Holy Trinity Church

REVIEW OF 2022

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

03
Introduction

04
Services

05
Life Groups, HT Men

06
HT Women, Church Weekend

07
Children

08
Youth, Students & Young Adults

09
Alpha, Mission Partners

10
Pastoral, Community Connections and Outreach

11
Cafe Connect, Well-being Walks, Dig-it Community Garden

12
Our Building, Care for Creation

13
Serving, Finance and Giving

INTRODUCTION

At Holy Trinity, our strap line is 'Loving God, Loving Huddersfield'. We believe that God is worth everything, and we want to be a church who express love in offering whole-life worship and in wholehearted commitment. Jesus is good news - the best news, and we want to share his transforming love in the power of the Holy Spirit, in acts of love, and in grace-fuelled evangelism.

This short review shares some of what we have done in 2022 to try and live out our calling as God's church here. It is intentionally brief to give you a glimpse, rather than the full story – it doesn't cover everything, but gives a flavour of what God has been doing in and through us in 2022 (if you want to read the official Annual Report and Accounts that we submit to the Charity Commission you can find it here: www.tinyurl.com/2022HT-TAR).

As always this, and our Annual Meeting in April, is an opportunity to look back with gratitude for God's faithfulness, and look forward with hope as to what he will do in and through us in 2023. If you read this as someone who considers Holy Trinity your home, thank you for the part you play in these stories, in the life, mission and ministry of our church family. If you are reading this because you are new or as a visitor to Holy Trinity, we hope it gives a glimpse of real people, living lives shaped by Jesus as part of a vibrant community, one that you are welcome to be a part of too.

SERVICES

Every Sunday we gather from across Huddersfield and further afield, to lift up the name of Jesus and to encourage one another in our walk with him. Attendance at both services has increased in the last 12 months, although attendance at the 10.45am service is still below pre-pandemic levels.

This year our Livestream team have enabled those who are unable to be with us in-person to join us for the 10.45 service at home. This also offers an opportunity for visitors to check us out online before coming in-person.

Our sermons this year have included series on: Fruitfulness on the Frontline; The Power of the Cross; The Power of the Resurrection; Ordinary Blessings (Ruth); Elijah and Elisha; Crying Out for God; and Jesus the King (continuing our journey through Mark's Gospel).

LIFE GROUPS

We recognise that, with two different congregations and a busy building, making deeper relationships and connections on a Sunday is not always easy. Life Groups enable us to forge those kinds of close, relational bonds of trust and encouragement, primarily in helping us to spur one another on in following Jesus. Life Groups also enable us to care for and support one another pastorally, to pray for each other, dig into God's word together, and look outwards to share Jesus with others.

Life Groups meet midweek (both daytime and evenings), across Huddersfield and as far as the Holme Valley – most in homes, with one group meeting in church. 127 people (54% of the people on ChurchSuite) are connected in a Holy Trinity Life Group.

If you feel that Holy Trinity is home for you, and you want to grow in friendship with others and go deeper with God, joining a Life Group is probably your next step.

HT MEN

Throughout 2022 we continued with our bi-monthly Saturday morning Men's breakfasts and prayer meetings at church. We also held a number of events at other venues to make our group more accessible to those who might not want to visit a church building.

These included darts nights and 'Table Talk' evenings. This year we also participated in the 'Movember' campaign to raise awareness of men's health issues. With the support of those in and outside of Holy Trinity we managed to raise over £1900 for the charity.

HT WOMEN

In September 2022 we hosted a women's **'Swap Shop and Supper'**, followed by a **Christmas Craft** evening in November. Both events were really well attended, drawing people from outside HT to join us. The buzz on both evenings was amazing, with a real joy and excitement as people chatted, ate and either crafted or found treasures at the clothes swap. This led us to plan more activities and opportunities for women to gather together in 2023, with events planned through the Spring and Summer.

CHURCH WEEKEND

In May nearly 100 adults and children went to The Hayes Conference Centre in Swanwick for our 'Connect' Church Family Weekend. This was a time to deepen our relationships as a church family, to spend time in God's presence, to worship together and hear from God.

Kids and Youth had their own dedicated sessions, and the adults were blessed by excellent teaching (from Acts 2, on being 'God's Beautiful Church') from Matthew Porter from St Michael Le Belfrey in York. Add in beautiful weather, space to slow down and relax, throw in good food and great company – it was a wonderful weekend!

CHILDREN

On Sundays at 10.45am our **Discoverers** (School Years Reception – Year 2) and **Adventurers** (School Years 3 – 6) enjoy worshipping together, learning from the Bible and praying for others. It is great to see our children growing in their faith in Jesus. A **creche** area is available in the Welcome Lounge for pre-school children together with their parents.

Monday mornings is our Little Lights group, where pre-school children and their parents meet to play, hear a short Bible story, sing, chat and enjoy refreshments. It's also an opportunity for members of the congregation to meet children and their carers from our local community. If you have pre-schoolers, or have family or neighbours who do, why not come along or invite them?

Girls' Club (School Years 5&6) meets twice a month on Wednesday evenings. The girls have enjoyed cooking, art, craft and sport and are encouraged to learn a Bible verse each month and discuss how they can apply this to their lives.

Part of our outreach includes parties! We held a Heroes party as an alternative to Halloween and also a Christmas party. We have run JaM (Jesus and Me) sessions on Sunday afternoons and plan to continue these as part of our outreach. Children enjoy games and hear a brief Bible story. We have also recently had a number of school visits, which gives us the opportunity to welcome classes into our building and share what our faith means.

YOUTH

In 2022 our youth (aged 11-17) met weekly on Sunday mornings for games, teaching and prayer, and fortnightly on Wednesday evenings for activities, games, and food at our youth club. Our older youth (aged 14-17) also met monthly on Wednesday evenings for Bible study.

Whilst we were not able to appoint a new Youth Minister this year, our amazing team of 9 leaders across Sundays and Wednesdays, have given time, energy, and prayer to help our young people meet with God and feel at home at church.

One highlight of the year was our youth and older children's weekend away in October, where 20 children and 5 leaders spent the weekend at Scammonden Activity Centre. We had 4 sessions on the theme of "People who met Jesus", along with lots of games, activities, food, and sweets (and not a lot of sleep!). Children and leaders had a great time, including some special moments of encounter with God, and we are hoping to do it again at some point in the future.

STUDENTS AND YOUNG ADULTS

Our students and young adults have met monthly for food and fellowship on Sundays, coordinated by our curate and with food provided by different members of the congregation, with around 10-12 people meeting each month. As is normal for student ministry, we have welcomed some new students and said goodbye to others heading off to pastures new. We have also supported the Christian Union at Huddersfield University in their efforts to reach university students with the gospel.

Following much prayer and discussion, we have decided to withdraw from the Diocesan project amongst students and young adults, due to the effect that Covid has had on this particular ministry. However, we remain committed to our work in discipling and evangelising those aged 18-30, and there are signs of new life to be thankful for going into the future.

ALPHA

In January – March 2022 an Alpha course was held online via Zoom. We had 10 guests join, a mixture of ages and backgrounds although most with some experience of church in the past. We had good discussions and some honest sharing of stories, although we have not seen as many people joining our regular congregation as we had hoped. In 2023 we are looking forward to running our first Alpha course in person since the pandemic.

MISSION PARTNERS

Holy Trinity is committed to partnering with people and organizations who are seeking to share the good news of Jesus in word and action, both here in the UK and around the world. We give a minimum of 10% of our unrestricted income to mission, and pray regularly for our partners. A number of our Life Groups each commit to pray regularly for one of our partners.

In 2022 the HT Mission Partners we regularly supported were:

·**Tearfund** – following Jesus where the need is greatest.
·**Christians Against Poverty** (Huddersfield Debt Centre) – helping people become debt free.
·**Christian African Relief Trust (CART)** – sending aid to Africa
·**Hand to Mouth** – enabling children in local schools to explore the Christian faith.
·**Open Doors** – serving persecuted Christians worldwide.
·**Dan Jenkins** – serving in a Christian band in schools with the Message Trust in Manchester.
·**Shannon** – preparing to serve with Overseas Mission Fellowship in East Asia.
·**Ruth Donaldson** – working with Iris Ministries in Mozambique

In addition, we have made one-off gifts to **Hannah Hawksbee** (preparing to go to South America with 'Serving in Mission'); **Hope Now** (a Christian charity serving in Ukraine); and **Hope Huddersfield** (an informal network of churches sharing the gospel and serving our town together).

PASTORAL

Much of our pastoral care happens naturally within our Life Groups. In the security of these relationships, we commit to support and pray for one another. We also have a small Pastoral Team who, with the clergy, commit to visiting the sick and housebound and praying specifically and confidentially for those in different kinds of need. Our Pastoral Team are: Mike Wilkins, Simon Walters, Val Armitage, Cath Barber, Hilary Hibbin, Gill Marsh, and David and Gill Ward.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS AND OUTREACH

Our Local Community Outreach Team (LCOT) has continued to share God's love in practical ways with our community:

·We regularly help with the **Huddersfield Street Kitchen** (HSK) who provide meals for the vulnerable and marginalised. At Christmas the church family provided enough in donations to fill 60 Christmas gift bags.

·We ran a series of **Skills Builder Sessions** (sewing, DIY, cooking, and smartphone/tablet basics).

·The lunch and activity **'Connections Social Club'** for the elderly and isolated, run in partnership with the Methodist Homes Association (MHA) Communities scheme, attracts nearly 40 people each week.

·A group sang Christmas Carols in local care homes, and Easter Hymns and Christmas Carols outside our local Co-op.

·We also continue to host 'The Prince's Trust and 'Flex' personal development courses, especially for young people and young adults. These courses aim to increase confidence, motivation and skills and enable participants to move into employment, education, training, volunteering or apprenticeships.

CAFE CONNECT

Café Connect is our regular space to drop in, and connect with others over coffee and cake. Over the last year we have seen a good number of different people joining our 'regulars' on Thursday mornings. These include some of the students from the Prince's Trust course, who come either to hang out or to run a quiz and do a presentation as part of their course. We've had visits from people who live nearby, wanting to see what is happening; contact with the local 'Social prescribing' team, who have come along to see how we can support their work combatting isolation and loneliness in the community; and of course, the walkers from our 'Wellbeing Walks', and the gardeners from 'Dig-It' also come in throughout the morning.

WELL-BEING WALKS

This is a valued community group (established in 2017, in partnership with our local GP Practices), especially for any who are isolated, lonely or at risk of developing health issues. Walkers meet on Thursdays at 11.00am outside Greenhead Park (Trinity Street entrance), and enjoy an hour's stroll and a chat, before joining others for coffee at Café Connect. Dogs are also welcome!

DIG-IT COMMUNITY GARDEN

Our Gardening Team have continued to transform our garden and grounds into a more beautiful space to be enjoyed by all. As well as weekly Thursday morning sessions, the team have also offered a number of 'Family sessions', and regular 'outdoor worship'. These have all been well received and attended by a growing number of families and children.

Sessions have also been run in Little Lights and Cafe Connect.

Grants have enabled the purchase of bench seating, new raised beds, and tools.

OUR BUILDING

We are blessed with a Grade 2* listed building which is of significant local and historical importance, and which for 203 years has been set apart for worship to the glory of God.We seek to ensure that the building is an instrument of our mission, rather than its maintenance becoming the focus of our mission.

Major maintenance in 2022 included:
· Spending significant funds ensuring our electrics are legally compliant;
· Preparatory work for renewal of our boilers and radiators;
·Clearing high-level gutters and downpipes;
· A comprehensive energy audit of our building.

A small team was convened to explore accessibility improvements to our building. Our accessible toilet has been updated, and disabled parking made clearer at the Trinity Street entrance. We also engaged our church architect to provide an accessibility audit, and our hope is that work on improved access at our main entrance will develop when funds allow.

CARE FOR CREATION

The **'Green Steps'** group (led by Bev Playle, now the joint diocesan Environmental Champion for Huddersfield) continued to meet with a focus on promoting appreciation of and responsibility for care of God's creation. We aim to achieve this through committing to pray, by including creation care within our worship services, and through promoting practical actions towards better stewardship of the earth and its resources. The challenges are great – especially in achieving net carbon zero in our 200-year-old building but the planned installation of our new heating system and the on-going work of the gardening team to make a beautiful, bio-diverse space for the community are two encouraging examples of how we can make a difference.

We have been greatly helped by the framework of the A Rocha Eco-church scheme. And if you haven't heard before [!], we are now one of only 500 churches nationally to achieve the Eco-church Silver Award. Read all about it here: (http://www.arocha.org.uk/eco-church/).

SERVING

Behind so much activity is a small army of people who enable ministry to happen here at Holy Trinity. Thank you to everyone who has served in different ways over this past year so that we can enable as many people as possible to connect with God and with others.

It may not surprise you that (especially since the pandemic) we need to grow our teams in every area of ministry at Holy Trinity.

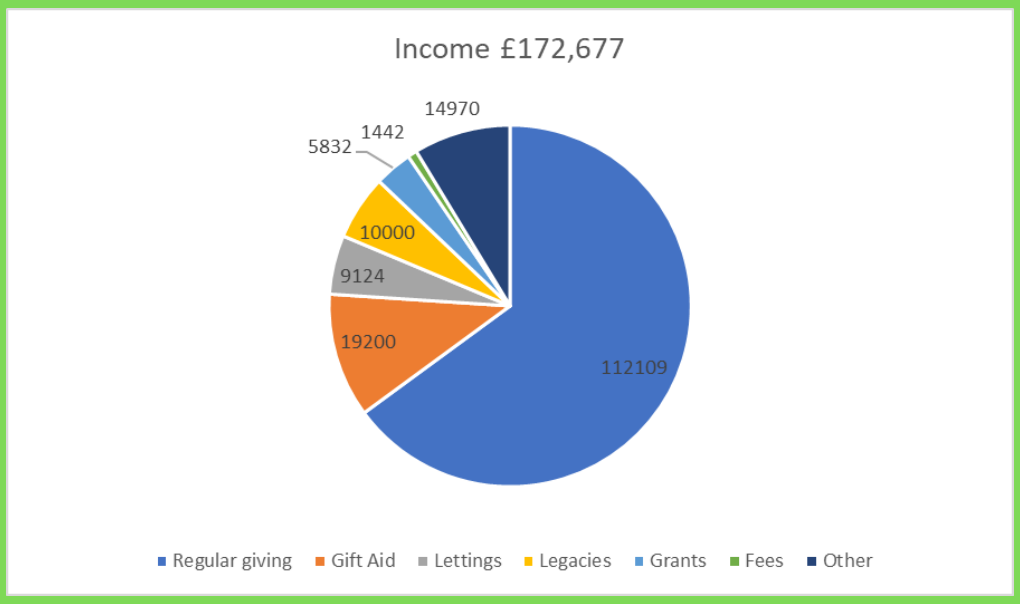
Whilst there is much to be received from being on a team (serving alongside others, finding our place in the body etc), let us not lose sight of the fact that, just like in our biological family, there is a need for us to play our part in giving to and serving the church family too. If you are interested in serving in any of the activities outlined in this review, please contact the church office. We also need to grow all our teams serving on Sundays: Welcome, Hospitality, Children, Youth, Screen, Livestream, Sound, Musical Worship, Bible Reading, Prayers. Which team could you serve on in 2023?

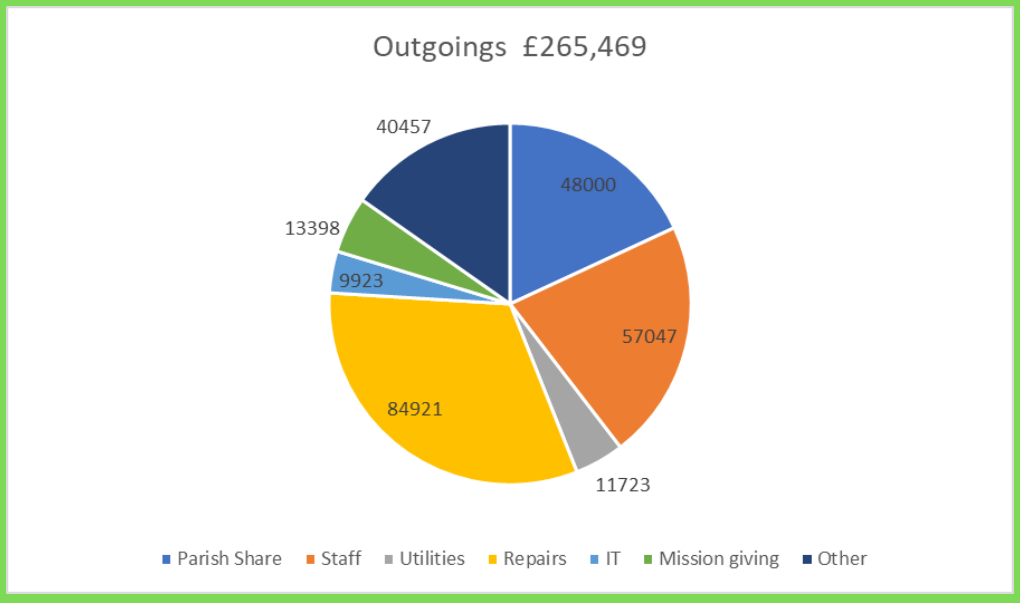
FINANCE AND GIVING

We would like to take this opportunity to thank those who have been able to financially support the work at Holy Trinity during 2022.
We have all felt the effects of the cost-of-living crisis, both here at church, and in our individual homes. Despite this, faithful regular giving has enabled us to continue all our activities, pay our staff, keep our building lit and warm (ish!), and meet our Parish Share request in full. Our appreciation also goes to those church users such as Little Lights, Café Connect, and various visitors whose generosity all makes a huge difference. The pie charts below show how this has been distributed across the year.

Every little helps as they say, but it is the regular, planned giving that enables us to budget and plan for the months and years ahead, and we encourage our church family to consider setting up a regular donation if they have not already done so. Gift Aid also increases our income by 25% and if you are a taxpayer please do complete a Gift Aid declaration.

Thank you to all who continue to support God's work here at Holy Trinity, both financially and in the generous giving of their time and talents.





Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

Ephesians 3:20-21