

All Saints Church, Parish of Malvern Wells & Wyche

Treasurer's Report for 2025

Introduction

This report should be read in conjunction with the 2025 Annual Review booklet and the 2025 detailed financial statement, as signed off by the Independent Examiner. Further information can be found in the Annual Report of the PCC but is summarised here.

2025 was very much a year of consolidation at All Saints with a small growth in the worshipping community. We still find it difficult to attract young families to Sunday morning services but this is more than compensated for by the wide range of children's groups offered by St Andrews on a Sunday morning and the regular strong attendance we achieve at our monthly Messy Church services and weekly Toddler meetings at All Saints. Sunday services are led by the Chase Team clergy and also by the committed and hard working group of retired clergy and locally licensed ministers in the All Saints community. 2025 also saw the Chase Team up to full strength after the appointments of the Team Vicar, Emily Spencer, in late 2024 and the Operations Manager, Neil Attewell in January 2025. Sadly, our Youth Ministry leader, Nathan Shipton, resigned from his post in August but youth work continued led by Tristan Mitchell while a new person is sought to fill that role.

All Saints is now seeing the benefits of Megan's Kitchen which was completed in 2024 and has enabled us to offer new opportunities to engage with our community outside of Sunday services. We offered a free soup and bread lunch to anyone in our community once a week during Lent and this was so successful in bringing people to the church, we have continued it on a monthly basis and include a Thought For The Day with each lunch. The Community Lunches have also enabled us to join up with the Bereavement Café group who meet weekly nearby for coffee and then come across to the church for lunch.

Finance overview

We began the year with a deficit budget of just under £3.3k for unrestricted funds. There were some uncertainties about how much All Saints should contribute to shared Chase team costs and also the level of any grants we might receive from the Diocese towards our Ministry Share request. In the end, we settled on a deficit of just under £4,400 but this excluded any monies we might have to contribute to the re-painting of the roof timbers and rainwater goods.

The end of year outturn saw us have a deficit for the year of just over £8,500 on unrestricted funds. The roof works required us to contribute nearly £18k to the project which was some £8k more than expected so a deficit of £8.5k was not a bad result. We also drew £10k from reserves to fund the roof works so this appears as a reduction in our reserves rather than in the current account.

General Income

Income from regular giving i.e. via the Parish Giving Scheme (PGS) and standing

orders was very similar to 2024 and higher than budget. There was a small reduction in the total monies given compared to 2024 but this was offset by an increase in the Gift Aid we were able to claim. If you discount the monies given for Megan's kitchen in 2024, overall income in 2025 was marginally higher than in 2024.

As in recent years, few people use the envelope scheme now and plate collections were generally modest. Donations are always difficult to forecast and in 2025, were much higher than in 2024. A few people now make regular donations via the card machine which was also used for one-off donations and is proving a useful asset.

Many of our regular givers Gift Aid their donations and this resulted in an increased Gift Aid claim for the year. Those who give through the Parish Giving Scheme – and if you have not joined it yet please give it serious consideration as it works so well for us – also have the opportunity to increase their giving each year in line with inflation. About half our PGS members do this so it helps us cope with the inevitable increase in our costs each year.

So, we finished the year with unrestricted income some £6.5k higher than budget which is quite humbling. Whichever way you give, we are extremely grateful for the generosity of the parishioners of All Saints. Faithful giving is a key part of Christian stewardship and it is great to see God at work in our church family.

Investment Income

All Saints has a deposit fund and two small investment funds all of which are managed by CCLA. In 2025, the deposit fund showed a small increase whereas the investment funds reduced in value by a small amount. The interest paying savings account with our bank generated further income but the interest rate payable reduced several times during the year and it is unlikely to yield the same amount in 2026.

The church also manages a few Restricted funds where the capital and any income are reserved for specific purposes. We added another account to these during the year, the Sickness Fund. This was a dormant building society account that was discovered that had been created with monies bequeathed from several small legacies. The account had been operated by members of All Saints who are now all deceased. It is intended to provide for people in the parish who are ill e.g. for help with medication, food, household bills, transport etc. The monies from the Building Society account were recovered and invested in an Investment Income Share Fund where the income is paid to the church current account for disbursement.

We also moved a separate Restricted fund bank account, the Wyche School Fund, into our current account to avoid paying two lots of bank charges. This is a small fund intended to benefit the pupils of the Wyche School in their Christian education e.g. providing bibles for the Year 6 school leavers or funding performing arts by Christian groups at the school. It is shown as a Restricted Fund held in the current account along with the income from both the Sickness Fund and the Peace Fund, also Restricted Funds.

We are now showing Designated funds separately in the financial statement. These are funds set aside for specific purposes but, unlike Restricted Funds, can be used for any church purpose with PCC approval. Previously, the two Designated Funds – Holiday at Home and the Blessings Fund - had been shown erroneously as Restricted.

Away Giving

Each year, it is our practice to give away at least 10% of our income from the previous year following the biblical teaching of tithing. At the start of the year, we allocated sums to our mission partners leaving some unallocated money for us to use when particular needs arose. In 2025, we continued to support the amazing work the Fletcher family and the Bryant family are doing in Thailand and Liberia respectively. Their powerful testimonies and commitment to showing God's love to those in need are inspirational. We continued to support Malvern CAP and the Lyttelton Well and the work of CMS in Peru. We also made smaller donations to the Octagon, to Lifepath, to SKY Autism Support and to our own Guy Crumpler for his work with the Mission to Seamen in Kobe, Japan. It was great to have Guy visit us during the year and those of us who remember him as a quiet but very thoughtful 7 year old in Sunday School are overjoyed to see how he has grown and the life he is now leading in service to God. Our total away giving was £9,269, some £1,000 more than budget.

Ministry Share (formerly known as Parish Share)

Ministry Share is now based on benefices rather than individual churches and is a contribution towards the costs of the stipendiary ministry received by the benefice through the Diocese. The Chase Team has two stipendiary ministers and faced a net request in 2025 of £145,430. Each benefice determines what proportion of the total request is paid by each member church and this was agreed by the three treasurers in the Chase Team churches.

The Diocese also offers Ministry Support grants and these are deducted from the requested Ministry Share. Grants are intended to be a bridge to enable churches to reach a point where they are able to pay their requested Ministry Share in full. It is a sad fact that Worcester Diocese only receives about 70% of its requested Ministry Share and the majority of churches in the Diocese don't pay their full request. The churches in the Chase Team have all paid their full request in recent years so on the face of it, we wouldn't qualify for a grant. However, grants can also be awarded for churches working in low income communities (LInC) and both St Andrew's and St Mary's qualify. In 2025, the Chase Team received a LInC grant of ~ £11k similar to that we received in 2024.

Staffing Costs

In 2025, we had a full staff team although we lost Nathan, our Youth Minister in August and this meant overall staff costs were lower than budget. We hope to appoint a new Youth Minister in 2026 and are grateful to Tristan for leading that work in the interim. The only person employed solely by All Saints is our cleaner Karen.

Fabric Repairs

Our fabric costs in 2025 were dominated by the roof works. The initial cost estimate increased to over £35k when additional requirements were placed on us by our insurers. Geoff Vevers did some amazing work to source grants towards the work and the PCC had agreed to fund the difference so we could commit to the job. Other fabric repairs in 2025 were less than budget which helped offset the cost of the roof works.

Utility Costs

Overall, our utility bills were higher than in 2024 partly due to general increases in costs but also due to the increased use of the church, especially making use of Megan's Kitchen. Long term forecasts are for utility bills to increase steadily but we are now free from the Parish Buying Energy Basket and are benefitting from initially lower prices as a result.

Our other expenditure ran pretty much to budget in 2025 but overall, expenditure was £10.7k higher than budget.

Assets and Liabilities

At the end of 2025, we had unrestricted reserves of ~£41.9k cash in current, savings and deposit accounts and £20.5k in investment accounts. The current account also holds £1,646 of Restricted funds. We have no outstanding liabilities.

Looking ahead

A deficit budget of just over £8k has been set for 2026. All three churches in the Chase Team have set deficit budgets for 2026. Deficit budgets are unsustainable in the long term but we have committed to spend more than we expect to receive in income so we can deliver the ministry to our communities we believe Gods is calling us to provide. We can draw on reserves for a couple of years but our income will need to increase if we are to maintain the current level of commitment, hence the Lent Appeal in 2026 aimed at funding a new Youth Minister. We have been consistently blessed by God's provision and we rejoice that we are able to concentrate our thoughts not on balance sheets but on seeking God's will and helping God build his Kingdom here in our parishes and the wider town. Not all churches are in the same fortunate position!

Paul Southern, April 2026