Nicky Huckle

Missions and Charities
Our policy for distributing the £3,300 set aside in the budget for donations to Missions and Charities has been to keep a balance between Christian mission and relief, and between international, national and local charities. So, four national and international charities have each received £500: SOMA (Sharing of Ministries Abroad), the Bible Society, Tearfund and the Diocese of Morobo. The local charities we support are the Devizes and District Foodbank, Homestart North Wiltshire, the Jubilee Centre, Marlborough Area Poverty Action Group and the Prospect Hospice.

In addition, special collections at church services have raised money for the Jerusalem and Middle East Church, the Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution, SSAFA, Combat Stress, Age UK Wiltshire and the Children's Society. Full details of the amounts involved can be found in the Accounts.

Charles Graham

Churchwardens' Report
We gave quite the response to this year's Ride and Stride appeal, engaging a much larger team from St George's Church and in turn stepping outside our parish.

Our Pet Service included not only our four-legged friends but also a small but mighty praying mantis.

Christmas services were very well attended and generous donations were made to all our special

collections throughout the year. Our Sing-along Nativity numbers were low again this year so we will reconsider how we approach this area of ministry.

We have run two additional and successful musical events this year - see Music section.

Some of our parishioners were affected by a data breach across the Salisbury diocese.

As I end my four-year term I wish to thank all the parish clergy, PCC and congregation for their support in sustaining the church services and maintaining our warm welcome here at St George's Church. I trust their ongoing love for St George's Church and our family in Christ will pass on to the incoming churchwardens. May their faith, prayer and works in outreach over the coming years bear rich and plentiful fruit.

Nicky Huckle, Churchwarden

30 July 2026

FINANCE

Financial Review

The following provides an overview of the accounts for 2025 which have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 using the Receipts and Payments basis.

In 2025 the Unrestricted Fund ended the year with a deficit of £9,611 against a deficit of £10,878 in 2024. While income increased in 2025, from £70,831 in 2024 to £72,963, expenditure increased in that time from £81,709 to £82,574.

We continue to give a proportion of our income. A total of £1,916 was raised through special collections and a further £3,350 was donated to a range of local, national and international charities.

2025 saw a number of capital projects, funded through the Legacy and Fabric funds we maintain for long term investment and maintenance of the church and churchyard. £30,210 was spent on capital project work from these funds, the most significant of which was the installation of a new heating system in the church, which will lead to a reduction in energy costs going forward.

The full accounts are presented in the Appendix.

Notes on Income:

The table below summarises the sources of income for our Unrestricted Fund over the past five years. This excludes restricted income such as designated donations and special collections.

We continued our annual Stewardship Campaign to ask parishioners to increase their regular giving, and this can be seen through the increase in regular giving through the Parish Giving Scheme (PGS) and Blue Envelopes.

Income from social events increased with more events in 2025.

Sources of Income (Unrestricted Fund)	2021 (£)	2022 (£)	2023 (£)	2024 (£)	2025 (£)
Planned Giving (Total)	30,796	30,853	31,474	39,460	40,243
of which: Parish Giving Scheme (PGS)	16,494	18,016	18,848	25,014	26,518
Standing Orders	12,597	10,988	10,873	12,575	11,480
Blue Envelopes	1,705	1,849	1,753	1,872	2,245
Collections (excluding special collections)	1,858	3,418	2,614	2,476	3,397
Yellow Envelopes	972	1,191	1,170	1,492	1,495
Wall Box	293	220	251	347	103
Donations	10,307	7,434	5,501	6,496	8,963
Card Reader	N/A	281	1,787	2,023	1,308
Generous Giving Campaign	7,981	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Gift Aid tax refund (2 years claimed in 2022)	11,425	22,447	10,468	13,069	11,060
Social Events (Net)	1,515	2,112	3,907	842	1,721
Fees from Weddings and Funerals	4,157	5,874	3,206	4,260	3,781
Legacies	0	0	200	0	0
Grants	0	1,000	335	0	0
Dividends from Investments	347	358	360	366	375
Total Income	69,651	75,189	61,274	70,831	72,447

Notes on Expenditure:

The table below summarises the sources of expenditure for our Unrestricted Fund over the past five years. This excludes designated expenditure on long term capital projects, the new church heating system and churchyard improvements.

We maintained tight control on spending in 2025, and expenditure increased marginally from £81,709 in 2024 to £82,058. The main increase in 2025 was due to increased church maintenance. Other costs remained steady or dropped, such as utilities where we started to see the benefit of the lower running costs of the new heating system. The Parish Share, which had been increasing year on year by 5-8%, dropped slightly in 2025. As it accounts for 60% of our expenditure, having risen by 25% since 2018, it was good to see this continual increase halted.

Summary of Expenditure (Unrestricted Fund)	2021 (£)	2022 (£)	2023 (£)	2024 (£)	2025 (£)
Parish Share	40,164	42,173	43,438	47,149	46,442
Church Maintenance and Running Costs	5,584	5,175	2,376	1,820	3,740
Church Capital Costs	Included above	60	177	259	97
Utilities	1,367	4,156	2,742	4,177	3,785
Insurance	2,085	2,169	2,232	2,274	2,314
Equipment & Consumables	561	631	118	610	725
Publicity, Printing and Stationery	1,867	3,128	1,450	2,550	2,062
Clergy Working and Office Expenses	1,926	2,567	2,055	2,451	2,096
Contemporary Worship Lead	N/A	N/A	3,853	9,600	9,600
Honoraria/Secretarial	2,030	8,107	6,361	7,034	7,228
Missions and Charities	1,123	3,330	3,455	3,380	3,350
Alpha Course	N/A	165	N/A	N/A	N/A
Education & Youth Work	N/A	632	126	179	377
Bank Charges	287	307	256	226	242
Independent Examiner Costs	432	0	0	0	0
Total Expenditure	57,426	72,602	68,639	81,709	82,058

Reserves policy

The PCC tries to maintain a balance on unrestricted funds that equates to at least three months' unrestricted payments (excluding charitable giving). In 2025 this was equivalent to £19,677 while the unrestricted fund stood at £2,721. The cash component of the Unrestricted Designated Fund at the end of 2025 was £40,928 and therefore all payments will continue to be met.

Alastair Barr, Hon Treasurer

30 July 2026

Appendix

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of St Geroge's Preshute, Marlborough

Registered Charity Number 1184256

Financial Statements for the Year Ending 31 December 2025

	Note	Unrestricted Funds	Unrestricted Designated Fund	Restricted Fund	Endowment Fund	Total 2025	Total 2024
Receipts		£	£	£	£	£	£
Voluntary Receipts							
Planned Giving		40,243		0		40,243	39,460
Collections at Services		3,397		1,636		5,034	4,019
All other giving / voluntary receipts	4a	11,869	1,600	0		13,469	12,458
Gift Aid Recovered		11,060	400	0		11,460	13,469
Sub Total		**66,569**	**2,000**	**1,636**	**0**	**70,206**	**69,407**
Activities for generating funds	4b	2,237		799		3,036	1,585
Investment Income	4c	375	3,406	131		3,911	5,374
Church Activities	4d	3,781				3,781	4,260
Total Receipts		**72,963**	**5,406**	**2,566**	**0**	**80,935**	**80,625**
Payments							
Church Activities							
Parish Share		46,442				46,442	47,149
Clergy and Staffing Costs	4e	9,600		0		9,600	9,600
Church Running Costs	4f, 6, 7	22,568	0	0	0	22,568	25,113
Church Capital Costs	6, 7	97	30,210	0	0	30,307	9,473
Mission Giving and Donations	5	3,350		1,916		5,266	5,138
		82,058	30,210	1,916		114,184	96,474
Cost of Generating Funds	4g	516		519		1,035	528
Total Payments		**82,574**	**30,210**	**2,435**		**115,219**	**97,001**
Excess of Payments over receipts		**-9,611**	**-30,068**	**131**	**0**	**-34,284**	**-16,376**
Transfer Between Funds	8	**5,264**	**-5,264**				
		-4,347	**-35,332**	**131**	**0**	**-34,284**	**-16,376**
Gains / Losses on Investments							
Realised							
Unrealised			-847		-728	-1,575	881
Net Movement in funds							
Balance brought forward at 1 Jan 2025		7,068	92,178	128	18,205	117,580	133,075
Balance carried forward at 31 Dec 2025		2,721	61,264	259	17,478	81,722	117,580
Net change in funds in year						-35,859	-15,495
Comprising							
Total Receipts		80,935					
Total Payments		115,219					
Investment Gains/Losses		-1,575					
Net change in funds in year		-35,859					

Statement of Assets and Liabilities at 31 December 2025

	Note	Unrestricted Funds	Unrestricted Designated Fund	Restricted Fund		Total 2025	Total 2024
		£	£	£		£	£
Cash Funds							
Bank Current Account		2,721	13,157	0		15,878	2,979
CCLA CBF Deposit Fund		-0	27,771	259		28,030	75,213
Total		2,721	40,928	259		43,909	78,193
	Note		**31-Dec-25**			**31-Dec-24**	
			£			£	
Investment Assets							
Investment Shares - CCLA CBF Share Account			20,334			21,180	
Investment Shares - Aspent Copse Trust			12,946			13,485	
Investment shares - Angela and William Whitrow			4,532			4,721	
Current Assets							
Cash on hand at bank			15,878			2,979	
CCLA CBF Deposit Fund			28,030			75,213	
Total Assets			**81,720**			**117,579**	

Notes to the 2025 Accounts and Further Analysis

1. Accounting Policies

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of St George's Preshute, Marlborough, is a charity registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales, Charity Registration Number 1184256.

a) Basis of preparation

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 together with applicable accounting standards and the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standards applicable in the UK & Republic of Ireland (FRS102) issued on 16th July 2014.

b) The accounts are prepared on the Receipts and Payments basis.

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention except for the valuation of investment assets, which are shown at market value.

The accounts include all transactions, assets and liabilities for which the PCC is responsible in law. The accounts do not include the accounts relating to any informal gatherings of Church members or small cash balances held by individuals such as the flower arrangers.

Rounding – the Accounts are prepared to the exact penny but for presentation purposes, and for ease of reading and understanding, are shown in rounded pounds. This can mean that some of the totals and/or sub totals do not appear as if they add correctly and appear to be £1 out.

c) Incoming resources

- Voluntary income - Collections are recognised when received by or on behalf of the PCC. Planned giving receivable under Gift Aid is recognised only when received.

- Tax recoverable on Gift Aid donations is recognised when the Gift Aid is received.
- Grants and legacies to the PCC are logged as soon as the PCC is notified of its legal entitlement, the amount due is quantifiable and its ultimate receipt by the PCC is reasonably certain. It is recorded in the accounts when received.
- Funds raised by any social events are accounted for gross, where practicable and costs for events included in expenditure, this is broken out later in the notes.
- Income from investments Dividends and interest are accounted for when received.
- Gains and losses on investments Realised gains or losses are recognised when investments are sold. Unrealised gains or losses are recognised on their valuation in the Statement of Assets and Liabilities.

d) Resources used

- Church ministry and services - The diocesan share/quota is accounted for when paid. Any diocesan share unpaid at 31 December would be provided for in these accounts as an operational (though not a legal) liability and is shown as a creditor in the Statement of Assets and Liabilities.
- Grants made - Grants and donations are accounted for when paid over, or when awarded, if that award creates a binding obligation on the PCC, then they are recorded in the Statement of Assets and Liabilities.

e) Fixed assets - Consecrated land and buildings and moveable church furnishings

- Consecrated and beneficed property is excluded from the accounts by S10(2) of the Charities Act 2011. Movable church furnishings held by the rectors and churchwardens on special trust for the PCC and which require a faculty for disposal are accounted for as inalienable property and not valued in the accounts.
- All expenditure incurred during the year on consecrated or benefice buildings and movable church furnishings, whether maintenance or improvement, is treated as an expense and written off.
- The fabric fund is maintained to cover the costs of major maintenance whereas minor works are funded through the general fund.

f) Investments - Investments are valued at market value at 31 December.

g) Current Assets - Cash held in a savings account with a bank is classified as cash at bank. Cash held on deposit with the CBF Church of England Deposit Fund or held in a term deposit account with a bank is also classified as cash.

h) Funds - Funds have been classified as Unrestricted, Unrestricted Designated, Restricted or Endowment.

- Unrestricted funds represent the funds of the PCC that are not subject to any restrictions regarding their use and are available for application on the general purposes of the PCC.
- Funds designated by the PCC for a particular purpose are classified as unrestricted designated as the PCC has allocated them for a specific purpose although the PCC can re-designate these funds. This helps budget for the future.
- Restricted funds are funds received, collected by or given to the PCC for a particular purpose which was specified at or before the time of receipt. These funds have been restricted by the donor for a particular purpose and they cannot be used by the PCC for any other purpose except by agreement with the donor or as determined by the courts or the Charity Commission.
- Endowment funds are funds or assets given to the PCC with the specific instruction that only the income gained from the funds can be spent. The original endowment funds cannot normally be spent and must remain in the form of equivalent assets or investments.
  St George's is the beneficiary of two funds:

The Aspent Copse endowment fund. The dividend income from the fund each year is added to our general fund and is not restricted in use. The fund itself is managed by the Salisbury Diocesan Board of Finance and the capital is not available to be spent (it is understood that in extremis the board could be approached to allow the funds to be transferred to our general funds but this would be a matter for them to consider not a right).

The Angela and William Whitrow fund where the dividend income gained is restricted to use on upkeep of the churchyard.

2. Explanation of Funds

St George's has a number of funds where the PCC has allocated money for specific purposes to aid saving for projects and to manage our finances more effectively, e.g. to budget for organ maintenance. The funds and purposes are as follows:

- Fabric fund: To build up reserves for maintenance work in the church and churchyard.
- Legacy and Gift Fund: Used to ring fence money for capital projects.
- Boiler Fund: Maintenance and where required replacement of the church boiler and related heating system
- Church Hall: Specific fund with the long term aim to provide a church hall or annex to the church
- Organ Fund: Fund for maintenance and repair of the organ
- Ministry Fund: to provide specific funds for ministry.

3. Movement in Funds

The movement in Funds is shown in the table on the next page.

Movement in Funds

	Note	Balance B/F	Receipts	Payments	Investment Gains / Losses and transfers	Bal/C/f
Unrestricted		7,068	72,963	82,574	5,264	2,721
Restricted	6					
Fabric Fund		128	131	0		259
Special Collections	5	0	2,435	2,435		0
		128	2,566	2,435	0	259
Designated	7					
Fabric		144	0	0		144
Legacy & Gift Fund		79,339	5,406	30,210	-847	53,689
Boiler		0	0			0
Ministry		5,264	0		-5,264	0
Church Hall		1,141				1,141
Organ		6,290				6,290
		92,179	5,406	30,210	-6,111	61,264
Total (excl of Aspent Copse & Whitrow Fund)		99,375	80,935	115,219	-847	64,244
Endowments						
Value of Aspent Copse Trust & Whitrow Funds		18,205	0		-728	17,478
Total		117,580	80,935	115,219	-1,575	81,722
		£				
Value at 31/12/24		117,580				
Value at 31/12/25		81,722				
Value change in year		-35,858				
Total Receipts		80,935				
Total Payments		115,219				
Investment gains/loss		-1,575				
Net change in funds in year		-35,859				

4. Breakdown of Income and Expenditure

		Unrestricted Fund	Unrestricted Designated Fund	Restricted Fund	Total 2025	Total 2024
Receipts		£	£	£	£	£
a) All other giving / voluntary receipts						
Donations (including yellow envelopes)		11,766	1,600		13,366	12,111
Legacies		0		0	0	0
Wall Box		103			103	347
	4a	11,869	1,600	0	13,469	12,458
b) Social Activities Generating funds						
Plant Sales		0			0	70
Raj Night		210			210	245
Rugby Dinners		620			620	0
Harvest Supper				799	799	743
Quiz Night		552			552	227
Concert		855			855	0
Safari Supper		0			0	300
	4b	2,237		799	3,036	1,585
c) Investment Income						
Interest on CCLA CBF Deposit Fund			2,817		2,817	4,305
Dividends of CCLA CBF shares			589		589	575
Dividends of Trust Shares		375		131	506	494
	4c	375	3,406	131	3,911	5,374
d) Church Activities:						
Fees for Weddings and funerals		3,781			3,781	4,260
	4d	3,781			3,781	4,260
Payments						
e) Clergy and Staffing Costs						
Contemporary worship lead Pay, NI, Pension etc		9,600		0	9,600	9,600
	4e	9,600		0	9,600	9,600
f) Church Running Expenses						
Clergy Working and Office Expenses		2,096			2,096	2,451
Honoraria and Secretarial		7,228			7,228	7,034
Organ Maintenance & tuning		595			595	567
Insurance		2,314			2,314	2,274
Printing and stationary		2,787			2,787	3,160
Heating, Lighting and Water		3,785			3,785	4,177
Repairs, Maintenance & Cleaning		3,145	0	0	3,145	5,045
Bank Charges		242			242	226
Education/Youth Work		377			377	179
	4f	22,568	0	0	22,568	25,113
g) Costs of Generating Funds						
Harvest Supper				519	519	528
Quiz Night		114			114	0
Concert		36			36	0
Christmas Carols		347			347	0
Night at the Raj		19			19	0
		516		519	1,035	528

5. Giving to Missions and Charities

		Unrestricted Fund	Unrestricted Designated Fund	Restricted Fund	Total 2025	Total 2024
		£	£	£	£	£
Special Collection Distribution						
Jerusalem and Middle East Church				328	328	214
Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution				196	196	478
Caldwell Trust				196	196	0
SSAFA - the Armed Forces Charity				172	172	116
Combat Stress				172	172	116
Children's Society				427	427	417
Age UK Wiltshire				427	427	417
				1,916	1,916	1,758

		Unrestricted Fund	Unrestricted Designated Fund	Restricted Fund	Total 2025	Total 2024
		£	£	£	£	£
Charitable Giving						
International						
SOMA UK		500			500	500
Diocese of Morobo (via Deanery)		500			500	500
National						
Bible Society		500			500	500
Tearfund		500			500	500
Local Charities						
Devizes and District Foodbank		500			500	500
Home Start North Wiltshire		150			150	150
Jubilee Centre		150			150	150
MAPAG		150			150	150
Prospect Hospice		400			400	400
Friends of Salisbury Cathedral		0			0	30
Total		3,350			3,350	3,380

6. Note on Restricted Funds

With the exception of Special Collections, there were no payments made in 2025 from Restricted Funds. The breakdown of receipts are shown below:

	Income	Expenditure
Dividends Received from Investments	131	
	131	0

7. Note on Unrestricted Designated Funds

As of 31 December 2025, there was £61,264 in the Unrestricted Designated fund. The breakdown of payments and receipts are shown below:

	Income	Expenditure
Dividends Received from Investments	589	
CCLA CBF Deposit Account Interest Income	2,817	
Donations for cherry trees	1,600	
Gift Aid on donations	400	
Legacy - Pew Works		1,682
Legacy - New Heater Installation		19,488
Legacy - Churchyard and Car Park Lamps		4,614
Legacy - Porch and Path Work		3,088
Legacy - Internal and External Electrical Work		1,338
	5,406	30,210

8. Transfer between funds

£5,264 transferred from Ministry Unrestricted Designated to Unrestricted fund

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT
TO THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL "THE PCC" (TRUSTEES)
of
St GEORGE'S CHURCH PRESHUTE

Registered Charity Number 1184256

Year Ended 31 December 2025

I report on the Receipts and Payments Accounts, pages 24 to 31, which are attached as the Appendix to the Trustees' Annual Report for the year ended 31 December 2025.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the 2011 Act"). The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Act and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act,
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act, and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no material matters have come to my attention which gives me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:  Date: 31 July 2026

Roger Wheeler BSc Econ
Accountant
Roger John & Co
1 Farrar Drive
Marlborough
SN8 1TP







