

St Colmans report to the Vestry

St Colmans Church is the most northerly `Episcopalian church in the UK, situated in Burravoe in the South East corner of the island of Yell in Shetland. It was built in 1900 and has been described as "a little rural gem". It is one of 3 Churches on Yell along with St Johns Church of Scotland in the North and the Methodist Chapel in the middle. Yell has a population of approximately 900, and the village of Burravoe has a population of approximately 100.

We have services on the first and third Sundays when we are joined by members of the Methodist Chapel and we join them at the chapel on the second and fourth Sundays. We also have ecumenical Family services 5 times a year which are well attended .We have regular visiting priests from our sister church of St Magnus in Lerwick on the main island.

The church is open daily all year for private meditation and prayer and attracts many visitors particularly, but not exclusively, during the tourist season. Our visitors book comments on the peace and prayerful atmosphere show how much it is appreciated.

The church is also used by the community choir which meets once a week to practice and we are able to call on their support for special services such as Christmas and our Summer Flower festival which this year combined with our 125th Anniversary which was very well supported by visitors from all over Shetland not only our island The local primary School also uses the school for Christmas and other occasions during the year

Although our congregation at most services is small, averaging about 10 communicants, we take pride in our church and keep it in good repair.

The Parsonage is in the church ground and was built at the same time as the Church. As we do not have a resident priest the parsonage is rented privately. We have 3 Trustees (vestry members) who have all undergone Trustee training this year and are at present reviewing and updating our constitution.

2024/25 has been a difficult year for the Church. The Parsonage wall needed re rendering and work was needed on the roof but we had difficulty getting supplies and labour to do it, which is one of the problems of living 200 miles from the Scottish mainland. This work has been done. Also the vestry roof has started to leak and needed a new outside door and then finally the oil-fired boiler failed its annual inspection meaning we had to find a new form of heating that was carbon free as stipulated by the diocese. So the year has been spent fundraising and looking for grants and waiting for builders and electricians. We have had a new vestry door put in and we have contractors and estimates for the other repairs

Because of our intense fundraising we have a healthy bank balance although most of it will be needed to pay building fees.

Our income this year on 30 September totaled £16,030 which included grants of £5722 towards Parsonage repairs and our expenditure was £8,914 giving us a surplus of £7115

This year the Vestry have undergone training in the duties of Trustees along with St Magnus church, our sister church in Lerwick
We are also reviewing and updating our constitution with advice from the diocese of Aberdeen.

We look forward to 2026 when all our objectives will hopefully have been achieved