



HOLY
TRINITY
CHURCH

Holy Trinity Church

Benefice of the Cookhams

Annual Parochial Meeting, 2024

**To be held in the Church
at 12.00 on
Sunday 28 April**

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Agenda for the Annual Meeting of Parishioners 12.00 Sunday 28 April 2024

The election of two churchwardens to serve for the ensuing year.

Agenda for the Annual Parochial Church Meeting Sunday 28 April 2024

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the meeting held on Sunday 23 April 2023
3. Presentation of changes to the Electoral Roll
4. Presentation of the Annual Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2023
5. Appointment of Independent Examiner
6. The annual reports on the proceedings of the PCC and the activities of the parish generally for the year ended 31 December 2023
7. Update on re-ordering project – verbal report
8. Election of 4 representatives to the Deanery Synod from 2024 to 2026
9. Election of up to 15 PCC members (less Deanery Synod representatives)
10. Update on vacancy process for Associate Priest – verbal report
11. Looking to the future – the Vicar – verbal input
12. Any other business – by leave of the Chairman and to be notified to the Secretary (PCCSecretary@cofe-thecookhams.org.uk) by 21 April 2024
 - Suggestion from Sheila and Andy Draper about raising funding for restoration project

Closing prayers

Date of the first PCC meeting: Following the APCM there will be a short meeting of the new PCC to elect the Treasurer, Secretary and Vice-Chair, and to agree membership of committees and trustee bodies

Date of next APCM: Sunday 11 May 2025



Holy Trinity, Cookham

Benefice of the Cookhams, Diocese of Oxford

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Parishioners, 12.00 Sunday 23 April 2023

There were 41 parishioners in attendance at the meeting.

The election of two churchwardens to serve for the ensuing year.

Mark Stockdale thanked everyone for attending the meeting and explained that he is chairing this meeting in the absence of a vicar.

The secretary advised that nominations for the election of Churchwardens had been received from Mark Stockdale who agreed to serve for 1 more year and advised that he will stand down in 2024, and Bernadette Clark. Both were unanimously elected.

The meeting closed 12.14.

Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting Sunday 23 April 2023

1.	Apologies for absence
	David Harrold and David Joynes.
2.	Minutes of the meeting held on Sunday 3 April 2022
	The minutes of the meeting held on Sunday 3 April 2022 were accepted as a true record. Proposed by Malcolm Sturges, seconded by Martin Gosling.
3.	Presentation of changes to the Electoral Roll
	Malcolm Sturges reported that the number on the electoral roll is 210 of which 80 do not live in the Parish. This is an increase of 2 new applications from outside the parish. Thanks were extended to Malcolm Sturges for his work.
4.	Presentation of the Annual Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2022
	The Treasurer advised that the total assets and cash assets have increased and outline the funds set aside for the restoration fund with more outgoings for the heating project. The general fund has increased, showing slightly more income than expenditure which has increased due in inflation with the total impact being +£31,000. The increase in income was due to no vacancies in the flats or Broomhill, caravan rentals, Parish Centre activity, weddings and funerals and standing order donations. The Parish share payment has increased but we will pay less this year as we get a rebate for having a vacancy. He advised that more legacies than normal were received in 2021 therefore the money was set aside for car park. Surplus £5k less than last year. He advised the accounts have been scrutinised by the independent examiner and were approved at last PCC meeting.

	<p>The treasurer proposed that the accounts are accepted. Proposed by Martin Gosling, seconded by Mike Clark. Agreed by all.</p> <p>Thanks were extended to Tim Sharples for his continued work on the accounts.</p> <p>The Treasurer thanked everyone involved in collecting and banking donations and highlighted that the Parish giving scheme is the most cost-effective method for making donations. He outlined the costs incurred with other methods and urged parishioners to look at the parish giving scheme and their tax position and to call him if help is needed to contribute.</p>
5.	<p>The annual reports on the proceedings of the PCC and the activities of the parish generally for the year ended 31 December 2022</p>
	<p>Mark Stockdale advised that an essential part of the meeting is to receive the Deanery Synod annual report which begins on 6 in booklet. The report was received and acknowledged.</p> <p>Other reports received were the Baptism and Baptism preparation and reports from the PCC committees and working groups including the stewardship report.</p> <p>Mark Stockdale expanded on the stewardship report by updating the current position with the church heating.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DAC has agreed in principle to a toilet in the tower. • DAC has agreed in principle to us installing underfloor heating in the nave and supplementary radiators there and in the east end – which will necessitate lifting all the pews and replacing most of them with chairs similar to the new ones in the Parish Centre – but probably reinstated pews in the south aisle. • So, what does agreement in principle mean? DAC has yet to agree on a method of heating. We have proposed gas as being the most efficient and appropriate for this building. Since we embarked on this project General Synod has introduced very demanding net carbon zero requirement to apply to each and every church in England by 2039. DAC are pressing for ASHP which our heating expert – who is also an adviser to the Diocese of Gloucester – has told us is not appropriate for Holy Trinity Church. An energy audit proposed halo heaters but they would spoil the look of the church and interfere with AV system. We are pressing DAC to make a YES / NO recommendation on our proposal to use gas in the short term and switch to hydrogen or green alternative by 2030. If NO, we can go direct to the Chancellor of the Diocese who makes the decision. <p>He advised that the church would be closed during the work and invited questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could temporary heating be considered as the church is so cold? Stewardship Committee will consider. • Could a temporary gazebo be put up whilst the doors are open? Stewardship Committee will consider. • Will the bell ringers be able to continue during the period of closure? Not sure MS will advise. • Where will worship take place during the work? Either the Parish Centre or SJB. <p>Mike Clark advised the parishioners that we have petitioned the Bishop of Oxford and have had a response advising on how to take the matter further.</p> <p>Reports were also received from the Bell ringers, Ministry of Welcome, Churchyard and Estate Trusteeships and other community interests, Verger and Sacristan, Servers, Choirs and music, Safeguarding, Sunday School, Trinity Nippers, Open Minds, Cookham Kids Holiday Club, Ladies' Group, Men's Breakfast, Whitechapel Mission, The Darby Pension Fund, Pastoral Network, Rendezvous and Holy Trinity Schools and thanks were extended to all contributors. Malcom Sturges also thanked the bell ringers.</p> <p>The reports were accepted by all, proposed by Nicola Stingelin, and seconded by Tim Sharples.</p>

6.	Appointment of Independent Examiner
	<p>Mark Stockdale thanked the independent examiner Roger Groeneweg for his work on examining the accounts and requested nominations for him to continue in this role which he is willing to do.</p> <p>Proposed by Mary Adams and seconded by Malcom Sturges.</p>
7.	Election of 4 representatives to the Deanery Synod from 2023 to 2026
	<p>Mark Stockdale advised that nominations have been received for Bernadette Clark and David Harrold. Further nominations were invited (up to 4), but none were forthcoming.</p> <p>Bernadette Clark and David Harrold were duly elected.</p>
8.	Election of up to 15 PCC members (less Deanery Synod representatives)
	<p>Mark Stockdale advised that the Churchwardens, Clergy, and Deanery Synod representatives were ex officio members of the PCC with elected members making a total of 9.</p> <p>Mike Clark highlighted that the Stewardship Committee has co-opted members who are not on PCC but provide valuable services.</p> <p>Mark Stockdale requested a show of hands to approve those elected. Agreed.</p>
9.	Update on vacancy process
	<p>Mark Stockdale gave an update on the vacancy process and current position as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A joint meeting of the PCCs appointed the four churchwardens (Lorna Sykes and David Hazeldine from SJB), Tim Sharples and John Sykes (SJB) to draft the Benefice Profile – a comprehensive online document which tells prospective applicants about our parishes and our mission and sets out the sort of person we’re looking for. • We are working to an ambitious timetable that could give us a new Vicar by the end of the year – and he explained why he said “could”. • We have set aside 12 July for interviews. If we find someone then the diocese would need to take up references and we expect they would need to give 3 months’ notice. • 24 May – section 12 meeting – the Archdeacon (for Bishop), Patron, Parish Development Adviser, PCCs. • 3 May – joint PCC meeting to approve draft Benefice Profile – final draft to s12 people. • To explain why he only said we “could” have someone in place by the end of the year: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No applicants ○ No suitable applicant ○ If they have school age children would probably want to wait for end of autumn term • Oh – and if you see a removal van outside the Vicarage in the next few weeks, don’t get too excited. The diocese has offered the Vicarage for a 6-month let. No, we don’t get the money, but we do get a reduction in our Parish Share.
10.	Any other business – by leave of the Chairman
	<p>Malcom Sturges thanked the Churchwardens, secretary and all who work for the church. Mark Stockdale thanked to Malcolm Sturges and Rev Helen Chamberlain – everyone clapped.</p>

11.	Closing prayers
	Mark Stockdale closed the meeting at 12.58 with the Grace with a message to help us to make this church a beacon of God's love.
12.	Date of the first PCC meeting:
	TBA
13.	Date of next APCM:
	Sunday 14 th April 2024

Signed

Date

Ministry Team Report 2023

During the course of 2023 we lost both our stipendiary clergy: Rev Nick Plant, Vicar, retired through ill health on Sunday 29 January, and we said farewell to our Associate Priest, Revd Helen Chamberlain, on Sunday 5 November, before she left to take up a post as Vicar of Cleckheaton (Diocese of Leeds). Work started in January to draft a Benefice Profile and to advertise the vacancy for a new vicar. There were no applications in response to our first advertisement in the summer, but after re-advertising we were able to interview applicants on Friday 20 January and delighted to appoint Revd Stephen Mills who took up post on Thursday 11 January 2024.

Although our self-supporting Associate Priest, Revd David Joynes, had indicated a desire to step back from active ministry, we are most grateful that he stepped up during the vacancy, firstly by supporting Revd Helen, and latterly when we were without stipendiary clergy. Our Licensed Lay Minister, Richard Simmonds, took on more funerals and he and one of the churchwardens covered all our evening services at Holy Trinity Church, roughly twice a month. We are also very grateful for local clergy and the Archdeacon of Berkshire who covered Sunday services and Weddings when none of our own team were available. Our Monday evening prayers for Ukraine and World Peace continued throughout the year, alternating between the two churches, an led by one of the churchwardens. Online lay led prayers continued to be uploaded to the churches' You Tube channel of Mondays and Fridays, supplemented by seasonal offerings by the choirs of Holy Trinity Church. Many Sunday morning services were recorded at St John the Baptist and the occasional evening services at Holy Trinity Church.

Church life continued through the year more or less as normal and church attendance was not much impacted by the changes in our clergy team. Indeed, average attendance at normal Sunday Services at Holy Trinity Church increased to 85 adults (69 in 2022) adults and 8 under 16s (6 in 2022) thanks to some special services and well-attended baptisms. There were 93 communicants on Easter Day and 189 on Christmas Day, including the Vigil service. There were 13 baptisms during the year; 6 weddings; and 25 funerals, memorials and interment of ashes.

A number of our congregations were confirmed by the Bishop of Reading at Bray on 10 September with another at Reading Minister on 10 December. It is always a joy to welcome new people to share with us in the Eucharist.

The ever popular 4th@4 All Age Service at St John the Baptist Church morphed into Families@4 to give more flexibility and to enable these services to coincide with Mothering Sunday and avoid half term holidays. We ran a Lent Course jointly with the Methodist Church entitled "Living Lent" covering the themes of creation, freedom, justice, reconciliation and prophetic vision.

We are planning a pilgrimage to Greece for June 2024.

Fr David Joynes and Mark Stockdale

Maidenhead and Windsor Deanery Annual Report for 2023

The Maidenhead and Windsor Deanery comprises 14 parishes and benefices. The Deanery Synod comprises all the clergy in the deanery and Lay Representatives elected by their respective parishes for a period of three years. July 2023 marked the start of a new triennium after Synod elections for lay representatives at parish annual meetings earlier in the year. At the end of 2023 the Synod had 68 members. Attendance varied from 31 to 38 over the year.

There were three meetings of the Synod during 2023:

Wednesday 8th February 2023 at All Saints Church, Boyne Hill, Maidenhead:

- Representatives of four Deanery churches shared experiences of studying the Bible
- All Saints Dedworth shared about their Life Groups and their use of the Bible Course by the Bible Society
- St Andrew's Clewer shared about a group which read the whole Bible together over five years, meeting up regularly to discuss what they had read.

- St Mary's Maidenhead shared a personal experience of studying Philippians, and how it had helped in spiritual growth, joy, and dependence on God.
- All Saints Boyne Hill (including an Iranian refugee) shared about their use of a book "Jesus Through Middle Eastern Eyes", interpreting Scripture through first-century eyes, including how Jesus offered new life and gave value to women.

Tuesday 23rd May 2023 at St Michael's Church, Bray:

- General Synod member Gracy Crane gave a detailed report on what had happened at the February 2023 General Synod sessions, in particular the motion and proposed amendments relating to Living in Love and Faith.
- Synod members discussed and gave feedback on their past and present use of online church, with a diverse discussion and many examples of blessings as well as some challenges.

Tuesday 17th October 2023 at the Soltau Centre, Stubbings:

- Bishop Olivia, Bishop of Reading, addressed the Synod under the title of "Our church: where are we and where do we go from here?", sharing her thoughts on history; post-pandemic trends and statistics; tired volunteers and clergy; a recent clergy survey; Living in Love and Faith; the challenge of making Jesus known to unchurched people; and the vision of a "simpler, bolder, humbler" church.
- Synod members shared questions and comments with Bishop Olivia.
- General Synod member Daniel Matovu reported on the range of topics discussed at the July 2023 General Synod sessions.

Thanks to parishes' hard work and generosity, the Deanery paid £931,978 of parish share in 2023, against an allocation of £1,000,714, which was 93.1% of the requested amount from the diocese. The diocesan average was 94.5%. This was a reduction from the £1,019,381 paid in 2022.

Rod Broad took over the position of Deanery Treasurer in October 2023 and the Deanery would like to thank Jim Tucker for managing the responsibility whilst the position was vacant.

Baptism and baptism preparation

The Baptism Policy at Holy Trinity Church (HTC) has been maintained with the expectation that the families of those being baptised should live in the Parish or be regular worshipers at our church. However, it is felt that baptism should never be denied to anyone especially with today's mobile population.

In recent years all of the baptisms were conducted during the main Sunday service (with the exception of adults who are confirmed at the same time at a special service officiated over by the Bishop) but there has been a recent trend in the benefice for families to have special Baptism services with families and friends of the baptised after the main Sunday Service. This has proved to be a success recognising that a large number of visitors to the normal Sunday service can change the dynamics of the congregation not necessarily in a good way. Having said this, one should not forget that a major aspect of baptism is welcoming the baptised into the body of the church (the congregation) and one must question how this is possible if the congregation are not present. I suggest that going forward we should keep an open mind and be flexible but with a preference for baptisms to occur in the main Sunday service.

Baptism is also an ideal opportunity to present our church to those who are not regular attendees so it is essential that we should try to enhance the experience in every way possible – always welcoming with worship enhanced by the choir, etc. – we should show case the best we have, to enhance our worship experience. Our mantra is 'Come and See' and it is essential that what people see is our best.

The Baptism preparation is an important aspect of our Ministry. The preparation enables to ensure the families know what to expect at the service and hopefully at their ease during the service. It also gives an opportunity to encourage the God Parents to think about the meaning and significance of the vows that they make during the service. With the use of technology (Zoom), we are now able to be more flexible and enable all who have a major part in the Baptism to be included in the preparation even if they are not local.

Fr David Joynes

Reports of the PCC Committees and Working Groups

Notes from the Stewardship Committee

Membership

Fr Nick Plant (Vicar) – ex officio (vacant from 29 Jan)
Mark Stockdale – Churchwarden (ex-officio)
Tim Sharples – Honorary Treasurer (ex-officio)

David Harrold
David Gaselee
Mike Clark – Chair

Co-opted members:

Stephanie Diggon – Secretary

Lee Richards

Responsibilities

The Stewardship Committee is responsible to the PCC in three specific areas:

1. To provide practical support to the Churchwardens in the management of the church estate.
2. The day-to-day management of the PCC estate, consisting of the Parish Centre, including the flats and gardens, paddock and car park, and the property at No 53 Broomhill. The properties are owned by the PCC, with title held in trust by the Diocesan Trustees (Oxford) Ltd. Day to day management of the Parish Centre, and the hire of its facilities, is devolved the Parish Administrator and a caretaker.
3. Fundraising.

Committee Membership

The period of the Interregnum meant that the committee was without the key ex-officio position of the Vicar from 29 January. Thanks are to the Churchwardens and to all the other committee members, including members co-opted from outside the PCC in specialist roles, who together had to take on extra responsibilities to cover the committee's roles and responsibilities.

We now welcome with more than usual warmth the arrival of the Revd Stephen Mills as an ex-officio member of the committee.

The Stewardship Committee has derived significant benefit from its policy of co-opting members to fulfil specialist functions, particularly in the work around the critical Church Reordering project. Stephanie Diggon does an immense amount in her role as Secretary to the Committee and in running the regular series of fund-raising Trinity Talks. Church member Lee Richards, a professional plumbing and building contractor, provides invaluable support and advice on the building trades, and local resident Andrew de Mille, a retired professional fund raiser provides sound advice on raising much needed project funds. We are hoping that the committee will additionally be supported by Adrian Powell, a professional mason, whose knowledge and advice will be most valuable.

The Church

The Stewardship Committee continues to work with the Churchwardens developing clearly defined plans for a major restoration and re-ordering of the church. These plans focus on two key issues. A new, robust and "future proofed" heating system, and a toilet in the church tower.

At last year's APCM we reported in some detail on the issues we were experiencing with the Oxford Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) in agreeing our detailed plans for the church reordering. In the end the DAC finally decided that they could not recommend to either accept or reject our consultants' plans, referring the decision instead to the Diocesan Chancellor. After visiting church and then waiting, in vain, for further comments from the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings the Chancellor finally granted our application, subject to the almost inevitable number of a few caveats, in January.

The final plans were almost identical in all material aspects to our original application. It is hoped that the APCM will recognise the hard work, determination and perseverance of the Committee and its consultants to achieve this outcome. The delay in negotiating acceptance will have inevitably resulted in cost increases. Our consultants are currently preparing detailed final plans and specifications for signing off by the Diocese – items for final resolution include choice of wall radiators, choice of limestone supplier and detailed stone laying plans etc. It is hoped that we will be able to go tender in May and to receive tender offers by mid-June, assuming no further objections.

The final project costs will be determined by the final plans and tenders for the work from external contractors. However, in the absence of those tenders the committee, is already working on plans to raise an additional c£300,000, over and above what is already held in restricted funds. This will be a major task, but the Committee is confident that it will be able to find the money, from a variety of sources.

The Churchyard

We are grateful to our contractors Holdfords, who have continued to keep the churchyard looking trim and tidy. Feedback from the congregation, community and visitors is encouragingly positive.

Fundraising

We are most grateful to Stephanie Diggon, whose much appreciated programme of “Trinity Talks” at Bel & the Dragon raises something like £3,000 p.a. for church funds. There are no current plans for a Whisky Tasting or church concerts, but thanks to the Community Curry Evening in February, generously sponsored by Cookham’s Spice Merchant Restaurant, £850 was raised for the building project.

Mike Clark

Annual Reports of the organisations

Bell Ringers

The Holy Trinity bell ringers ring to announce and welcome people to the services, mainly the 11.00 am Eucharist and 6.30 pm Evening Service, but also for special services when asked and to mark special village events. We also usually meet on Tuesday evenings from 8 – 9.30 pm for practice.

This year we have managed to ring for most of the morning services and but are still only ringing in the evening for special services. We were pleased to be able to ring for all the Christmas services and to ring the New Year in as a band. In May our local band rang in celebration on the day of the Coronation of King Charles III. On the following day a visiting band rang a full peal on our bells to commemorate this event. Our local band has rung one quarter peal this year to welcome Fr Stephen to the Cookhams. Additional ringing this year has been for six weddings and the bell has been tolled for one funeral and one memorial service.

Our membership is currently sixteen. We have gained two new recruits this year who have made excellent progress and will be soon be ringing for services.

Mandy Salter

Churchyard and Estate report 2022

The Paddock

As effective owners of the Paddock, the PCC agreed a strategy for our future relationship with Reading University Archaeology Department, and we put this onto a contractual basis from this year, which ensured mutually smooth running. The Archaeology Department and partners, led by Associate Professor Dr Gabor Thomas, carried out another extended period of excavation in the Paddock in summer 2023 which also provided practical experience for students. More artefacts were found this summer and after the dig was closed down, the excavation area was successfully re-seeded. In January 2023, members of the PCC met the Friends of Cookham Abbey which was set up to support this and other archaeological work in Cookham.

We plan to continue to develop our relationship with the University in 2024 and explore ways to signpost dig visitors to explore the church.

The Parish Centre

Dave Simpson resigned as the parish centre caretaker at the beginning of 2024. We are grateful for his service and are actively recruiting his replacement. Bookings for the centre are relatively strong. The three flats are currently all let and there seems to be a steady demand for properties of their type.

Car Parking and Access

Any further plans for all-weather parking on the paddock remain on hold following the archaeological discoveries.

Rental Properties: three flats above the Parish Centre and flat in Broomhill

The tenants in the Parish Centre flats have continued unchanged. We have done some maintenance to repair water damage.

The properties' Energy Performance Certificates were all renewed during the year. The government now seems to have decided to rescind the expected tightening of the energy performance regulations, so that we will no longer have to spend money on Flats 1 and 3 to bring them up to the minimum level required for renting before 2025. However, nothing is certain in the current political climate.

The sale of 53 Broom Hill eventually completed in July 2023. Matters were held up by the owner of the Ground Lease who took the opportunity to demand new terms. The sale completed at £300,000 before costs. The money is now invested in term deposits and will be used to help fund the heating project.

Mike Clark, Tim Sharples and Mark Stockdale

Trusteeships and other community interests

The PCC is a registered charity, and all PCC members have a responsibility as individual trustees. On joining the PCC, members are required to register as trustees and to confirm that they meet the necessary legal requirements. They are provided with information concerning their duties and conduct. This was covered in more depth at our first PCC meeting and will continue to be brought to the attention of new PCC members at the first meeting each year.

Holy Trinity Church also has trustee responsibilities in the wider community. The trust deed for **Pinder Hall** requires that the Vicar and current churchwardens of Holy Trinity shall act as the trustees of the hall. The premises include an adjoining house which is used as the residence of the caretaker. Supervision of the hall's accounts, ensuring that the charity is financially sustainable, with reserves maintained at an appropriate level, and the maintenance of the building and its fabric, are important issues for trustees. Mike Clark, Bernadette Clark and Mark Stockdale have been active members of the Pinder Hall Management Committee, and the Vicar and churchwardens normally attend the AGM and scrutinise and sign off the annual accounts.

The Vicar serves as the Chairman of the **Kings Hall Trust**, the charitable trust which owns the old King's Hall, which now houses the Stanley Spencer Gallery. The trust negotiates the rent for the building and receives rental income from the gallery. After allowing for appropriate costs, the trust distributes any surplus funds to charitable causes in the local community. The church is obligated to provide two other trustees. The PCC has nominated Mike Clark and Tim Sharples to fill these positions.

Cookham Voluntary Services (CVS) is an independent non-profit, self-financing community organisation, providing transport for patients from the Cookham Medical Centre who, for whatever reason, are unable to provide their own transport to get to medical appointments. Since it was established, it has been the practice that the Vicar serves as chairman of the management committee. CVS is not a registered charity and the chairmanship does not carry any trusteeship responsibilities.

Mark Stockdale

Verger's and Sacristan's Report

Once again, I begin with heartfelt thanks to those who work in teams of 3 to give our church a monthly clean and keep it looking in good order. I was delighted that despite some friends stepping down others have joined/re-joined to keep the numbers steady at 12.

My thanks go to the Churchwardens for their continued guidance. I was glad to be allowed to order 3 new cleaning implements which hopefully will be easier to use than the bent and damaged items.

I look forward to playing a part in the life of my church in the coming year ahead and the exciting times as Father Stephen develops his ministry.

Malcolm Sturges

Servers' Report

Those of us that assist at the Eucharist services consider it an honour and privilege to be able to take part in the service in this way. I would like to thank Kay Weallans and Andy Draper for their faithful support over the past year which enabled us to provide a server for every Sunday service except one, when Mark Stockdale kindly stepped in.

When the House of Bishops held a conference at the Odney club at the end of 2023, they used our church for their services, and I was privileged to serve for the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Archbishop of York at evening Eucharists.

We have continued assisting in the simplified manner adopted since the pandemic, with just one server at each service. Now that Father Stephen has been installed, we plan to return to having a procession at the start of each Sunday morning service, with a Crucifer and Acolytes, provided we have enough servers to do so, and so we are looking for additional people to join us in this special role. Please come and talk to one of us if you would like to become a part of the team.

Martin Gostling

Choirs and Music

The Girls' & Boys' Choir, Men's Choir & Choristers' Mums' Choir continue to work to a schedule which aims to keep commitment regular but not too much – covering each Sunday morning service and the twice monthly evenings.

The choirs cover a considerable amount of music for a morning service, ringing the changes in terms of communion setting and placement of anthems. We try not to let things get into a rut but to keep fresh ideas as part of our morning service setup.

Twice monthly evening services continued throughout the year. Special services amongst these plus others: in January we held our Epiphany Carol Service, and the Girls' & Boys' Choir plus Choristers' Mums' Choir sang for Father Nick's farewell Candlemas Solemn Mass at the end of the month.

Our Easter Carol Service at 6.30pm on Easter Day was well attended and recorded, receiving a good number of views. And in a change from previous years, the Quartet (working as a new sub-choir when helpful) sang for the Good Friday Liturgy Service.

In the Summer Term the Girls' & Boys' Choir provided the music for a special Coronation Festival Eucharist Service in May. And in July we held a Choral Evensong in memory of Ricky Lonmon, at the time of his anniversary.

September brought Harvest celebrations – morning and evening. Earlier than usual, we marked All Souls at the end of October. With its placing at the end of Half Term, this brought 'staffing' difficulties and was therefore led by a soloist. A week later the Men's Choir led the music for Reverend Helen's final service before her

departure. Later in November we held our Advent Carol Service and on Christmas Day we held our 'Carols by Candlelight' service to a full church and raising nearly £700 for Thames Hospice.

Just before Christmas, the Men's Choir had the sad duty of singing for the funeral of ex-chorister Norman Waite.

Online offerings continued alongside our 'in church' work and recorded special services. These were: Forty Days and Forty Nights (a Lenten presentation); Choral Evensong for Passion Sunday; His Cross Is Every Tree; From This Time Forth (marking the Coronation of HM King Charles III); Listen (music for a Summer's Day, sung by the Girls' Choir); Through the Keyhole: Inside Out; Homeward Bound; Ave Maria: The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary; Down to the River; Lord, I stretch my hands to you; Tears in Heaven (gaining over 1000 views); Remember: An Offering for Remembrance Day; O Come, O Come Emmanuel (an Advent presentation of carols and readings, featuring Wendy Craig and receiving over 1100 views, and still rising); In The Bleak Midwinter; Away In A Manger.

All of our online offerings with slides are possible thanks to the collaboration, time and skills of Andra Rigby. This year we have also introduced more frequent videos of our one-off anthems, to lessen the workload for Andra. But we still rely on her for uploading and front covers, for which we are tremendously grateful.

We are a rarity locally, having a goodly number of young people in our choir. We are grateful to them and their families for their commitment. We are thankful to our adult choristers for the same. And to all the choristers for enduring cold temperatures in church. Sometimes it has threatened to be rather soul-destroying and could easily have put people off attending practices and services. We are pleased that it has rarely done so.

Choristers Claudia, Elsie, Jack and Maddie enjoyed ABRSM Singing Exam successes during the year.

Sara and Victoria Wood

Annual Safeguarding Report 2023

The care and protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults involved in Church activities is the responsibility of the whole Church. Everyone who participates in the life of the Church has a role to play in promoting a Safer Church for all.

The PCC operates a Safe Recruiting process, which aims to keep a balance between safe recruitment and not creating an onerous bureaucratic system. The recruitment of new volunteers involves informing the recruiter so that the necessary details and references can be obtained. Procedures are always monitored to ensure that checks and training for volunteers are delivered in a timely manner and the cooperation of volunteers in this is much appreciated. We follow the Church of England's Safer Recruitment and People Management guidance 2021.

Bernadette Clark is the named recruiter for Holy Trinity Church. She also acts as verifier and is responsible for checks with the Disclosure and Barring Services for new and established volunteers with children and vulnerable adults at Holy Trinity. Access Personal Checking Services Ltd (APCS) is the recommended DBS Umbrella Body for the Diocese of Oxford. We have used them to undertake these checks since 2017.

We have been proactively using the Parish Safeguarding Dashboard, an online system that gives assurance to parishes that they are complying with statutory requirements and Church of England policies. It also enables dioceses and the national church to oversee compliance, and to focus their support on the areas of greatest need. This dashboard is regularly reviewed by the safeguarding Officer and church wardens.

Safeguarding training modules and expectations: The Church of England's Practice Guidance: Safeguarding Training and Development (2021), provides a clear framework for safeguarding training across all Church of England communities. The resources and training equip our church to engage positively with the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults in both a practical and theologically informed way. A range of safeguarding training modules are a mandatory requirement for particular Church Officer roles. Safeguarding training should be renewed every three years.

All safeguarding training records being kept securely by the Parish Administrator and people are asked to forward their training records once completed.

Moving forwards the safeguarding hub will be used for managing the DBS process and aspects of recruitment as well as monitoring training records.

The PCC has complied with the duty to have 'due regard' to the House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy and Practice Guidance.

Huw Thomas

Trinity Nippers

Trinity Nippers is a parent run toddler group with weekly input from clergy. Nippers meets in Holy Trinity Church at 10.15am on Tuesdays in term time. Following the service in church the group move to the parish centre for free play and refreshments. The children enjoy action songs, a short Bible story and prayers. They are invited into our wider church family and encouraged into child friendly services such as the all-age monthly Families@4 service and the Crib Service.

We are very grateful for Revd Helen for continuing to lead Trinity Nippers and the group continued to run after she left in the autumn. However, it was paused in spring 2024 and we look forward to it restarting later that year. We are grateful to everyone that helped to run it.

Bernadette Clark and Mark Stockdale

Knit1Purl1 Group

The Knit1Purl1 Group was originally the brainchild of Valerie Hamer at the time of the 100th Anniversary to mark the end of the First World War. Her drive and vision to create a fitting tribute to the fallen led to the making of hundreds of poppies to display on 50 crosses (one for each of the pews). We continue to display the poppies each Remembrance Sunday.

The next project (again, Valerie's idea!) involved knitting a large display of birds, insects and flowers for the Cookham Festival 2019 to adorn the wrought iron railings and garden of Seaton Cottage.

Since then, there have been many projects mostly, but not exclusively, to support charities – hats for premature babies; teddies and other knitted toys for deprived children; blankets for Age Concern, Christmas tree decorations for the church; a Christmas snow scene 'topper' for the GPO post box outside Waitrose, the list goes on!

We have just completed knitted daffodils for Mothering Sunday and are busy knitting Easter chicks and bunnies for the Alexander Devine Hospice.

The group meet at the Parish Centre every Monday afternoon for a couple of happy and creative hours to enjoy the company of friends and neighbours, to exchange news and keep in touch with group members who are unwell; to help and teach the less experienced in the joys (and sometimes frustrations) of knitting and crocheting! In essence, a ministry of love and fellowship carried out with busy hands in the spirit of Martha.

Bernadette Clark

Men's Breakfast

The Men's Breakfast is still as popular as ever after running for ten years. At our monthly gathering we serve cooked breakfasts for between forty and fifty men who live in the area. We have maintained the same format throughout – breakfast followed with a talk, given by a local speaker. The subjects for the talks continue to be very varied. Most recently we have covered subjects such as the Banking system for facilitating the movement of money, Table Talk (making dining tables out of wood), The Cold War, the Diamond industry

and many other interesting subjects. The talks always stimulate a lively question and discussion session at the end and often it is difficult to end the sessions on time.

I must emphasise that without the support of a small number of dedicated helpers it would not succeed and so we need to thank all who provide their support each month in so many ways – washing up, cooking, putting out chairs and tables, collecting money, speaking, etc. We cannot mention all by name because there are so many but thank you to all who help. I believe that going forward, the Men's Breakfast will continue to thrive but as I said last year, we do need to ensure that its survival is not dependent upon one or two people and so we need to think about forming a small committee to ensure its vibrant future. Financially, the men's Breakfast is strong and consequently, in this year, we have been able to make a further contribution of £500 towards the Church and donated £100 to 'New Brainstorm' (a Street School in Uganda) and purchased a new toaster costing £104 for the Parish Centre. Going forward we will need to restrict the numbers to 40 because we do not have the capacity in the kitchen for greater than this.

Fr David Joynes

The Darby Pension Fund Annual Report

The Fund exists to provide payments each quarter to people in Cookham who are on low incomes and who meet the requirements set out in the will of the Darby brothers. Trustees, drawn from Holy Trinity Church, Cookham, and St John the Baptist Church, Cookham Dean, have the responsibility of administering the Fund.

The investments remain under the management of CCLA, a professional company which specializes in charities and church investments. Fund finances continue to remain healthy with investment income matching that of previous years.

This income has exceeded expenditure in recent years due to the falling number of pensioners supported, as such the Fund currently holds an excess in its bank account and continues to have capacity to support additional pensioners.

There were 19 pensioners supported by the Fund at the end of the year.

Kate Dilley

Pastoral Report

This last year has been a very trying one for everyone involved with the Church. For most of the time we have been without a permanent Priest. Although Father David officially retired at the beginning of April, he has continued to serve all parishioners as well as taking many services and filling in as much as possible. Richard has also always been available and happy to help and share the load in many ways.

The Men's Breakfast is getting more and more popular and the resumption of coffee after the morning service on Sunday is proving to be a busy time where people gather for a very noisy and happy get together welcoming many new faces.

Unfortunately, due to the poor heating several of our regulars decided that it is just too cold particularly during the winter to attend services - despite blankets being available. However some of the services are recorded and can be watched on YouTube. Again Sara and the choirs have managed to provide regular musical treats and delightful readings to help meditation which can also be viewed on the internet.

The good news for us all was the arrival of Father Stephen as our new Vicar what a joy to welcome him to our midst and as he gets involved in this new chapter of his life Pastoral Care is sure to be on his agenda.

Val Eckett

Report to PCC regarding Holy Trinity C of E Primary School

Number of pupils on roll – 210 (as of 04.03.24)

The Mission Statement of the school can be found on the school's website.

Holy Trinity C of E Primary School continues to thrive and provide a centre of excellence for pupils in the heart of Cookham village. Its popularity is evident with more applications placed each year than places available and currently the school is full. The entire body of staff is committed to ensuring the school's vision and the Christian ethos remains at the forefront of all decision making to the benefit of all.

Following an ungraded Ofsted inspection in March 2022, the school had a graded Ofsted inspection sixteen months later, in June 2023. Since October 2015 the school had remained outstanding in all areas. However, with a change in the Ofsted framework and a shift in emphasis from academic results to a school's curriculum offer, Holy Trinity received a judgment of 'outstanding' in three out of five key areas, 'Behaviour and Attitudes', 'Personal Development' and 'Early Years Provision'. The school was graded 'good' in 'The Quality of Education' and 'Leadership and Management' which gave it an overall grading of 'good'. The single development point from this inspection was, 'Some curriculum areas are still in the process of being refined and embedded. Pupils have not yet developed detailed enough knowledge and skills in these subjects. Leaders should continue their work to support teachers' practice.' Since the inspection, with more time to embed the three subjects Ofsted highlighted as less developed, the team has worked tirelessly to continue to refine the curriculum.

A copy of the school's latest Ofsted report can be found at: [50224252 \(ofsted.gov.uk\)](https://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

Staffing at the school remains stable. Following a change in the leadership structure which came about just before the end of the academic year 2019-2020, Miss Anna Smith has continued in the role of Head Teacher with Ms. Fiona O'Reilly, appointed September 2020, as the school's deputy headteacher. The school's strength comes from having highly effective teachers and support staff in place across every key stage, all of whom are deeply committed to ensuring high quality provision.

Since Holy Trinity's Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) in October 2016 Holy Trinity has continued to build on the 'outstanding' judgement it received in all areas. In December 2023 the school received another SIAMS inspection. Like Ofsted, the SIAMS framework against which schools are judged changed in September. No longer are schools given a one word judgement. Instead SIAMS explores ways in which each school's theologically rooted Christian vision drives the work and enables the school to live up to its foundation as a church school. As such, it makes judgements on religious education, collective worship, and pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural (SMSC) education. These judgements combine to enable an evaluation of how schools, through their theologically rooted Christian vision, are living up to their foundation as Church schools, enabling people to flourish. The conclusion of the inspector was overwhelmingly positive in all areas and the school received a glowing report.

A copy of the school's latest SIAMS report can be found at: [holy-trinity-church-of-england-primary-school--cookham.pdf \(d3hgrlq6yacptf.cloudfront.net\)](https://www.holy-trinity-church-of-england-primary-school-cookham.pdf)

The school's agreed values of 'love', 'friendship', 'forgiveness', 'courage', 'sharing' and 'hope' are at the core and their positive impact on the school's Christian distinctiveness is felt throughout.

At the heart of the school's vision is a Biblical text from John 13:34-35

Jesus said...

³⁴" I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. ³⁵By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

John 13:34-35

The school's vision goes on to state that 'rooted in our Christian ethos, we will provide the finest education, develop enduring values and instill ambitious life aspirations'. This vision is underpinned by a belief in key aims and values which the staff have for all the children, that of spiritual and personal well-being and

fulfilment, respect for others and ourselves, justice and global citizenship and the courage to strive for excellence and seek high aspirations in all we do. Importance is given to the teaching of religious education and collective worship which continues to have a noticeable impact on the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all pupils. This is led by a committed senior leadership team and strong governing body supported by the local clergy.

The links between school and church remain strong. Wherever possible, weekly acts of Collective Worship are led by members of the clergy and the school aims to visit Holy Trinity Church at least once a term for specific celebrations in the church's calendar. Father David Joynes sits on the school's governing body which is chaired by Mrs. Yasmin Thorn-Davis with Dr. Huw Thomas as the vice-chair.

The pandemic caused considerable disruption but, for some time since, we have enjoyed a period of stability and normality. All regular aspects of school life have returned. That said, we continue to use 'Google Classroom' as an online learning platform for disseminating information, including weekly homework tasks, to the children. This has proved highly effective. Weekly collective worship sessions are also posted here for everyone to access. The challenges caused by the pandemic were enormous. However, a strongly committed and highly effective team ensured these challenges were met. Both then and now a regularly updated Continuous Improvement Plan identifies key priority areas and how they are to be tackled. National tests, cancelled because of the pandemic, have resumed and while the children continue to perform well, results demonstrated differences in cohorts and still the adverse effect the considerable period away from school caused. Prior to any disruption, Holy Trinity's consistently high results demonstrated that pupils perform significantly better than pupils nationally with the school regularly listed in league tables of top performing schools. This is still the case.

The school has robust systems in place for monitoring lessons, assessing the children's progress and attainment, scrutinizing marking, moderating teacher judgements and observing behaviour. The overarching policy of providing a sense of awe and wonder through the delivery of all lessons, ensures high levels of engagement. A number of themed weeks, notably 'Maths & Coding Week', 'Science & Technology Week', 'Book Week', 'Arts and Culture Week' and 'Sports Week', are timetabled throughout the academic year. Staff are committed to working with the local community to use resources on our doorstep to strengthen the children's curiosity in specific curriculum areas. Developments to the school site over the last few years mean we have a large wildlife area plus other facilities where the children have continued to successfully engage in outdoor learning. Following the success of being awarded Green Flag status for environmental work in September 2019 the school's Eco-Council, made up of children from each class, continue to steer the school in a range of environmental projects through initiatives which all come from them. We continuously channel efforts into reviewing and modifying our curriculum so that the children have access to a bespoke learning programme which reflects the needs of our community and prepares the children for life beyond Holy Trinity.

Our charity work also continues. Links with charities including Partners for Change, Ethiopia, MacMillan Cancer Support, Sport Relief, Children in Need, Save the Children, Maidenhead Food Share, Thames Valley Hospice and The Royal British Legion, to name a few, remain strong; all these charities have benefited from fund raising events in school in the last year.

For news of what is happening at Holy Trinity C of E Primary School the school website www.holytrinitysch.co.uk, where weekly newsletters can be found, has a wealth of information and school news is regularly published in the Cookham Parish Magazine.

Anna Smith
Head Teacher