

Brunswick Church Annual Report 2024





Our Vision/Values

Our church is called first to worship God.

- we seek to offer worship which;
 - honours God
 - enables a real encounter with Him
 - reflects our varied community
 - is accessible to newcomers.

We must be the place where all can grow into wholeness in Christ

- together we seek to grow in;
 - the understanding of our faith
 - caring for one another
 - developing our gifts
 - deepening our relationships with one another.

We are called to make Christ relevant to all, and encourage all to follow Him

- we seek to this wherever God has placed us.

We are called to follow the example of Jesus in serving others, mirroring His ability to meet the social, spiritual and physical needs.

We seek to express God's love by serving people locally and worldwide, helping all people to experience life in all its fullness.

PURPOSE

The Parochial Church Council of Christchurch Brunswick, together with the incumbent (Reverend Canon Simon Gatenby) have the responsibility of enabling Christian Mission, Worship and Nurture to take place within and beyond the parish boundaries. It also has responsibility for the Church complex located on Brunswick Street, Manchester 13 and a property at 35 Portland Crescent, Longsight, Manchester 13, known as Barnabas House.

ANNUAL REPORT 2024

PCC Membership

During the year, the following served as members of the PCC

Incumbent: Rev. Canon Simon Gatenby

Curate: Rev Kathreen Shabaz (until October 2024)

Church Wardens: Mr Tim Craft

Mr Dilu Varughese

Deanery Synod Representative: Mr Gordon Flear (Secretary of PCC)

Elected Members:

Mrs Sally Jones (Treasurer) Mrs Judith Keeble

Mr Andrew Crome Mrs Agnes Ablakwa

Mrs Jenny Ferneyhough Mrs Alex Ellis (from 21/4/24)

PCC Employees

Ms Mo Blue – Community Programme Manager

Ms Kaydia Benjamin – Buildings Caretaker

Luis D'Assuncao – Barnabas Cleaner

PCC Organisation

PCC met 7 times during 2024 with 75% attendance. Various sub-groups continued to meet and fed in reports regularly: Preachers and leaders, Youth leaders and Eco Group.

Church Attendance

There were 80 parishioners on the electoral roll at the AGM in April 2024

The details of those attending services (including those on Zoom) were as follows :

	Average	Highest	Lowest
Adults / Children (<16)	46/14 (5 Zoom)	102/36	15/0

There was a regular Wednesday morning prayer (average 5) and an occasional evening Prayer meeting as well as other services (Ash Wednesday, Carol service etc).

PCC Review of Year

Major items that PCCs discussed/progressed were

- a) Safeguarding – Safeguarding is a mandatory agenda item for every PCC. A series of detailed actions were chased through at each meeting, by the end of the year PCC had completed the mandatory standard for Safeguarding. The PCC complied with the duty under section 5 of the safeguarding and clergy discipline measure 2016.
- b) Prayer – The monthly evening prayer meeting was supplemented by a daily prayer list which encompassed both individuals in the congregation and all the streets and activities that took place in the parish.
- c) The Climate group kept PCC apprised of various items and Eco matters became part of our monthly Cycle with 'Just One Thing'. PCC began an application to become a Demonstrator Church and took a survey of Church members to see what actions we should pursue next.
- d) The Positive Steps project continued and the PCC obtain various grants so that the offer of the midweek programme could include a Homework club, Craft club and more musical classes.
- e) The Mission priority of 'More people in Mix More often' was encouraged and supported.
- f) The PCC discussed its Mission Support and implemented changes in support.
- g) The PCC supported 3 church members in their successful applications for Authorised Lay ministry training in 2024/5.
- h) PCC decided to leave membership of the Evangelical Alliance in the light of their statement on sexuality and same-sex relationships.
- i) PCC supported a Church group in providing Experience Easter and Christmas for 2-year groups from the local school.
- j) Various other topics were discussed or decisions made regarding fabric issues at Church and Barnabas, reports from Deanery Synod and preparation for our tri-annual Church weekend away in 2025.

During 2024 Christchurch Brunswick celebrated its 50th year of the new building/ church. A weekend of celebrations occurred in June and various ex-Curates were invited back to preach – which continues into 2025.

You can read more about these items and more in the attached reports.

*On behalf of Christchurch Brunswick PCC
Reverend Simon Gatenby*

If you are reading the printed version of this booklet you can access the links to further info and videos by downloading the online version from this link on the church website <https://www.brunswickchurch.org.uk/news/agm-2025>

Treasurer's Report for the Financial Year ended 31 December 2024

Total income for the year was £172,007 (2023 £238,371). This is lower than the previous year due primarily to donations received for the Lounge Refurbishment Project in the last quarter of 2023.

General giving and donations totalled £49,010, which is higher than in 2023 (£42,629).

Room hire and EV charging income brought in £49,565 (2023 £50,376). Barnabas house room rental income was £20,292, slightly lower than in 2023 as two residents moved out during the year. Overall, these resources contributed income of £69,857 (2023 £75,000).

We continued to receive our annual contribution of £5,400 from the Manchester Diocese as compensation for Simon's time spent training Westcott students and received a £1,000 grant from Stewardship towards overhead costs.

We received £31,667 from Our Manchester representing $\frac{1}{4}$ of the first year (January to March 2024) and $\frac{3}{4}$ of the second year (April - December 2024) of our 3-year grant towards the costs of our community project, Positive Steps. Other grants for project activities and activity income from participants amounted to £5,012. The Positive Steps Project also received its usual annual contribution of £3,000 from the Church congregation.

Total expenditure for the year, including capital spend but excluding depreciation, was £135,242 (2023 £236,370). The significant decrease in expenditure on the previous year due mainly to expenditure on the lounge refurbishment in 2023.

Salary costs were slightly higher in 2024, part funded by the Our Manchester grant. Utility costs dropped slightly, from £14,038 in 2023 to £13,867 in 2024 (thanks to careful monitoring and use) while income from the EV charging points increased from £4,973 in 2023 to £5,617 in 2024. We also held lots of community events throughout the year, including a weekend of activities celebrating the building's 50th anniversary, and continued to provide household items for local people in need from our Keep Warm Fund.

We were again able to pay our Parish Share in full (2024 £26,461 2023 £24,043) and to support our various mission partners.

We ended the year with net current assets of £159,733 (2023 £122,968) of which £115,715 are general reserves excluding fixed assets.

As usual, 10% of giving, and tax relief received on Gift Aided giving, during the year will be set aside for mission support during 2025.

Thanks to Mo for her help with the bookkeeping in 2024.

Sally Jones

Maintenance, Fabric and Refurb Report 2024



2024 has seen lots of regular maintenance to our Church – mostly on a Monday evening at 7pm, but also occasionally Saturdays as we have a “full day” of getting the place “spick and span”

The Maintenance Group is one of our most regular and essential groups (that is only seen by Church maybe once or twice a year) and has most of its members under 17 years of age! Some even come back from Edinburgh and Liverpool to join in!

So - what goes on? In no order...

Mending Simons Chimes	Remove graffiti in new toilet	Check water in roof again
Changing banners		Leaks - foyer still an issue and one in worship room.
Checking the water in the roof	67 actions from PCC H&S inspection	Spring clean-up outside on late Saturday afternoon/ evening - when we hope to give the garden a spruce up, help the car park garden and remove the weeds from the front of Church
Youth room door repair	New toilet seat x 3 in ladies	Mend rectory door
Lounge door repair	Keep on deleting emails	Finish off those door guards
Clearing up after the party	Trunking at front of church - drills and rawlplugs	Filing of accounts, FIT meter reading
Equipment, files, chair covers, and more up into the loft (and back down again)	Church roof pushing up	Painting the hall
Heavy Cleaning with a Rug Doctor and Grease remover	Clear office up including emails!	Clearing garden of leaves and doing some weeding at front.
Pew removal for worship group space	New mobile "bin" in garden	Bolts purchased so lounge door can be locked
Putting on bin locks	Lawn mowed	Fire extinguisher to move in new lobby (more drilling)
Christmas decorations up (and down)	Roof repaired	Bolts in worship room need covering again.
More checking water in roof	Outside chairs stored in cupboard (cupboard tidied)	
Fix fire extinguishers off wall in hall	Clock repaired	
H&S Notices to do and laminate	New geyser repaired	
	Put up notice board	
	Clear up garden	
	Two noisy heaters	
	Installing the water butts	

As you can see there is a huge amount of work done in many varying locations – and lots of fun and enjoyment, hopefully with some learning and training going on at the same time.

Our thanks (in no order again!) to Abi, Ala, Anne, Caitlyn, Danett, David, Emily, Erin, Fig, James, Jas, Kexuan, Marie, Matt, Ryan, Serena, Tim & Winson.

As part of Maintenance at the start of the year we completed the lounge

Refurbishment with the finishing of recovering of chairs, new curtains and the provision of pictures and lights to complete the transformation. Refurb then mostly took a back seat after 4 years of intensive work – although we entered a very slow process of becoming a demonstrator Church for the church of England.

In 2025 we are unsure what the year holds in terms of major building work – please pray for discussions currently ongoing.

It is always good to be reminded that our priority is what is happening in the building and who is using it – and its brilliant that there is It is much that it needs such a brilliant team to maintain it week in and week out.

Gordon Flear

Praying together as a church family

"And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people." Ephesians 6:18

We are all called to pray for each other but there are some specific prayer activities that happen at church.

1. The prayer ministry team. This is a group of church members who have committed themselves to pray with people at church. We pray in pairs for people during Holy Communion every 4th Sunday but also during or after other services when asked.

The current team is: Agnes Ablackwa, Marie Donnelly, Helen Gatenby, Simon Gatenby, Nick Jones, Judith Karanja, Judith Keeble, and Gloria Slippe. Thank you to Susan Alman for helping us out. We really need more people as the team is now smaller. If you would like to discuss joining the team or recommending somebody for it, please speak to Judith Keeble, or Simon Gatenby

2. Prayer Chain. The church has a version of a prayer chain as a way of praying for each other at any time. People can sign up to receive requests for prayer by email (or phone). People can ask for prayer by contacting Jenny Ferneyhough who will forward those requests to those who have signed up to receive them. This has times where quite a few people ask for prayer and times that are less busy so we would encourage people to continue to use it. Please mail requests to prayer@brunswickchurch.org.uk Thank you, Jenny, for coordinating this over a long time.

3. Regular Prayer times. Regular prayer takes place on:

- Sunday mornings before the service - 10am
- Wednesday mornings - 9.30 to 10am
- The third Sunday of the month - 7 to 8pm

You are very welcome to join these prayer times.

To find out more about how you can be involved, speak to: Simon or Judith.

Judith Keeble



Sunday School Update 2024

Groups Update:

- Infant Sunday School (ages 3-7): This small but mighty group is full of big ideas, and it's a joy to watch them play, learn, and interact with the older children and young people at church. We are currently looking for a new leader to join our team and help guide our littlest ones as they explore faith in their own imaginative ways.
- Junior Sunday School (School Years 3-6): This group keeps us on our toes! Some weeks, we have just one child; other weeks, we have seven or eight! No matter the numbers, the children bring so much energy and enthusiasm to each session. They love getting creative, and our leaders do an amazing job of adapting on the spot to make sure every session is engaging and fun.
- Senior Sunday School (ages 11-18): This group continues to go from strength to strength. The fact that numbers remain strong, relationships keep deepening, and conversations grow in depth speaks volumes about the young people in our church. Their willingness to engage with big questions and support each other is inspiring to see.

Highlights of the Year:

- Continuing to use Roots on the Web as a foundation for our planning, helping us link Sunday School with the main service while allowing space for our own creative ideas.
- Diving deep into the Book of James and the story of Job, sparking great discussions.
- A bespoke nativity performance in the carol service, written and performed by our young people.
- Lots of crafts (because you can never have too many crafts!)

Thank You to Our Leaders!

Sunday mornings at Brunswick are full of energy, curiosity, and creativity – and that's thanks to our incredible Sunday School leaders. Their imagination, flexibility, and dedication ensure that every child and young person is engaged, encouraged, and excited to



explore faith together. Whether they're adapting sessions on the spot, bringing Bible stories to life, or finding new ways to spark discussion, their passion shines through in everything they do. We are so grateful for their commitment and the way they make Sunday School such a special place for our children.

Here's to another year of growing, learning, and journeying together in faith!

Interested in getting involved? Speak to Naomi Harrison – she'd love to hear from you!

Eco Report

Our 5th Mission Action Priority is Climate Change Awareness and Action.

As we see the impact of climate change not only around the world, but also on our doorsteps, and hear about the speed at which the World is warming up this continues to be a priority for the Church amongst all the other competing issues we must face.

On a national stage early in 2024 we applied and were then nominated as a Demonstrator Church for the Church of England's Net Zero project – the pace of responses and actions hasn't really matched the crisis we are in, but we hope 2025 will bring decisions and an ability to move forward with the Net Zero plans for the Worship Room. We were also featured a bit in a video! – see [here](#).

The reality is that its all of us doing little things that really matters – so our "Just One Thing" campaign continued during the year – encouraging the 50 or so individuals that come to church each week to make a change and do something – 1 thing a month. We backed this up with a couple of services specifically focused on Creation Care.

We asked the Church what we should be doing through an Eco survey – results [here](#), and from this began some new initiatives in early 2025.

- Eco Stepping Stones Seminars with our Missional Community Churches.
- An ECO shop- starting to buy in bulk and sell onto Church members for no profit goods that are ethical and good for the planet.
- We hope to have a service about Climate Justice in early 2025, and a series of services to concentrate on Creation care and climate Crisis during the Season of Creation in September.
- Encouraging the Church Council to become Net Zero in the short term by offsetting the 14.4 net tonnes of carbon our church building created in 2024 – which we did.

But... to repeat the final paragraph of last year's report (despite what some people would have you believe)...

.... the Climate Crisis continues and IS getting worse – impacting the wider world and ourselves. Anything and everything we do as a church (building) is good – but everything we can change as church (people) is so much more important – how embedded is Creation Care in my life?

The Eco Group

Experience Easter and Christmas

Continuing what has now become somewhat of a tradition, in 2024, we again welcomed children from Medlock School into Church to Experience Easter and Christmas. Just before Easter, 60 year 5 children spent the morning learning about the Easter story by visiting a number of 'story stations', each manned by a Church member, to hear different parts of the Easter story and at Christmas, 60 year 2 children did the same, but this time discovered the story of Christmas. It's lovely that we are now seeing year 5 children at Experience Easter who remember doing Experience Christmas when they were in year 2!

Sally Jones



Wednesday Evening Fellowship Group

When - Wednesday evenings from 7.45 - 9.15pm.

Where – Our pattern now is to meet at a home for a bible study, discussion and prayer every week with a Zoom option for those who can't attend physically.

What - This year one of our topics was based on The God Story – looking at the overall big picture of the Bible and tracing the themes of kingdom, family and presence. Another was to use the Lectio 360 course: "How to be (un)successful" – comparing God's call to what contemporary culture says is successful. As usual we took a break over the summer.

Who – Normally the group is between 4 to 8 people on any given week. You're very welcome to join us. Contact Judith on judithkeeble@gmail.com



Judith Keeble

Safeguarding Report 2024

The Parish continues to be guided by the Diocese of Manchester policy "SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND ADULTS AT RISK", which is available on the church website. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. If you'd like to know more, please contact Naomi Harrison or Simon Gatenby.

There have been no allegations or reports of abuse made and no cause for concern raised.

Naomi Harrison - March 2025

Music Group Report 2025

Music group continue to lead the congregation in sung worship. We come, we sing and play, we pray and worship.... and as two or three – and now regularly more! – are gathered together, somewhere in this mystery God is here and meets with us. We trust that what God desires and 'listens' to is the intention of our hearts, rather than our musical skill, as we come to Him, seeking to worship in Spirit and truth. We approach leading the congregation in this vein, inviting the Spirit to inhabit the best that we can offer to enable us to praise and worship Father and Son, to be lead into His presence and into worship.

Music group members are: Paul, Lee, Abi, Jenny, Evan, Olivia, Herbie, Marie, Helen, Jayden, Simon and Erin, who we are delighted to have welcomed to our number this year. Our increased numbers, and members' commitment and instrumental flexibility, has meant we've been able to offer live music to support our worship in every service this past year. Choosing songs and leading the band and congregation on Sundays has been shared amongst us. We've also run a worship 'soaking' evening and hope to create more space for this in the coming year.

And thanks also to the dedicated PA team – Tim, Edwin and Matthew – who enable our sound to be heard and lyrics to be seen, both in the building and on Zoom. Thank you to everyone involved!

Currently we meet for practice before each service; and quarterly for a longer full morning, to practice, pray, play and

worship together. We are always open to more people of any age joining us: if you have some musical ability, or can hold a tune vocally and have a desire to use these gifts to serve God and the church through worship, then please do come and speak with us, we'd love you to be involved.

If you have songs, of any tradition, that encourage you and that you would like us to sing, please do let us know and we'll do our best to learn and incorporate them into our worship.

Worship is the collective endeavour of all of God's people. Thank you for your active participation in sung worship on Sundays – standing at the front and seeing God enabling people to worship Him through singing, dancing, contemplating, praying, laughing, clapping and crying is a real privilege and a sign that as we gather together in the name of Jesus, Jesus is here with us.



Helen Gatenby

50th Anniversary weekend

Over the weekend of 29th and 30th June 2024 we took the opportunity to celebrate what God has done at Christchurch Brunswick (to give us our “official name”) over the past 50 years



Based on the theme of “Looking back with Gratitude, looking forward with Hope” we opened the building to congregation members and community friends from past, present and future. A very full schedule was planned and run around many opportunities to sit, chat, and eat together.

Saturday morning combined a walk around the parish combined with a litter pick – followed by a soup lunch.



Saturday afternoon was a community fun event – with lots of activities for all ages plus a chance to look at various archives and memories in displays spanning the past 5 decades. Tea and cake abounded

Saturday’s service featured a Celebration of many things currently happening in Brunswick – a highlight was Joyful Noise leading our worship

On Saturday evening – after once again being well fed we had time to relax, chat, enjoy the music and join in on the legendary Quiz

Sunday morning we were joined by many old Brunswickians (the Diaspora as we call them) as we gave God thanks for the past 50 years and looked



forward with encouragement to the next few decades – see a video of service [here](#).

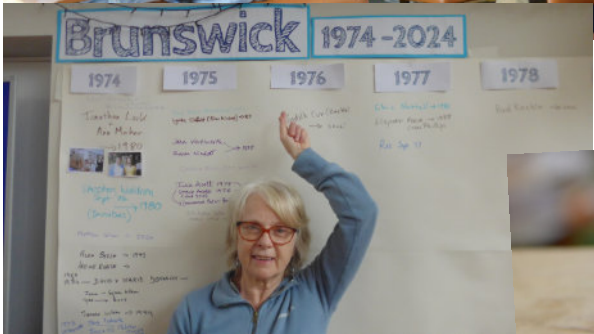
We of course ended with a 'Bring and Share' lunch - with many different contributions across our wonderful culturally diverse Church. Everyone will have their own memories and highlights of the

weekend – mine include the creation of the Brunswick Timeline, the testimony of many of those who have passed through these walls over the years, and especially the words and letters after from so many who



encouraged us to “keep on keeping on” in working with what God is doing in Brunswick

Gordon Flear



More photos of the weekend [here](#).

Positive Steps Report January – December 2024

During 2024, our Positive Steps Project's core activities continued.

Women's Footprints

Our Monday women's group met throughout the year. More than 40 women have attended the group. Sometimes we just sit and chat over tea and cake, providing a safe space for women of all ages, ethnicities and faiths to talk and find support. We also enjoy doing crafts, listening to guest speakers, going on trips and taking part in other local projects. Two of the highlights this year were:

RNCM Project - The group undertook an 8-week project with the Royal Northern College of Music to encourage local people to access activities provided by the College. The women worked on a photography project and creative pieces that were then exhibited at the College. They also had the opportunity to attend an opera - The Snow Queen - which was a first for all of them!

Train Travel Project - In September the group took part in a project called "Try the Train" run by Northern Rail. The project was aimed at encouraging women to use the train more. Over eight sessions, a facilitator from Northern Rail helped the group to look at barriers to using the train, took them to Piccadilly Station to familiarise them with the facilities. The group then chose to visit [Hebden Bridge](#) by train, planned the trip together and had a wonderful day out. They also had lunch courtesy of Northern Rail! .

The group has also enjoyed a guided nature walk around Brunswick and trips to Gorton Monastery, the cinema, charity shops, Wythenshawe Park, Manchester Museum, enjoyed lunch at Manchester University and visited The Royal Northern College of Music Archives.

In April two of our women's group members, Susan and Marie, undertook training to deliver a Peaced Together Project. This is a 10-week creative course that will support women with their well-being and will be rolled out in 2025.

Toddler Group

Our thriving toddler group saw over 100 parents/carers and toddlers attend the Wednesday morning group during the year. Led by the amazing Susan Alman and her volunteers, the children enjoy a stimulating environment and healthy snacks while



their parents/carers have the opportunity to meet, share experiences and build friendships. The highlight of the year was the toddler Christmas party when [Santa paid a visit!](#)

Towards the end of the year Mo and Susan undertook training with the Manchester Local Care Organisation as part of the Neighbourhood MMR Vaccination – A Health Creation Focused Project, aimed at increasing confidence in the take up of the MMR vaccination. They will be delivering three information sessions for the community in early 2025, one of which will be within our toddler group.



Brunswick Beestro

Our popular community café is open Tuesday – Thursday serving free hot drinks and toasties and a full meal on a Tuesday cooked by Alison and Kay. It continues to be a place where local people meet to chat over a coffee or a meal. During the year we worked with Fareshare Greater Manchester, from whom we buy surplus food, which would otherwise go to waste, for use in our Beestro.



Joyful Noise Singing Group

Our singing group, Joyful Noise continued to meet during the year and gave several performances, including at our Golden Jubilee weekend, the [Swinton Grove Christmas Light Switch On](#) and our [Community Carol Service](#). Members meet each Thursday afternoon.



Guitar Lessons

At the beginning of 2024, we added adult guitar lessons to our offer of weekly guitar lessons for children and, towards the end of the year, joined the two groups together.

Homework Support Club

Our after-school Homework Support Club for children in years 1-6 and their parents, which we began in September 2023, although small in number, is really valued by those who attend. The club, which meets on a Tuesday afternoon, is staffed by our wonderful volunteers, Ros, Marie and Emma. Five children and their parents regularly

attend and, as well as receiving support with homework, they enjoy a healthy snack and play educational games. This is what one of the mum's had to say about the club: "At home with 3 it is difficult, so it helps to come and do homework with other adults. It's not all about homework, it's relaxed - they can eat, do reading and play. It gives me a break. I help one and the other adults help the others."

Exercise Classes

Zumba classes, armchair exercise and Buzz (GP referred) exercise classes all continued during the year.

Brunswick Food Pantry

During the year, we set up the Brunswick Food pantry which is stocked with donated store cupboard and frozen foods and is open to anyone in the community by referral to Mo. This has proved particularly valuable for those who don't qualify for other local food banks.

Conversational English Group

Having undertaken training, Mo set up this group towards the end of the year, with help from Judith, to give those with for whom English is not their first language a space to improve their conversational skills.



Alongside all of this, we also held lots of community events:

Family Games Night

In January we held our first Family Games Night, which included child-friendly and team games, such as giant Jenga and Connect 4, a Beetle Drive and Bingo (which got very competitive!), followed by board games from 8pm for teenagers upwards. Pizza, salad and cakes were on the menu. It proved so popular that we held a second one in February!

Lunar New Year Fair and Celebration

Also in February, we hosted a [Lunar New Year Fair and Celebration](#) to celebrate the Chinese New Year, featuring a New Year Market, unique delicacies, games, an art workshop and cultural and artistic performances.

Pancake Party

On Shrove Tuesday, we had our annual Community Pancake Party with Mo and our volunteers serving huge amounts of pancakes with all sorts of toppings to local families.



Golden Jubilee Weekend

Over the weekend of 29-30 June, we held a variety of events to celebrate our building's Golden Jubilee. These included a guided walk around the local area looking at the many changes that have taken place over the years, especially the eco-themed improvements that many PSP members have been involved in, a community lunch, an



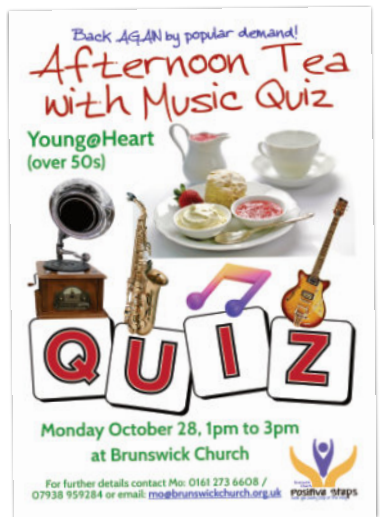
afternoon of circus skills, bouncy castles, face painting, crafts and games, a meal comprising various dishes representing the many cultures in our community followed by a quiz, disco and karaoke. Photos of the weekend can be viewed [here](#).

Women's Health & Wellbeing Day

In September we hosted a Women's Health and Wellbeing Day at which health professionals gave talks and information relating to menopause, endometriosis, miscarriage and women's mental wellbeing.

Afternoon tea with music quiz

In October 2024 we held another of our ['Afternoon Tea with Music Quiz'](#) events. Great food was provided by our volunteers and a prize quiz on all things musical ably led by Quizmaster Simon.



Tabletop Sale

In November, at the request of local people, the women's group organised another tabletop sale, giving people the opportunity to sell their unwanted items and buy some early Christmas presents.

Community Pantomime

In December we, once again, hosted travelling theatre company, NWTAC, who this year did two performances of the pantomime "[Sleeping Beauty](#)" to a packed auditorium of local families. Tickets were £5 for an adult and child and £3 for an extra child. All the children enjoyed free refreshments and a treat to take home.



Community Christmas lunch

On 17th December we hosted our annual [Community Christmas Lunch](#), at which more than 80 local people enjoyed a full Christmas dinner, musical entertainment and a



goody bag to take home. All the shopping and cooking was done with the support of fantastic volunteers.

Some of the things people have said about Positive Steps:

"Thank you very much Susan, you are truly a wonderful teacher and we spend the best times with you". (Toddler Group mum)

"I love this place. I feel so lucky to be able to come here 3-4 days per week. Lots of laughter, great atmosphere and lovely food."

"I have only recently joined the group (Women's Footprints) but genuinely feel part of the group - lovely people and I will definitely keep coming. It helps me with my personal issues and gives me things to look forward to."

"The Positive Steps Project has been a lifesaver and life changer for me. I look forward to the Women's Group every Monday morning. It is an amazing start to my week. Then

on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday the space offers a variety of activities and events to the general community. On these 3 days there is good food available for whoever turns up. Everything is done in a very safe and joyful environment with great conversations and much laughter."

"The food and reading are my favourite stuff. It helps to read with Mum".
(Homework Club)

"Women's Footprints is invaluable to me – gives me a great sense of purpose".

"I think every aspect of PSP is amazing. It gives people a safe space where they can go and get help or just to get away from their worries. The care and dedication that Mo has toward positive steps are just amazing. I believe Mo has changed a lot of people's lives for the better with her positive and caring ways."

"I love coming to the women`s group. I don`t know what to do with myself when we have a break."

Our building is also regularly used by a number of other local organisations:

- The Lab Project, who run courses for unemployed adults aged 19+ aimed at building confidence and communication skills, as well as having their office in our building.
- M13 Youth Project, who run three weekly youth clubs in the building.
- Rockwell Community Brass Band, who hold their weekly practice sessions here (the band also performed at our 50th Celebration and Community Carol Service).

During the year we also hosted local tenants and residents' meetings, Greater Manchester Mental Health Carers Matter meetings, the M13 Youth Project trustee meetings and AGM, Greater Manchester Tenants Union meetings, S4B Stakeholders meetings, Manchester Women's Aid meetings as well as the wedding and reception of two of our volunteers!

As a dedicated community worker with fantastic support from volunteers, the Positive Steps Project strives to empower individuals, foster inclusivity, and create positive change. By listening, supporting, and collaborating, we are helping to build a stronger, more resilient community where everyone has a voice and access to opportunities. Thanks to all for a fabulous year!

Mo Blue – Community Programme Manager



Mission Partners

Movement for Justice and Reconciliation (MJR)

MJR is a national UK charity set up in 2015 working for racial and class equality in the church and society. Central to the work of MJR is to identify and challenge the legacies of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade, including its continued injustices and consequences for all communities, White and Black. MJR believes that reconciling slavery and its legacy issues is vital to the integrity of Christian witness, unity and renewal of fellowship. Its work includes research, training and education, networking and advocacy.

In 2024 MJR continued its work on exploring issues around the legacy of colonial slavery and industrial exploitation. It is currently developing a virtual project with the Museum of Diversity, which works with the Commonwealth heads of states. The MJR documentary film 'After the Flood: slavery, the church and reconciliation' continues to be widely used and well-received. It is now licenced for use in a number of churches and denominations including Anglican, Methodist and Baptist as a resource for congregations, as well as by a growing number of colleges and universities, including Manchester, as a teaching resource.

To find out more about MJR go to mjr-uk.com or speak to Paul Keeble.



Ambassadors Football Great Britain

In August 1990, 3 overseas amateur footballers who had relocated to the northern England town of Bolton decided to start a football team by placing an advert in a local newspaper. From these humble beginnings, a movement started that was called 'Ambassadors in Sport' which eventually became known as 'Ambassadors Football' from August 2013. This movement has grown both nationally across the UK, and internationally to over 25 countries globally. The ambitions of these founders of the Ambassadors football club have always extended beyond the field itself; their Christian faith, ethos and values drove them to go beyond the game and actually seek to bring transformation both to individuals and communities through the combination of Football, Faith, Future.

Since becoming a UK registered charity and a limited company in 1997; Ambassadors have aspired to run quality football outreach for the local church in an aim to share faith, to give individuals a better future. From our experience we have invested in churches and



individuals to empower and train them. We believe football is a great way to build fellowship, friendship and trust that breaks down all barriers.

In the UK, by 2027 we will partner with 800 churches in their disciple-making mission (we currently partner with approx. 434).

We will train 100 people through football to be effective Christ-followers.

The British work of Ambassadors Football is one of about 25 similar national charitable ongoing works around the world that are joined by an international covenant of agreement under the banner of Ambassadors Football International.

From a personal point of view and having been involved through close contact with the GB director since 2015 and through prayer and other kinds of support it's great to see all the good work ongoing amongst young people.

Finally, we would like to thank you as a congregation for your support both prayerfully and financially.

For more information go to gb.ambassadorsfootball.org, or speak to David Donnelly.

Ambassadors Football National Director Martin Bateman has written a more detailed report on 2024 – copies available from David Donnelly.

Tear Fund

[Tear Fund](#) is a Christian charity that partners with churches in more than 50 of the world's poorest countries. They tackle poverty through sustainable development, responding to disasters, and challenging injustice.



They tackle poverty through sustainable development, responding to disasters, and challenging injustice. "We believe an end to extreme poverty is possible." Their strapline for many years has been "Following Jesus where the need is greatest."

The 3 main areas of the work are

- Humanitarian response responding quickly to disasters and conflicts, supporting those in greatest need throughout the recovery process.
- Community development partnering with local churches and organisations, mobilising resources and empowering communities to lift themselves out of poverty.
- Advocacy and influencing helping individuals and churches speak out on issues of poverty and injustice, and we challenge unjust policies and practices at a local, national and global level. Going "upstream" as Bishop Tutu said ("There comes a point where we need to stop just pulling people out of the river. We need to go upstream and find out why they are falling in."). They are very involved in Climate Crisis work and recently have asked their supporters to write to MP's asking them to vote against the huge recent cuts in Aid budgets.

As a church we have supported TEAR FUND for many years and we renewed our support this year. Why do we support them? Primarily because their mission and vision

mirrors so much of what we believe and do in Brunswick – though they do it on a world scale! It allows us to have a wider perspective on what God wants for his world beyond Brunswick, and to know that there are things we can do, give, and pray for that can make an impact for our sisters and Brothers throughout the globe. Apart from a monthly gift we also run The BIG QUIZ every autumn as a fund raiser and we regularly pray for them.

Poverty is not God’s plan. You are.

For more about Tear Fund go to tearfund.org or ask Gordon Flear.

Operation Restoration Christian School



Based in Trenchtown, a hard hit part of Jamaica’s capital Kingston, Operation Restoration Christian School (ORCS) is a remedial school, serving students between the ages of 12-17 who have fallen behind in their literacy and numeracy and who are functioning academically below their age group. They work with the students over a four-year period, assisting them to gain re-entry into the main stream education system through the Grade Nine Achievement Test, or enter into other academic or skills development programmes. They currently have three classes, served by dedicated teachers and the principal, Robert Dixon.

ORCS was founded in 1994 by Lorna Stanley and recently celebrated its 30th anniversary. Robert has said about the ORCS students, referencing Isaiah 42:3: “Our students are the weakest reeds in the education system. The ones that have been left behind and can easily be discarded. That flickering flame that threatens to be blown out by the winds of life. They come to ORCS lacking fundamental skills and information they should have learnt at the primary level. We bring justice by creating an atmosphere within the school in which our students can thrive and access realistic life-chances.”

Initially through links with Les Issacs’ Ascension Trust, together with visits from our own Paul Keeble and more recently Simon and Helen Gatenby who volunteered at the school for 5 weeks towards the end of 2023, our church has supported this school financially and in prayer.



We have welcomed Robert – and previously Lorna – as our guest when they have been across in the UK. Robert will be visiting again in April.



