

## The Benefices of Mitford and Hebron, and Upper Wansbeck

An exciting role to lead two forward looking benefices in the service of Christ. We are neighbours, from a variety of traditions, located in rural Northumberland approximately 15-20 miles north of Newcastle. The parishes have different styles and traditions yet are committed to collaborate in appropriate ways to support one another on our journeys of faith. This process of evolutionary growth reflects the characters of our individual church families. We are two distinct parts of Christ's serving body, discovering complementary roles within our communities.

It will be both exciting and challenging for whoever leads us on this journey. The Priest in Charge can count on the support of a large, vibrant ministry team, including a 0.25 stipend lay minister. This will enable the appointee to be an effective catalyst for the spiritual growth of individuals and communities. Administrative support will be provided.

To inform potential candidates in further detail, separate profile documents have been produced by the individual benefices. These clearly illustrate that we are very much distinct and yet forward -looking church families, with many shared values and aspirations. We look forward to welcoming a leader who would flourish in this environment.

# Benefice Profile of St Mary Magdalene, Mitford and St Cuthbert, Hebron



*Stable Green  
Mitford  
Morpeth  
Northumberland  
NE61 3PZ  
[www.mitfordchurch.org](http://www.mitfordchurch.org)*

*May 2022*

## Introduction

This profile introduces the Benefice of Saint Mary Magdalene, Mitford, and Saint Cuthbert, Hebron, its church family and our aspiration to continue in faithful growth and service to Jesus our Lord.

There are 128 people on Mitford's electoral roll and 26 on Hebron's. We are predominantly a gathered congregation where 90% live in outlying towns and villages around southeast Northumberland and travel to our two parish churches.

Mitford and Hebron have shared both a priest in charge and a ministry team for over a decade. During that time the two parishes have grown to work so closely and productively together that we have come to regard ourselves as ***"One Church Family with Two Homes"***. This strong spirit of unity has now led to establishing of a Joint Parochial Church Council (JPCC) for the parishes in August 2021.

Authorised by Bishops Council under in July 2021, we understand that this is the first Joint Council of its kind to be authorised under the Church Representation Rules. All groups now report through and are overseen by the Joint Parochial Church Council (JPCC). This gives us a clear common identity and an ability to apply the time and energy saved from administrative duplications to better serve one another and our local community.

The JPCC has 14 members and meets in alternate months. When required the Standing Committee meet some month before each PCC meeting. There are several sub-committees and working groups

In drafting we have consulted widely: not only with church members, but also with other residents of the parishes and surrounding Christian neighbours. This has proved to be a valuable opportunity to take stock of our relative strengths and shortcomings, encouraging us to share what we enjoy through God's grace and reinforcing our commitment to our own distinct, gathered community. In particular, it reminds us that we can never be complacent in our journey of faith, for as followers of Jesus we remain very much a "work in progress".

Although primarily written for enquiring clergy as we seek a Christ centred minister to lead us forward, we hope it can be of value for anyone considering joining our church family. Should this honest introduction to Mitford and Hebron attract you, then please do come and join us- you will be most welcome!

### **The Person we seek is:-**

- **a Spirit led prayerful leader, a good communicator, empathetic, approachable and a "visible presence" in our community.**
- **passionate to preach and teach the Bible, building up the Christian lives of those in church and presenting a living faith to those in the wider community.**
- **an enabler and encourager who will enthuse and energise, growing a younger church whilst nurturing the gifts of all.**
- **willing to engage and serve the community, working in collaboration with a strong ministry team and a variety of people within the benefice and beyond.**
- **able to innovate and demonstrate flexibility and imagination in music and Anglican liturgy**

### **Our Mission and Vision**

Our MISSION is to **worship God, to build his Church, to love his World.**

In this Mission our **VISION is to be continually growing and becoming more like Jesus.**

- growing *numerically* as more people join our faith community.
- growing *spiritually*, as we seek to deepen our relationship with Jesus.
- growing in *servanthood*, as together we seek to bless our communities and do all we can to give the people around us a chance to meet with Jesus.

This is underpinned by our Mission Action Plan, which is on our website <http://www.mitfordchurch.org>

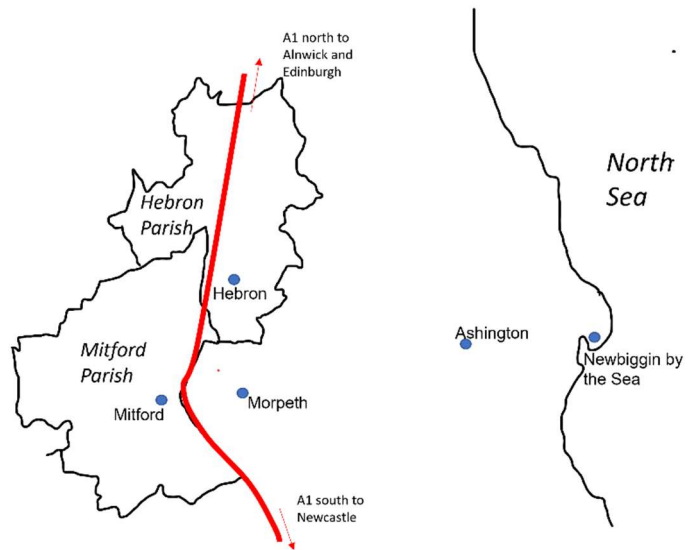
### **The Benefice**

The Benefice of Mitford and Hebron is a rural, mainly agricultural area in Northumberland. We are situated to the north and west of the market town of Morpeth, just off the A1, 16 miles north of Newcastle upon Tyne. At the centre of Mitford village is the Plough Inn and the Village Community Centre, which provides many opportunities for social interaction and sporting activities. Hebron village has a thriving Community Association, with which we share St Cuthberts church building.

According to the most recent data available <sup>1</sup> the parishes contain approximately 1423 residents and they are of mixed age and social grouping. There is a very low ethnic mix in the area , with few social or unemployment issues.

A significant new development featuring 225 homes has recently been built within the benefice at St Andrews Gardens – former NHS Trust land at Northgate Hospital. We regard this as a great opportunity to reach out to some 500 newcomers and welcome them into our church family

The main industry in the area is farming and the other main local employers are Northgate Hospital, Piramal Pharma Solutions (Pharmaceuticals), Newcastle University and a large Garden Centre. There are a large number of people throughout the Benefice who commute to Tyneside and beyond, as well as many who run home businesses Morpeth offers excellent rail and bus transport. Newcastle International Airport is 10 miles to the southwest. There is a regular bus service from St Andrews Gardens into Morpeth and school buses for the villages



Morpeth is a friendly and characterful market town where people have time to talk to each other in the street. There are major retailers, Marks and Spencer, Boots, W. H. Smith, Morrisons, Lidl, and Next as well as a wide range of smaller family run businesses, plus banks and building societies. There are five churches of various denominations in the town. There are also pleasant walks along the river and surrounding area, extensive parks and recreation areas for all ages and many leisure and sports facilities.

There is a three tier education system in the Morpeth area of the following schools:

- |                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| First schools: –  | All Saints C of E Aided, Abbeyfields, Morpeth First School, St Robert's RC Aided and Stobhillgate |
| Middle Schools:   | Chantry and Newminster  |
| -                 |   |
| Community         | The King Edward VI  |
| High School: –    |   |
| Community         | Collingwood School and Media Arts College   |
| Special School: - |   |
| Adult Learning: - | Morpeth Adult Learning Centre - The King Edward VI  |

We enjoy an active partnership with “our church school”, Tritlington C of E Aided First School, which also feeds into Chantry Middle School

Northumberland is a lovely and historical county of rolling open countryside, occasionally wooded with some open moorland and frequent views of Simonside and the distant Cheviot Hills on the Scottish border. The coast line is spectacular with long fine sandy beaches.

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<sup>1</sup> ArcGIS Hub Parish population 2018 update

Newcastle upon Tyne is just 20 minutes away, with extensive shopping and a revitalised Tyne river frontage featuring The Sage Gateshead which is both a live music venue and a centre for music education and the famous Gateshead Millennium Bridge.

## Worship In The Benefice

### ***“One Church Family with Two Homes”***

We are a diverse, inclusive, welcoming Christian Community with people of all ages, and we seek to provide worship which reflects the needs of the whole church family across the Benefice, using both our church buildings.

Our current service pattern is as follows:

1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday in the month	9.30am	Communion Service	Mitford Church
2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday in the month	9.30am	Service of the Word	Mitford Church
	4.00pm	A quiet afternoon prayer in the Celtic tradition	Hebron Church
3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday in the month	9.30am	Service of the Word	Mitford Church
4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday in the month	9.30am	BCP service	Mitford Church
	9.30am	Café Style Church	Hebron Church
4 <sup>th</sup> Thursday of the month	2pm	Worship and fellowship (This service is primarily for our older members of the family who find it difficult to access a 9.30am service)	Hebron Church
5 <sup>th</sup> Sunday in the month	9.30am	Service of the Word	Mitford Church

### Seasonal Services

- We hold an annual service of “Light and Hope” for all who have been bereaved
- Remembrance Sunday service
- Carol Services in both buildings, Good Friday in both buildings
- Christmas Day and Easter Day are usually celebrated in Mitford for the whole benefice.



### Occasional Services

In the benefice we average 10 funerals, 8 weddings, 8 baptisms in a year. Baptism services will normally [but not always] be within the setting of our family worship.

We also have dedicated prayer days in the Benefice at specific times of the year, praying for the church, the community and the world.





With the exception of the monthly BCP service all music, liturgy and supporting multimedia is available on projection screens at Mitford Church ; similar arrangements also apply at Hebron's Café Church service.

We have re-introduced the serving of Coffee after services, giving people an opportunity to chat, network and enjoy each other's company.

We are greatly blessed and encouraged by the extent of lay participation through music, reading, intercessions, prayer ministry, teaching and leading in this family worship environment.

## **Collaborative Ministry**

The Benefice embraces, values and promotes collaborative ministry between laity and clergy. We are dedicated to recognising and empowering everyone's individual ministry in the worshipping community.

We have a Ministry Team comprising:-

1 OLM with PTO

1 retired priest with PTO

3 Readers

2 Readers with PTO

2 Authorised Lay Ministers

2 Anna Chaplains

We meet on a regular basis for mutual support, prayer, planning worship, identifying training needs and resources. Our aim is to further develop all lay ministries within our church family, providing opportunities every church member to share their gifts in Christ's body. In addition we are willing to collaborate with and able to support neighbouring parishes by sharing resources, in line with both Deanery and Diocesan plans for the future.

## **Small Groups.**

We believe small groups are an important part of Christian growth, discipleship and provide opportunities for building strong and supportive relationships. These meetings occur in a variety of settings on different days. Some focus on prayer and fellowship, others on discussion but most are home groups which meet weekly to study God's word. Topics for study have included:

- Further exploration of subjects from weekly sermon series, eg. "Nehemiah", "The Jesus Scandals" etc.
- seasonal themes for example Advent
- online resources for example The Bible Society Bible Course

We encourage all our church family to be part of a home group. Five home groups meet weekly (including one ecumenical group) and two further groups meet on a monthly basis. We are currently looking to multiply two of our biggest groups so that they retain that "welcome feel" for new members.

Many of the guests from our Alpha Courses have taken the opportunity to become part of our home groups.

## **Children and Young People**

We attach great importance to our church's work with children and young people, both within the families who come to Mitford and Hebron, and from the wider community. We endeavour to help and support them to grow in their understanding of the Christian life and to experience for themselves what it means to be part of the Christian family.

The life of our Christian community aims to reflect the central place of children and young people, providing them with opportunities to experience the love of Christ, through the promotion of the Christian faith, spiritual growth and self-development.

### **Junior Church and crèche**

Our small junior Church runs alongside our worship and incorporates a varied programme of activities, games, craft, quizzes and Bible stories. It consists of one group for pre-school children and another for those of school age. In addition, at the rear of the church there is a welcoming area with seating and toys where babies and toddlers can play alongside their parents.

### **Youth Ministry**

Our Youth Ministry is being redesigned to actively include our young people in the life of the church, through opportunities to feel involved and valued eg as members of the church music group; in reading the lessons; operating the sound and projection systems; and helping out with practical tasks such as lighting the candles. We recognise the individuality of all young people and encourage them to reach their potential. Young people have a valued input into our Church life, and we try to encourage and promote the good that they bring to us as well as be challenged by the freshness and energy that they have.

### **Tritlington Cof E First School**

Our church school at Tritlington in the parish of Hebron, has at present 44 children on the school roll. Following two unsatisfactory OFSTED inspections, the Governing Body was disbanded and an Interim Executive Board put in place with representatives of Newcastle Diocese and Northumberland Local Education Authority. We have kept our church connections throughout this time by being available to offer online worship during Covid lockdowns and involvement in worship planning, school vision planning and support with SIAMS inspections. In the coming months a church presence will be sought on the re-formed school governing body.

More recently members of the Ministry Team have been able to go into school to take collective worship and will continue to do so on a regular basis. Two members of our Ministry Team act as Chaplains to pupils, staff and families and are seen as "Church Friends".

We are currently mobilising a small team who will be providing "Messy Church" services at the school. We encourage the school to use our church buildings for end of term worship, prayer days, and seasonal church events. We also support all school fund raising events; offer financial assistance for specific areas of need; and supply all Year 4 leavers with a Bible at their end of year service. We are committed to supporting the school and hope to further develop our links as a Benefice. It is worth noting that the headmistress and staff have explicitly stated they look forward to involving the appointed priest in the life of the school.

### **Safeguarding**

Safeguarding is an integral part of our faith, our practice, our worship and our praying. In our Benefice we are committed to providing the safest possible environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults in our care and the best possible outcomes for all. The safeguarding team, in consultation with the Diocese, works continuously to maintain full compliance with all current safeguarding requirements.

### **Together in Mission**

The Benefice is committed to providing a range of ways of welcoming newcomers into our church family, while "still being themselves". Alpha courses are promoted through both widespread



advertising and personal invitations. Sessions open with a good home cooked meal, followed by a pre-recorded talk and then plenty of opportunity for participants to ask questions which the talk and discussion have prompted in a relaxed and friendly environment. Our monthly Café Church service provides a further, very informal opportunity to learn, share and worship. While regarding Alpha and Café Church as a key means of outreach, we have found they also enrich our church family as others introduce their fresh perspectives to us.

We have established a Marriage Preparation course. Feedback from the course has been excellent. The course has been adopted by other parishes and we work in collaboration with them to assist each other. Marriage Enrichment courses are also run, open to members of the wider community, Christian or non-Christian. Mindful of the influx of new residents to the benefice, we see the contacts made through pastoral services as a significant opportunity for outreach over the coming years.

In 2020 church members launched two different community carol singing initiatives. The first involved visiting the homes of older people associated with the churches of Hebron and Mitford, singing some carols with them and giving a small token of love from the church. The second was undertaken in partnership with musicians of Ellington Colliery Brass Band, when socially distanced singers sang Christmas Carols with and for the residents of Fontside Estate, Mitford and the new housing development at St Andrews Gardens.

Whilst caring for the needs of our church family we seek to fulfil our place within the wider body of Christ through active engagement in joint initiatives. For example a member of our Benefice leads the above marriage enrichment and marriage preparation courses for a number of local churches. Interchurch Lent Courses are a regular event locally and we host a mid-week ecumenical group in our Parish Room, called "Coffee Plus": this lively gathering of ladies meet for prayer and Bible study.

The JPCC sets aside a percentage of its income for charitable support via mission partners at home and abroad. For many years we have supported Children's Vision International (via its UK-associated charity, New Hope for Children) which runs a school and linked children's homes in Bogota, Columbia. It is headed up by Richard Sanderson who visits us each year to provide first-hand updates and share fellowship. Additionally, several of our church members have visited the project as volunteers.

Closer to home, we are key supporters of the Wansbeck Valley Food Bank, a local ecumenical charity. Members of our church are both trustees and volunteers; in addition we donate food and provide regular financial support, both individually and collectively. We regard "our" Food Bank as a practical means to express Christ's love to those in the community experiencing dire need, rather than just talking about it!

We also support two Newcastle-based organisations who work with refugees and asylum-seekers – West End Refugee Service (WERS) and The Hub. For many years we have hosted groups of their client families for an afternoon of food in the Stable Room, games on the vicarage lawn, music, local walks and general good company- a wonderful way to be able to share the privileges we have in this lovely corner of rural Northumberland.

During 2020 and 2021, due to Covid, we were unable to hold these afternoons. Instead, in collaboration with The Hub, we provided parcels of food and practical gifts to their refugee families, so they would know we have not forgotten them.

In addition to the above mission partners, we have traditionally made an annual donation to other charities, eg The Children's Society.

Our World Mission Group is currently reviewing our pattern of charitable giving and is

formulating criteria to guide us in the selection of new mission partners going forwards.

## Pastoral Care

Mitford and Hebron benefice recognises the need to look after each other at all ages through prayer and action. We recognise that there will be times in our lives when we all need the love and support of another person; this is the care we offer.

Our **Pastoral Team** looks to provide support for all our church family and the community beyond by:

- Maintaining a welcoming approach to all who attend our church.
- Being alert to those who need help, physically, psychologically, socially or spiritually.
- Ensuring that the approaches we make are entirely appropriate to a person's need and in a manner that preserves dignity and confidentiality at all times.
- Employing methods that safeguard children, vulnerable people and ourselves.
- Using a team approach to work and training that gives best help to those in need but also looks after ourselves.
- The care we offer may be delivered in church, at home, in residential care or by a hospital visit as the need arises.
- Recognising home groups as a way of caring for our church family.

The Church is also richly supported through the work of **Anna Chaplaincy**. This powerful Ministry is authorised by the Diocese of Newcastle and is being widely developed in our Deanery and across the Diocese. Ministers meet regularly to support each other in training.

We have two Anna Chaplains who dedicate themselves to all the needful in our Church and Community but with special attention to the elderly.

Our **Anna Chaplains** give support by:

- Always being sensitive to the needs of individuals and groups in the Church.
- Praying regularly for and with people to ensure that they feel the care of the Church family.
- Marking special times in the church year with deliveries to the homes of the elderly or those with a particular need.
- Sharing palm crosses and cards at Easter time, delivering cards and small gifts at Christmas, flowers on Mothering Sunday and poppy displays at Remembrance
- Organising services for needful groups and especially for those who have lost and are bereaved.
- Singing carols in residential homes at Christmas with seasonal offerings.

In ALL our Pastoral Work we consider the Safeguarding of Children and the Vulnerable to be absolutely crucial and we ensure that all team members are fully cleared for this Ministry and that their training in these areas has been taken to the appropriate level. Confidentiality is always given the highest priority

## Prayer Ministry

Prayer is a central part of our life together and we aim to underpin all we do with prayer, acknowledging that we can do nothing in our own strength and are dependent on God and the work of the Holy Spirit. It is embedded in our worship, our homegroups, our pastoral care and is an integral part of our meeting together. Prayer also takes place at many other times and in a variety of ways:

- Prayer ministry for individuals at the end of the main Sunday service
- Weekly corporate prayer meeting
- Weekly prayer letter
- Weekly early morning prayer for protection of God's work
- Prayer triplets/groups

- Special prayer meetings for particular needs
- Participation in Thy Kingdom Come global prayer initiative
- Weekly prayer support for the annual Alpha course
- Regular prayer for mission partners both locally and globally
- Prayer resources shared with church family

We seek to be a community of faith which combines prayer and dependency on God, with actions and mission, aware of our weaknesses and trusting in God's goodness and grace.

### **Music in Mitford and Hebron Benefice**

Music has been a real blessing and strength of the ministry of the benefice and its members in recent years.

The church has an organist who has primarily been based at Hebron but who also plays the organ for services at Mitford. In addition, she contributes to other services such as weddings and funerals as required.

The church also has 3 music leaders who organise the music for Sunday services. They liaise with the service leader, select service music, then organise musicians and singers. We are blessed with many talented musicians who can provide us with a wide range of styles: from traditional hymns music to more contemporary worship songs. New songs are introduced on a regular basis, and repeated on subsequent occasions so that the congregation can become familiar with them.

Music also features in a number of the outreach initiatives the church has been involved with such as carols in the local pub; carols at the home of individuals, music for refugee visits and any other special services or activities which take place in the life of the church.

### **Community involvement**

Many of our various social events occur as part of other group activities. The World Mission group hold pooled meals to welcome mission partners, while the Pastoral Care team arrange Afternoon Teas and Coffee Mornings.

The benefice is committed to reaching out to our local communities and so we endeavour to be involved and support all social events in both parishes. In Mitford, we support the community centre and attend events they instigate ie coffee mornings, summer fair, carol singing in the local pub called the Plough. Hebron's church building is also the Village Hall, used by the Hebron Community Association (HCA), who have regular social events during the year beginning with Burns Night – Summer Concert, Ciderfest at harvest time and Christmas music events. The church family are involved and support all these events.



annual Harvest In The Barn is a collaboration between the HCA and the church family. This

Our



involves a service of harvest worship and a shared picnic lunch..100 people came together in October 2021 for this shared event , drawing together members of church, village and Tritlington School. The open and welcoming attitude of our church family enables the wider community to become involved with activities e.g. church yard maintenance, without feeling pressed to become part of the worshipping community.

## Communications

We recognise that effective communication is an essential aspect of our mission and ministry.

A monthly news and notices sheet is available both online and in printed form (delivered by request). Christmas and Easter cards with a seasonal message and service details are widely distributed to households in the benefice.

We are currently exploring how further use our website <http://www.mitfordchurch.org> can better serve those within and beyond our church family .

During the pandemic we made significant use of on-line tools to maintain our worship, unity and support for one another. This has opened our eyes to further opportunities for utilising such facilities as we go forward; we now have groups meeting regularly to pray together on Zoom and routine “business meetings” taking place on line. We are also trialling the recording of sermons with the aim of making them available via links on our revised website.

## Mitford and Hebron Church Environmental Group

The benefice has established a small group who are exploring future plans. Their aim is to help equip our church in caring for God’s world in our worship and teaching. In October 2021 ahead of Glasgow’s COP26 the group organised and led a Climate Sunday service at church . This introduced the congregation to a range of Climate Change issues, encouraging their action on a personal, church and community level.

The group have now become part of the Eco Church community and its award structure. They will continue to provide further regular input into both services, and other events.

## Buildings and Fabric

### *St Mary Magdalene Church, Mitford*

St Mary Magdalene church, Mitford is a beautiful Grade I listed building in a wooded conservation



area of the Wansbeck river valley opposite the ruined remains of Mitford Castle. The original Norman church was constructed on the site of a previous Saxon building in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, and later destroyed under King John in 1215. The church was rebuilt in the 13<sup>th</sup> century and survived later fires and partial destruction. In 1874 a massive restoration took place. The present building comprises the early English chancel, extended nave and 19<sup>th</sup> century spire and baptistery. There are two side chapels, one now the vestry, the other called the Mitford Chapel. A new gallery was added above the font in

2008. The church has what is thought to be the oldest church bell in the country.

Mitford church has disabled access – hearing loop – modern heating, fibre broadband and audio/visual systems and the fabric is in excellent state of repair.



### ***St Cuthberts Church, Hebron***

It is thought there has been a Church on the site at Hebron since the 7th Century. Legend has it that St Cuthbert's remains stayed here en-route from Lindisfarne to Durham Cathedral. The 2 cell medieval church was remodelled in 1793 and retains 12th century chancel masonry, a 14th or 15th century double -chamfered chancel arch, gothic nave windows and has a pretty bellcote. A vestry was added in the 19th century. The building is set back from the road and in the centre of a churchyard with a large number of mature trees and gravestones.



The building is shared with Hebron Community Association (HCA) who raised the necessary funds for the reordering, installing a kitchen and WC within the vestry in 2010. The HCA now use the church building for social events approximately 6 times a year (there are chairs rather than pews). The building is in a good state of repair with an oil-fired heating system and can seat approximately 100 people at capacity.

### ***The Stable Room, Mitford***

Situated between the church and Vicarage is the "Stable Room" which was completed in 2000 with a grant from the Millenium Commission. This building has disabled access, two unisex toilets



(one with disabled facilities and a baby changing unit) and a fully equipped kitchen. The hall provides an area for approximately 80 people which can be partitioned into three meeting rooms. A video link allows us to relay church services to the hall. The room has many uses - coffee after worship - Junior church - committee meetings - Youth Groups - Harvest lunches - retreats and public hire for special events. The building is fully compliant with Health and Safety and Food Hygiene

Regulations and has an efficient heating system. We have Internet wi-fi and telephone services within the Stable Room.

### ***Churchyards***

There is a small group actively involved in looking after the churchyards. In recent years we have tried to create an Eco-friendly churchyard at Mitford, with attempts to grow wildflowers in several areas and the introduction of bird boxes and "bug hotels" put in place by our children. The latter have been well used and certainly encourage wildlife in the churchyard. Attempts to grow wildflowers have not met with success due to the wetness of the ground but we do try very hard to maintain biodiversity.

This is a very different way of managing a churchyard, so we are trying hard to keep people informed and involved.

We are actively involved in managing the gravestones; for their safety and the history they provide.

### **Mitford Vicarage**

The Vicarage is a very spacious 4 bedroomed detached family home with large garden and overlooking the ancient ruins of Mitford Castle. Built in 1961 it is of brick construction and the interior is in good decorative order.

Ground floor rooms include a substantial living room with open fireplace; dining room; music room with door to outside; fitted kitchen; a cloak / washroom; utility room and study. Upstairs there are 4 good sized bedrooms and family bathroom.

Central heating is powered by LPG. In 2021 fibre broadband was provided to the vicarage. As part of a village wide initiative. This facility will continue to be available free of charge to the next priest in charge.

Externally, the extensive front driveway is used for parking at times of church services. Vehicular access is also available to the rear of the property.

There is also a garage; carport and large hard standing area. There are gardens, with lawn, shrubs and perennials to the front and rear of the property. The front lawn is often used for church events, such as summer fetes, and for music and games when hosting visiting mission partners.



### **Consultation process**

To ensure that our Benefice Profile represents the widest possible range of views, the JPCC tasked a small team to consult extensively. To do this we presented an evolving draft of the Vision statement shown at the start of the document, then held an open discussion to gather opinions on our relative strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT analysis) as a church family. At the end of each discussion we sought input on the characteristics of the candidate we are seeking to lead us forward. During this exercise held sessions with our Sunday congregations, house groups and other local stakeholders such as Hebron Community Association and Tritlington School. In addition we invited residents to come and offer their input at an informal session in the local village pub.

### **Finance**

During the pandemic, there has been no specific giving campaign, however a stewardship campaign is planned in the next 12 months. The vast majority of giving is gift aided, with the tax being duly claimed. In addition, Gift Aid envelopes are made available in the pews for one off and irregular givers. The church has some reserves and there are no major debts.

Expenses are paid to the incumbent to reimburse their expenditure in respect of travel, telephone and internet provision and other incidentals necessary for the post. In addition, Council Tax and Water rates are paid on behalf of the incumbent. We will make financial provision for part time administrative support for the appointed incumbent

A copy of our latest Financial Accounts is provided below:-



**The Joint Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parishes of  
St Mary Magdalene, Mitford & St Cuthbert, Hebron  
(Charity No 1196182)**

**Receipts and Payments Accounts**

	Unrestricted Fund	Unrestricted Designated Fund	Restricted Fund	Total 2021
<b>Receipts</b>				
<b>Voluntary giving</b>				
- Planned giving	£68,870		£4,301	£73,171
- Collections at services	£1,728		£0	£1,728
- All other giving/voluntary receipt	£910		£0	£910
- Gift Aid recovered	£9,537		£293	£9,830
- Legacies received (capital value)	£0		£0	£0
- Grants	£0		£25,343	£25,343
	<u>£81,045</u>	<u>£0</u>	<u>£29,937</u>	<u>£110,982</u>
				£0
<b>Activities for generating funds</b>				£0
<b>Income from investments</b>	£1,058		£921	£1,979
<b>Church activities</b>	£3,890		£0	£3,890
<b>Other incoming resources</b>	£1,101		£0	£1,101
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<u>£87,094</u>	<u>£0</u>	<u>£30,857</u>	<u>£117,951</u>
<b>Payments</b>				
<b>Church activities</b>				
- Mission giving and donations	£138		£7,000	£7,138
- Diocesan parish share contribution	£58,049		£0	£58,049
- Salaries, wages and honoraria	£3,799		£0	£3,799
- Clergy and staff expenses	£5,933		£0	£5,933
<b>Church expenses</b>				
- Mission and evangelism costs	£91		£0	£91
- Church running expenses (including governance)	£14,745		£4,386	£19,131
- Church utility bills	£3,341		£0	£3,341
- Stable Room Running Costs	£1,043		£0	£1,043
	<u>£87,138</u>	<u>£0</u>	<u>£11,386</u>	<u>£98,524</u>
<b>Costs of generating funds</b>				£0
<b>Major capital expenditure</b>				£0
<b>Other expenditure</b>				£0
<b>Total Payments</b>	<u>£87,138</u>	<u>£0</u>	<u>£11,386</u>	<u>£98,524</u>
<b>Excess of receipts over payments</b>	-£44		£19,471	£19,427
Transfers between funds	-£1,973		£1,973	£0
Cash at bank and in hand at 1 Jan	£17,371	£23,951	-£17,930	£23,392
Cash at bank and in hand at 31 Dec	£2,836	£17,951	£6,572	£27,359

## Statement of Assets and Liabilities

	Unrestricted Funds	Unrestricted Designated Fund	Restricted Funds	Total 2021 <sup>1</sup>
<b>Cash Funds</b>				
Bank Current Account (Hebron)	-£3,813		£25,891	£22,078
Bank Current Account (Mitford)	£6,117	£14,301	£9,868	£30,286
Deposit Fund (Hebron)	£9,329			£9,329
Deposit Fund (Mitford)	£6,762		£5,908	£12,670
	<u>£15,446</u>	<u>£14,301</u>	<u>£15,776</u>	<u>£39,615</u>
<b>Other Monetary Assets</b>				
<b>Investment Assets</b>				
Investment Fund Shares at market value	£39,718		£37,745	£77,463
(Mitford)	<u>£55,164</u>	<u>£14,301</u>	<u>£53,521</u>	<u>£117,077</u>

Note: these are combined, unaudited accounts for the period 1 Jan-31 Dec for the two parishes. Accounts for Hebron and Mitford for 1 Jan-31 Jul and the JPCC for 1 Aug-31 Dec have been subject to an independent audit.

# The Benefice Profile of Upper Wansbeck

## Introduction

Welcome to the Benefice of the Upper Wansbeck churches of St Giles, Netherwitton; St Andrew's, Hartburn with St John's, Meldon; St Andrew's, Bolam; and St Mary Magdalene, Whalton. Our churches have worked together for many years serving our rural communities. We are now actively exploring how we form a Joint PCC for the Benefice. We already have shared procedures such as Safeguarding. Our current ministers, who have been an integral part of, and whose development has been supported by, the Benefice are:

The Rev. Fiona Sample, Interim Minister (retiring)  
Pamela Walker, Associate Lay Minister  
Rachel Coundon, Authorised Lay Worship Leader

## Mission

Our ambitions are summed up in these five goals to which we enthusiastically subscribe:

- 1) To worship locally and with openness to new patterns of worship, new styles of worship and fresh types of congregations.*
- 2) To develop the church's life and mission with confidence. This will include training for lay and ordained, the development of discipleship, the nurture of lay worship leaders and the growth of clergy able to focus on delivering the vision.*
- 3) To be regarded by other institutions, communities and individuals as a significant partner/player in the development of local communities.*
- 4) To enable the church to be valued, by itself and others, as sacred space that holds and shares the Christian story and its heritage in Northumberland and beyond.*
- 5) To be a church that embraces a holistic and varied understanding and practice of growth: in numbers of people who value, respect and engage with their parish church; in numbers of these who are positively impacted by the church; and in openness to how church growth might happen.*



## Our people

## The person we seek

We hope that the new priest we seek will offer us:

### Spiritual leadership

We are looking for a spiritual, thoughtful, caring and inclusive priest who is comfortable with the diverse community (from young to old, working in the city to working on the farm, not working and unable to work) to our church services leading prayer for our rural community and for the whole world and its problems, developing and building our faith and increasing our congregation. They will be willing to get out and about (knocking on the doors of the widely spread farms), to be visible and engage with people and build a social network.

### Leadership in development

We would like a priest who is empathetic, approachable, energetic and visible who can lead us in involving more of our rural community, both churchgoers and non-churchgoers, and engage with schools, who is imaginative, innovative and insightful, to create an environment which is accessible to all of us, adults and children alike, of all faiths and none and be comfortable with IT systems. To find a way of rejoicing positively, to encourage sharing and the development of our community using both traditional and more modern ideas. A good sense of humour always helps!

### Leadership in worship

We would like our priest to lead us intellectually and thoughtfully in our search to find ways of broadening the appeal of our worship in the reality of the world we occupy today but thinking about what tomorrow may bring, whilst still catering for the needs of those who value traditional as well as new forms of Eucharistic worship.

## Our churches

All our beautiful and peaceful church buildings are listed Grade I except for St Giles which is Grade II\*. Some churchyards also have listed headstones. All the churches have history, some dating back over 900 years of Christian worship. Their condition varies from very reasonable to good with various legacies and grants which have helped with maintenance. All churches have churchyards, only Hartburn is essentially full but there is plenty of space at its Chapel of Ease, St John, Meldon. Each parish has prepared a profile and they can be viewed at: [www.upperwansbeckchurches.weebly.com](http://www.upperwansbeckchurches.weebly.com)



St Andrew's, Bolam



St Andrew's, Hartburn





St John's, Meldon



St Mary Magdalene, Whalton





## St Giles Netherwitton

### Our communities

The four parishes together have a population of around 1500 with 180 on the electoral rolls. The population is an interesting mix of farmers and agricultural workers (there are a number of large estates as well as independent farms) together with commuters and home workers and the retired, many of whom have come from outside the Benefice. There are pockets of deprivation as well as a significant proportion of those with professional qualifications and degrees. The population is mainly White/British. Our congregations are mainly over 55 years old. The children of current parishioners have mostly grown up and left home leaving their 'empty nesting' parents behind to support the churches.

We are fortunate to have access to very good schools. There is a Church of England primary school in Whalton and a small primary school in Belsay, part of the Pele Trust, which serves the western part of the Benefice. Secondary education is provided by two multi academy trusts, The Three Rivers Learning Trust based in Morpeth and The Pele Trust which is based in Ponteland, on both of which the Church of England is represented. All these schools are rated Good or Outstanding. The primary school in Whalton being located next to the church plays a significant role in village life and the Ministry Team provides regular worship in school and in church for pupils and parents.

### Patterns of Worship

Our tradition is one of 'gentle Anglican worship' with an emphasis on the Eucharist and joyous celebrations at Easter and Christmas. The real strength and opportunity for the Benefice is the extent of general goodwill towards the Church throughout the community. This does not always show results in turnout every Sunday but can be seen in attendance figures for the major festivals as well as in the plethora of fundraising events. All our villages have access to halls, although the re-ordered Hartburn Church also serves as the village hall. It is the home for the Hartburn Community Project which works with the church.

During the Covid pandemic the ministry team recorded a service of Morning Prayer every Sunday, as well as midweek morning prayer and a daily reflection, all on Facebook. There were also lay led Sunday Evensong Services on Zoom led by members of Hartburn congregation and lay led family services and morning prayer most months on Zoom from Bolam.

As things have begun to return to normal a weekly Service of Holy Communion has been held in rotation at each of the four parish churches as well as two family services each month in Whalton and Bolam respectively and monthly Evensong at Meldon. Until Covid, there was Holy Communion twice a month at each church with Bolam offering a lay led Family Service once a month. All our churches can be described as welcoming churches offering coffee after services.



## Coffee



## The Roost Team

There is a charity in Netherwitton called 'The Roost' aimed at supporting post-18 young people which is run by the Pioneer Minister Rev. Beth Rookwood and has a Bishop's Mission Order from the Diocese seeking to reach young adults across the whole of Northumberland. Follow the link:

<https://roostcommunity.org/>

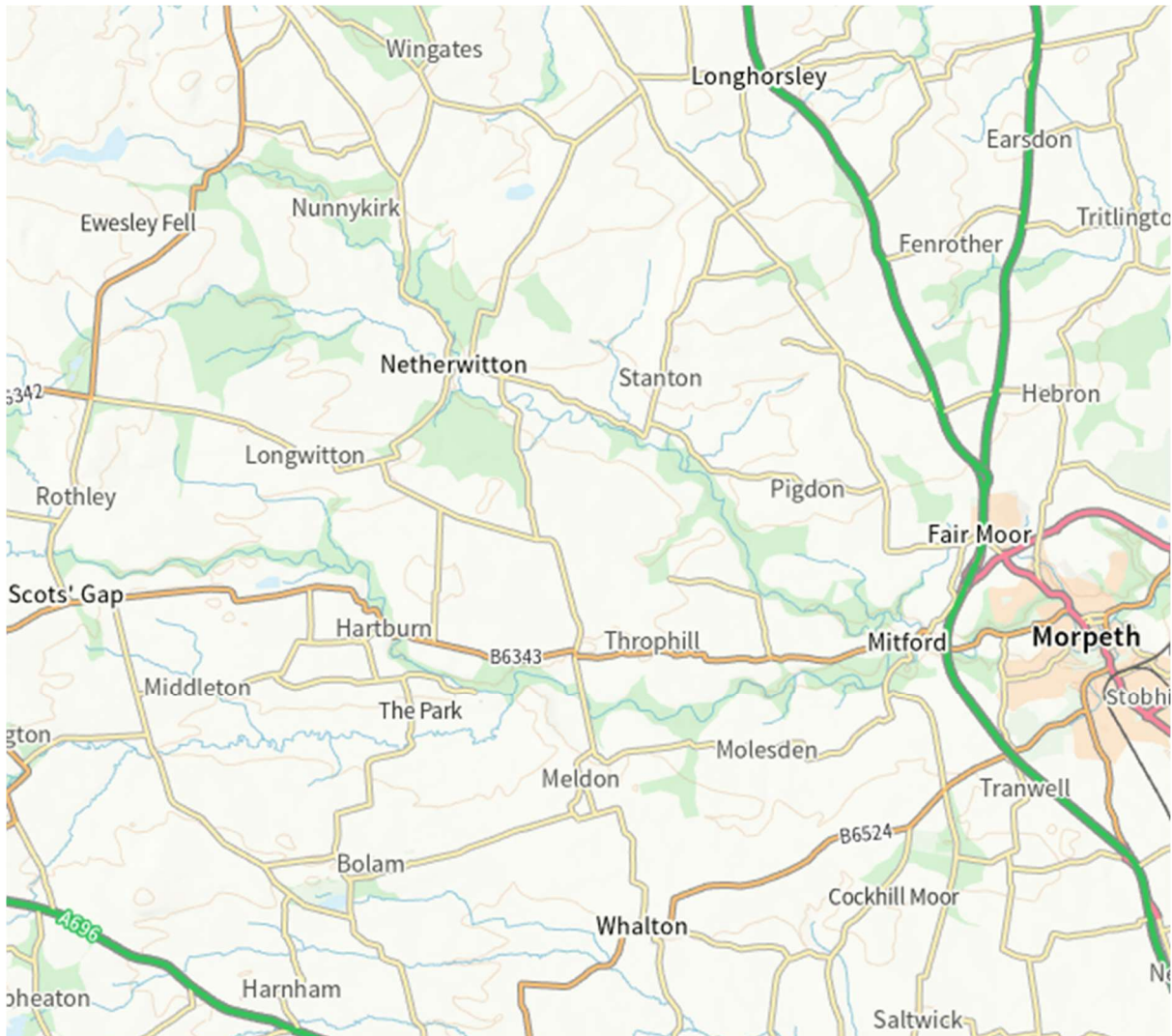
Sustaining rural worship is a challenge that requires the clergy to be creative and open minded in their approach to diverse rural populations. There is a role for pioneering work with non-churchgoers and the development of children's and young people's involvement. This may require some greater flexibility in the way the clergy work and perhaps some experimentation in, for example, the timing of services and the nature and even the location of some services. It certainly needs an encompassing vision which captures the nature of the community as it actually is, whilst supporting routine activity such as visiting the sick and offering communion to the housebound. We are open to wider cooperation with other denominations but there is only one Methodist church and one Catholic church located adjacent to our Benefice. Given the preponderance of Church of England related schools we can look forward to building on the good foundations of our existing relationships.

The link to our Benefice newsletter for March/April is [shorturl.at/iopA5](https://shorturl.at/iopA5)

'Reflections' are posted on our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/upperwansbeck>

## Geography

The Benefice consists of a number of villages and hamlets spread over an area of approximately fifty square miles surrounding the catchment area of the River Wansbeck which rises in the Northumberland hills. The shape of the Benefice is roughly triangular with Netherwitton at the north, Bolam at the south-west and Whalton at the south-eastern points. Distances are Netherwitton to Bolam 8.5 miles and to Whalton 7.5 miles. Bolam to Whalton is 4 miles. Hartburn and its Chapel of Ease, Meldon lies within this triangle.



Central Newcastle is about 30 minutes away, the airport some 25 minutes. There are three pubs in the area and the village halls hold pub nights and offer a wide range of activities and entertainment including film nights.

Our population in the Benefice is growing slowly with the addition of some new houses to existing villages. Its proximity to national and international transport routes and easy commuting to Newcastle is recognised and alongside the growing awareness of the quality of life which Northumberland offers with wide-open landscapes, extraordinary beaches, castles, country houses and gardens of national importance, and the vibrant city centre in Newcastle, sees the villages becoming increasingly popular with young professionals.

## Events and outreach

Spread around the Benefice our parishes hold events which serve to involve both churchgoers and non-churchgoers and are often fundraising opportunities. These include Crib, Christingle and Carol Services, National Garden Scheme Open Gardens, church fetes, drama, quiz nights, a cinema organ recital, carols and mulled wine, a Baal Fire, a hand-writing competition for primary children, a lunch club, parish supper, Christmas Fair, musical events and so on.





## Finance

Income over the last year has obviously suffered from the pandemic in that our ability to arrange special fundraising events has been restricted. The total combined income from the four parishes was about £90k in 2021 of which £54k was derived from a combination of parish giving, collections, donations and gift aid from HMRC. A further £28k related to the receipt of grants which are generally sought to cover specific major projects.

Looking at expenditure, the major elements are the Diocesan parish share contribution and maintenance to the fabric of our churches which in 2021 were £33k and £35k. We try to pay 100% of our parish share contribution although in recent years one of our parishes has been unable to commit to this.

Overall, there was a very small, combined surplus. In broad terms the parishes are able to break even through the normal income but rely on the receipt of grants, which are applied for from various local sources, to assist with major spend projects.

The combined net assets, consisting of bank balances (£52k), investments (£200k) less a small creditor (£9k) were approximately £245k at the end of 2021. It should however be noted that at least 25% of the bank funds are restricted in that they are allocated to specific forward projects.

We do not as yet have a Joint PCC and so PCC accounts for our four parishes which have been, or will be, submitted to APCMs are as follows:

# St Andrew's, Bolam

Financial Statement: Year Ended 31 December 2021

## General Account

### Receipts

	2020	2021
£	£	£
<b>Incoming Resources from Donors</b>		
Gift Aided Giving	6,881.12	5,300.00
Income Tax Recovered	8,891.21	3,351.47
Church Collections	279.65	1,522.50
	16,051.98	10,173.97
<b>Other Voluntary Incoming Resources</b>		
Donations	17,580.68	2,863.89
Wall Box	184.90	26.41
	17,765.58	2,890.30
<b>Receipts from Investments</b>		
Interest & Dividends	1,187.54	1,833.47
CBF Deposit Fund Interest	12.25	0.00
	1,199.79	1,833.47
<b>Other Receipts</b>		
Fees	932.00	411.00
Special Collections for Charities	175.10	441.00
Historic England Grant	15,000.00	0.00
Newcastle Church Institute Grant	350.00	0.00
Grants	0.00	11,676.14
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>51,474.45</b>	<b>27,425.88</b>
<b>Payments</b>		
Special Charity Collections	345.10	0.00
Bank Charges	350.30	396.86
<b>Church Activities</b>		
Diocesan Parish Share	11,287.00	9,000.00
Expenses of Ministry & Parsonage	1,253.00	0.00
Insurance Premium	2,665.56	2,667.85
Heating Oil	618.91	389.81
Electricity	848.40	(466.68)
Maintenance of Building	8,910.14	30,857.22
Inspection of Accounts	100.00	100.00
Other Sundries	1,292.50	20.98
<b>Total Payments</b>	<b>27,670.91</b>	<b>42,966.04</b>
<b>Surplus/(Deficit) on the Year</b>	<b>23,803.54</b>	<b>(15,540.16)</b>

## War Memorial Account

	Receipts	Payments	Balance
<b>Opening Balance</b>			2,956.88
Bank Charges		1.00	
Landscaping		500.00	
			501.00
<b>Closing Balance</b>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>501.00</u>	<u>2,455.88</u>

## Statement of Balances as at the 31 December 2021

Monetary Assets				2021	2020
	Handelsbanken Current Bank Account No 48461927	Handelsbanken War Memorial Bank Account No 14450218			
<b>Opening Balances</b>	25,437.88	2,956.88		28,394.76	9,506.82
General	(15,540.16)	0.00		(15,540.16)	23,803.54
Churchyard	(1,580.00)	0.00		(1,580.00)	0.00
War Memorial	0.00	(501.00)		(501.00)	(4,915.60)
Transfer Between Funds	2090.00	(2090.00)		0.00	0.00
<b>Closing Balances</b>	<u>10,407.72</u>	<u>365.88</u>		<u>10,773.60</u>	<u>28,394.76</u>
<b>Other Assets</b>					
Investments - market value				128,148	118,516
				<u>146,911</u>	<u>146,911</u>
<b>Other Liabilities</b>					
Loans				<u>1,500</u>	<u>1,500</u>



# St Andrews Hartburn

## Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2021

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2021 £	Total 2020 £
<b>RECEIPTS</b>					
<b>Voluntary Receipts</b>					
Planned giving	[a]	4,042		4,042	6,791
Parish Giving Scheme	[a]	6,137		6,137	
Cash collections at services	[a]	3,260		3,260	2,315
Church collection box	[a]	-		-	157
Car park	[a]	635		635	556
Organ Fund donation				-	-
Project donations received	[b]		1,991	1,991	50
		14,073	1,991	16,064	9,868
<b>Grants, taxes and fees</b>					
Grants for churchyard & repairs	[c]	1,850		1,850	2,600
Fees		423		423	739
Tax recovered		1,434		1,434	2,754
<b>Activities for generating funds</b>					
Project funds raised	[b]		2,141	2,141	535
Miscellaneous income	[b]		75	75	10,135
<b>Investment Income</b>		1,580		1,580	1,680
<b>Total Receipts</b>		19,361	4,207	23,568	28,310
<b>PAYMENT</b>					
<b>Church Activities</b>		8,785		8,785	10,542
Diocesan parish share				-	1,100
Clergy expenses		13,547		13,547	12,389
Church running expenses	[d]	613		613	118
Building repairs & renewals			234	234	164
Costs of generating funds	[b]	6		6	-
Financial costs		954		954	233
Charitable donations		892		892	76
Miscellaneous expenses				-	4,000
Loan Repayment					
		24,797	234	25,031	28,621
<b>Total Payments</b>		(5,435)	3,973	(1,462)	(310)
<b>Excess of Receipts over Payments</b>					
Release of investments		(5,435)	3,973	(1,462)	8,464
		(26,309)	42,575	16,266	7,801
<b>Cash at bank and in hand at 1 January</b>		(31,745)	46,548	14,804	16,266

# STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

Hartburn PCC

Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2021

Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2021 £	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2020 £
<b>Assets</b>						
<b>Cash Funds</b>						
Bank Current Account	(31,745)	46,548	14,804	(26,309)	42,575	16,266
<b>Investment Assets</b>						
Artemis	[e] 13,393		13,393	12,041		12,041
Blackrock	[e] -		-	-		-
Jupiter	[e] -		-	-		-
M&G	[e] 22,876		22,876	20,177		20,177
<b>Total Assets</b>	4,524	46,548	51,072	5,908	42,575	48,483
<b>Liabilities</b>						
Wm Leech Foundation Loan					-	
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	-	-	-			
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	4,524	46,548	51,072	5,908	42,575	48,483
<b>REPRESENTED BY:</b>						
General Fund	4,843		4,843	10,278		10,278
Organ Fund	1,000		1,000	1,000		1,000
Investment Revaluation Reserve	(1,319)		(1,319)	(5,370)		(5,370)
St Andrew's Community Project Fund		46,548	46,548		42,575	42,575
	4,524	46,548	51,072	5,908	42,575	48,483

# St Mary Magdalene, Whalton

## Income & Expenditure

**AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2021**

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<b><u>INCOME</u></b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>
<b><u>VOLUNTARY INCOME</u></b>		
Gift Aid	4497	3461
Collections Tax	1034	872
Recovered	922	800
Donations	1089	1198
Grants	4	<u>0</u>
	<u>2500</u>	6331
	1984	
	7	
 <b><u>OTHER INCOME</u></b>		
Investment Income Trading	111	84
income Fundraising	0	227
Funerals, Weddings & Baptisms	1777	4078
Sundry	755	0
Sale of Investment	33	33
	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
	2676	4422
 <b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b><u>22523</u></b>	<b><u>10753</u></b>
 <b><u>EXPENDITURE</u></b>		
Parish Share	400	5000
Clergy Expenses	0	1400
Church Running Expenses	695	835
Upkeep of Church	1175	3761
Upkeep of Churchyard	474	1845
Sundry	2	120
	206	
	0	
	0	
 Church donations	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
 <b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>		<b><u>12961</u></b>
 <b>NET</b>	<b>9851</b>	<b>(2208)</b>
 Cash Funds at 1 <sup>st</sup> January	1050	1050

# Statement of Assets and Liabilities

**AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2021**

	2021	2020
<b><u>BANK ACCOUNTS</u></b>		
Current Account	1050	1050
<b><u>OTHER ASSETS</u></b>		
Investments		2167
<b><u>DEBTORS</u></b>	<b><u>4213</u></b>	
Tax Refund		<u>2046</u>
		<u>4213</u>
<b><u>LIABILITIES</u></b>		
Other Creditors	0	0

# ST GILES, NETHERWITTON

## Income & expenditure account for the year to 31 December 2021

	Notes	2021 £	2020 £
RECEIPTS			
Income resources from donors:			
Planned giving		9,610	9,420
Collections and other giving		1,175	278
Income tax recoverable		2,532	2,560
Other voluntary income resources:			
Donations		575	775
Income from operating activities to further the work of the church:			
Parish Council Grant to churchyard		800	800
Bann/Funeral		564	396
Income from operating activities to generate funds:			
Fundraising events		-	-
Income from investments:			
Dividend income		188	169
Interest		1	2
Miscellaneous		-	240
<b>Total receipts</b>		<b>15,445</b>	<b>14,640</b>
PAYMENTS			
Grants to further the work of the church:			
Donations made		-	100
Church activities:			
Newcastle Diocese Parish Share		10,274	10,274
Organist fees		160	492
Organ tuning		-	-
Insurance		1,576	1,592
Group Parish Expenses		-	1,000
Electricity and Heating		294	393
Maintenance and repairs	3	1,567	719
Churchyards		835	861
Church Management and Administration:			
Postage, Typing and Printing		0	0

Miscellaneous costs	67	130
<b>Total payments</b>	<b>14,773</b>	<b>15,561</b>
<b>Surplus/(Deficit) of Receipts over payments</b>	<b>672</b>	<b>(921)</b>

## ST GILES, NETHERWITTON

### Statement of assets & liabilities at 31 December 2021

	Notes	2021		2020	
		Book cost £	Valuation £	Book cost £	Valuation £
Barclays Bank		14,149	14,149	12,565	12,565
Cash in hand - unbanked collections		0	0	0	0
CBF Bank		100	100	100	100
<b>Total bank &amp; cash</b>		<b>14,249</b>	<b>14,249</b>	<b>12,665</b>	<b>12,665</b>
<b>Debtor - Income tax</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3,165</b>	<b>3,165</b>	<b>4,228</b>	<b>4,228</b>
<b>Creditors &amp; accruals</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(20)</b>	<b>(20)</b>
<b>Investments</b>					
<b>CBF Church of England Investment Fund</b>		701	3,223	701	2,819
<b>BlackRock</b>		3,300	22,794	3,300	19,944
<b>Alliance Trust</b>		1,896	6,502	1,896	5,676
		<b>5,897</b>	<b>32,519</b>	<b>5,897</b>	<b>28,439</b>
<b>Total net assets</b>		<b>23,311</b>	<b>49,933</b>	<b>22,770</b>	<b>45,312</b>