



St. Matthew's Church, Reading

Annual Report

Year Ended 31st December 2023

Registered Charity Number: 1148083



ANNUAL REPORT

Welcome to the Annual Report of the mission and ministry of St. Matthew's Church, Southcote Lane, Reading for the year 2023.

Under the Parochial Church Council (Powers) Measure 1956, the PCC is required to co-operate with the vicar in promoting in the parish the whole mission of the Church - pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. This report describes how this has been achieved during 2023. Further details of the activities of the PCC and of the various ministry areas of the church can be obtained by contacting those named in each report.

Sections

1. Trustees Report	p.3
2. Report from the Vicar	p.6
3. Electoral Roll	p.9
4. Deanery Synod Report	p.9
5. Churchwardens Report	p.10
6. Family & Children's Report	p.11
7. RE Inspired Report	p.12
8. SouthTots Report	p.12
9. Creche Report	p.13
10. Winter Warmers Report	p.13
11. Youth Report	p.13
12. Safeguarding Report	p.14
13. Statement of Financial Activities	p.15
14. Independent Examiners Report	p.23

Our Vision:

"...a thriving, growing church at the heart of the parish, sharing the good news of Jesus Christ and serving the community."

Trustees' Report for the 2023 APCM

Membership

Members of the PCC are either ex-officio, elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) in accordance with the Church Representation Rules, or co-opted onto the PCC.

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

Vicar: The Revd. Pads Dolphin
Associate Minister: The Revd. Kirstie Dolphin
Churchwardens: Jan Ball (also PCC Secretary)
David Horne

Deanery Synod Representatives:

Brian Day
Mary Day

Elected Members:

Nick Burn (also Treasurer)
Gwyneth Rudman
Steve Rudman
Emma Noonan
Erick Nwanshi
Abigail Fryer-Saxby
Simon Beasley

Co-opted Members:

None

Non-Voting Members:

None

The PCC held meetings in January, February, March, April, May, July, September and November.

Standing Committee and Finance Committee

The Standing Committee is the only committee required by law and transacts the business of the PCC between its meetings, subject to any direction given by the council.

If there is an urgent need to approve expenditure which cannot wait for a scheduled meeting, a Standing Committee can be convened to approve up to £500. The Standing Committee consisted of:

- the Vicar (Pads Dolphin)
- the Churchwardens (Jan Ball and David Horne)
- Erick Nwanshi, Emma Noonan, Mary Day

Any approvals made by a Standing Committee must be reported to the next PCC meeting and will be minuted.

The Finance Committee had the following membership:

Pads Dolphin, Nick Burn, Brian Day, Alan Chandler. Most of its business was conducted via email and finance was a standing item on every PCC agenda.

Review of the year

The PCC met 7 times since the last APCM.

The following items were included in the business of the PCC during 2023

- Amy Cadle was appointed as our new Safeguarding Officer.
- A new professional cooker was installed in the Hall kitchen to meet the demands of feeding so many families at the After-School Hub.
- RE Inspired providing RE lessons to Southcote Primary School were restarted for the first time since pre-Covid.
- Nick Burn announced his intention to resign from the Treasurer's role at the end of 2023 and Chisom Umeh, who is a qualified accountant, offered to be our new Treasurer, which the PCC approved.
- With the growth in the After School Hub ministry, and a new vision to provide training for some of the mums in various life skills, the PCC approved Lynn's proposal to increase her working hours from 3 to 5 days, on a temporary basis, funded by one day per week for fundraising, and one day per week for training including the conversion of the old 'Committee Room' into a new training room. The duration of the extra two days was to last as long as funding is raised to support them.
- The PCC approved hiring Liberty Umeh as our new Youth Worker, who started on January 1st 2023. Liberty subsequently resigned toward the end of the year to start a new career job. We all wish her well in her future career.
- The loft above the Parish Office was insulated with great help from Kevin Alderson.
- The PCC approved spending to have the hedges and trees alongside Farrington Walk cut down to a 6ft level; subsequently Simon Beasley did the job voluntarily.
- Following the February General Synod decision to approve new trial liturgy known as Prayers of Love and Faith (PLF), the PCC made the strongest possible protest to the Bishop of Oxford for proposing to overturn 2000 years of the church's teaching and doctrine on marriage. The debates within the Church of England are still continuing around this subject and further decisions are to be made at the July 2024 General Synod.
- The purchase of a new sound mixing desk for the church was approved and the desk was installed.
- New energy contracts were expertly negotiated by Karen Alderson, our Parish Administrator, which are saving us a significant amount of money.

Financial Review

The PCC is responsible for the financial affairs of St. Matthew's Church. Over the last few years voluntary income has reduced (see page 15) whilst costs have increased significantly which has been a challenge for us as a church to meet all our major financial commitments of parish share, salaries and necessary services and utilities. We are very thankful to the generous hearts of the congregation of St Matthew's who continue to give sacrificially towards the mission and ministry of St Matthew's. Below are the figures for the year 2023 compared with the previous two years.

	2021	2022	2023	
	Actual	Actual	Budget	Actual
Voluntary Income	£101,581	£97,724	£102,833	£103,401
Total Income	£113,342	£114,171	£120,897	£158,345
Total Resource Used	£120,389	£125,518	£140,650	£156,983
Net Income	(£7,047)	(£11,347)	(£19,753)	£1,362
Unrestricted General Reserve	£69,129	£66,500	£61,000	£41,202

As the table above shows, our total income for the year was around £38,000 higher than budgeted. This was due almost entirely to a new fundraising initiative to resource the kitchen conversion and training room development to support the After-School hub and proposed training initiative.

Our total expenditure was approximately £16,000 more than budgeted due to spending on fundraising items as well as increased salary costs as we increased Lynn's hours to full time – financed by the fundraising. The overall result of increased income and spending resulted in a net income which was positive for the first time in several years. However, the worrying trend for the future is that the unrestricted general reserve reduced from £66,500 in 2022 to £41,202 at the end of 2023. (see reserve policy below)

Reserve Policy

The PCC has a policy of keeping three months running costs in reserve to cover unforeseen circumstances. We will be hard pressed to meet this goal at the end of 2024 unless we can increase voluntary giving and/or fundraise to support general expenditure items such as energy costs and staff salaries. This is something the PCC will need to address over the coming months.

Basis of Preparation

The accounts have been prepared using the accrual accounting method consistent with last years' accounts.

Health and Safety

A report on health and safety is considered at each PCC meeting. Accident books and First Aid kits are located in both Church and Hall and the First Aid kits are inspected regularly and refilled if necessary.

Safeguarding

A report on safeguarding is considered at each PCC meeting. This takes account of all vulnerable or potentially vulnerable users of our facilities and participants in our activities. A safeguarding agreement is included in the documentation issued to all hall users.

The PCC would like to thank everyone who has worked so hard during the year to help support the mission and ministry of St. Matthews.

Signed on Behalf of the PCC

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading 'Pads Dolphin', with a horizontal line underneath.

Pads Dolphin, Vicar

Vicar's Report to the Annual Church Meeting – April 2024

I am now writing my 13th Vicar's report to the Annual Church Meeting and wondering how to make it fresh! A vicar's life is one of the most varied on the planet. From the highs of beautiful times of worship to the lows of getting out the drain rods to try and unblock a sewer, there's almost nothing that cannot fall under the remit of being a vicar.

But none of it would be worth doing if it wasn't for you, the people of St Matthew's, whose lives we have shared over the past year, as we journey together with God, doing our best to follow the one who gave his life for us – our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

One of the perspectives that only a handful of people, at most, see and experience on a week-to-week basis is the aspect of St Matthew's that we are, effectively, two congregations in one church. So here's a few thoughts on each in the hope that you will be enriched by reading about the part that you don't usually attend. And if you are one of the handful who attend both, then you have a double blessing!

The Traditional Congregation

Meets about six times a month – every Wednesday and every other Sunday. The congregation numbers about 25 in total, and since two thirds of you are usually there on a Wednesday it is probably one of the largest midweek CofE services in the town. Everyone knows everyone and no-one goes missing without someone knowing why – or there's a follow up phone call within the hour. You look out for each other in the most wonderful way. This is a pastor's dream. The vicar is always told when he needs to make a visit! Having been dragged to traditional church against my will as a child, and then avoided church for the best part of thirty years, eventually finding faith in a contemporary informal

environment, it took me a few years to really grow to love the traditional worship. But at St Matthew's, I have, and that has deepened particularly since Covid when we moved the Wednesday service out of the chapel and into the church, since when the congregation has grown, and the services are fuller and richer. Two of the qualities I love most about the traditional services are the space and the pace.

Sometimes it takes a while for a person to make their way from their seat to the lectern to read, or sometimes I take the bread and wine to their seat. But there's no hurry. We sit and listen to Taizé music or some instrumental worship tunes before the service and on a Sunday our organist, Andy Stancliffe, plays the organ beautifully as we sing hymns from a wide range of 'eras'. And although the 11.45'ers don't usually get to join in the tea and coffee on a Sunday, every Wednesday we sit down together after the service and enjoy home-made cake thanks to some great bakers in the group, and we deepen our fellowship together – if you haven't been, you don't know what you're missing.

The Informal Congregation

Meets every Sunday at 10am. One key difference with the 10am compared to the traditional service is that you never know who's going to be there! Some have Sunday working commitments, or family commitments which prevent them coming – on the other hand we see many more 'new' people or visitors so there's always an opportunity to meet and greet people you've never seen before.

The 10am services begin with everyone of all ages together for the first part of the worship and a 'Family Time' which engages both children and adults in a short interchange of thoughts, questions and answers which link to an aspect of faith.

One of the things I love most about the informal services is that the leading and preaching is much more widely shared out to a team who all bring different perspectives to the worship and teaching life of the church. This has become more collaborative in recent years as we get together to discern where we feel that the Spirit is leading us to focus on.

After the 'Family Time', we have a combination of prayers, readings and a sermon (and communion twice a month) with more in-depth Bible teaching than we have time for at the traditional services. One of our key aims is to try to create spaces in which the congregation can respond to the leading of the Holy Spirit. In the prayers, this might be through inviting people to pray out loud spontaneously; after the sermon it might be to invite a response; in the sung worship toward the end of the service it might be an offer of prayer ministry to anyone who would like someone to pray with them, one-on-one.

In such a service, the music plays a crucial role in taking people into an encounter with God; the songs tend to be longer than traditional hymns, and yes, more repetitive, but for good reason – just as a Taizé chant allows people to dwell in the presence of God, so the chorus and bridge of many modern worship songs achieve the same thing. And at St Matthew's we are blessed beyond measure with our lovely worship team – and we can even boast a worship leader who has released two albums of her own worship songs in the last couple of years! So if you're a traditional worshipper and you've never been to a 10am service, come along one Sunday and see what we get up to in the informal services.

Kidz Church, Youth and Creche

Although I began by saying that we are two congregations at St Matthew's, in truth we are a few more than that. Whenever a new family comes along to St Matthew's for the first time with primary age children, I can guarantee that if their children go out to join Kidz Church, they will love it, and probably try to drag their parents back to St Matthew's the following week. It is such a joy to see children enjoying church life.

In 2023 we restarted the youth group, and although it's not large, (about 6-10 in total), we regularly have a group meeting on a Sunday morning for which the leadership is shared out among a servant hearted group of leaders and helpers in the absence of a designated youth worker since Liberty had to step down when she started a new career job.

At the beginning of this year, we finally got the creche up and running for the first time since pre-Covid, and although it is an even smaller contingent, we have up to 4 or 5 little-ies who attend the creche from time to time, giving their parents a chance to spend some quality time in church.

In my report I have concentrated on the 'worship life' of St Matthew's in the sense of services of worship. But as most of you know, so much more goes on midweek in our amazing outreach ministries - you can read about those in the other reports enclosed in this annual report, so do please take the time to do that. There is so much good going on at St Matthew's.

Fred Pavitt

By now you will have noticed that I haven't referred to any names in my report (there are too many to start naming!) – but I would like to close with just one. Fred Pavitt. Fred was someone who attended almost everything going on in St Matthew's – both congregations, every prayer meeting he could, all the Holiday Clubs, the midweek groups, and was the most encouraging, faithful presence in the church family for as long as Kirstie and I have been at St Matthew's. When the Lord took him home toward the end of last year, he left a large hole in the lives of ourselves and many others – but he will always remain an inspiration to us as a dear brother in Christ.

Thank you to all of you. I simply say that I love St Matthew's, I am constantly in awe of the generosity of those who give financially to support the work of the church, of the dedication, inspiration and passion that I see in the church family as everyone serves together, and I hope and pray that St Matthew's will go from strength to strength into the future.

With love in Christ,



Revd Pads Dolphin, Vicar of St Matthew's

Report on the Electoral Roll

The Electoral Roll of St Matthew's in 2024 sees us with 87 adult members which one less than that reported at the Annual meeting in 2023. Five people came off the roll and four new members came onto the roll.

Applications for membership of the Electoral Roll can be made at any time during the year and applications forms are available in the Welcome Area. Forms should be completed and handed to a member of the Clergy, to the church office or to me.

Pads Dolphin (in lieu of an electoral roll officer)

Deanery Synod Report

Deanery Synod is a forum where parishes from across Reading can come together to discuss issues and opportunities that transcend our parish boundaries. It is a forum for sharing ideas, addressing common challenges and linking into the wider mission of the Diocese. St Matthew's deanery synod representatives for 2023 were **Brian and Mary Day**.

Report for 2023

There were four meetings during 2023, meeting in different churches in the Deanery. In the March meeting the Area Dean, Revd. Mike Smith spoke about the priorities for 2023-26, those being Green Park, the increase of 6,000 units of accommodation in the town centre and Loddon Reach where 12,000 new residents are expected.

The June meeting saw the Parish Share discussed and the allocation for 2024. A 3% increase would meet the Deanery's current commitments. To afford new ministry in Green Park the increase would need to be 6%. The parishes felt this was unaffordable and in some cases 3% would be a struggle, but this was agreed. St. Matthew's Parish Share for 2024 is £47,556. During the year members heard about various initiatives, successful or otherwise that were happening in the parishes.

There were brief discussions on the approval by the General Synod on the 'Living in Love and Faith' services and further discussions on the impact to parishes will be discussed during 2024.

Mary and Brian Day

Churchwardens' report

Churchwardens – what do we do?

It's a very odd role really. We are ultimately responsible to the Diocese of Oxford, but also answer to the Vicar (Pads). Because the Church of England is tied to the State (sometimes referred to as the 'established' church), the laws of the Church of England are a subset of the Law of the Land. In practical terms, we are keepers of the many!! keys and bear ultimate responsibility for making sure Sunday services happen. Wardens are also accountable for the state of the church buildings and grounds and we are responsible to the Bishop to ensure the Vicar isn't going rogue and preaching heresy – something we don't have to worry about!

How quickly the year flew by, so here is a quick review from our perspective.

The grounds and buildings :-

We have finally managed to get the leaking gutters sorted and some collapsed drains repaired although there are still ongoing issues with a different drain.

A church work party cleared a lot of bushes but thanks must go to Simon Beasley for his continuing work in keeping the grounds looking so well kept and tidy and to Ian and Julie for the upkeep of the sensory garden (gravelled area) in front of the church.

Perhaps the highlight of the year was watching the new cooker entering the kitchen through a hole in the wall ! Many thanks to those involved and particularly Chris for his speedy work in restoring and decorating the kitchen and also the new training room with its eye-catching scripture on the wall.

The Human side :-

2023 was a year of continuing mission and outreach with SouthTots, Streetpastors, the Hub and Winter Warmers and Lynn was busy fundraising to see the conversion of the old committee room into a training room where children and adults could be mentored, especially those with mental health needs. We eagerly look forward to this coming to fruition in 2024.

Sunday services have remained steady in number with Christmas services really reaching out into the community. August saw a wonderful baptism service with so many people sharing their testimonies and we are so grateful to God for the new faces who have joined us this year - May God bless you abundantly.

Our thanks go to all the volunteers who keep things running on a Sunday and throughout the week. Please do consider if there is any way you can help as we are always in need of more hands – and no experience is necessary!

Jan Ball & David Horne

Family & Children's Report including "the HUB"

The hub started in January 2023 in response to the cost-of-living crisis and rising heating bills. We opened the doors every Friday after school to anyone in the community who wished to come along and enjoy good company and a free homemade meal and pudding. The children play football and 'IT' outside whilst others enjoy crafts and games inside with a cuppa. Friendships have been made, several families have attended church and support is being given weekly where it is needed to contacts we have made within the hub.

We collect food weekly from 3 organisations and distribute the food to the families as well as use what we can to keep the food bill down. As you can imagine this takes a great deal of time as does the regular shopping and cooking for 50/60 people on a regular basis every week. Very often I will be on my feet from 9am to 7pm. It's a huge commitment that has seen God's blessing. If you would like to be involved we would love your help. It doesn't have to be every week – any time given would be greatly appreciated.

What would help look like? Coming along and chatting to the families who attend the hub, washing up like Steve Rudman does on a regular basis, collecting shopping for us, making a pudding, helping cook, helping set up or dedicating time to pray while the hub is running.

Over the year we have served up 1733 dinners, averaging around 46 meals a week. We have raised the money to provide us with a catering style kitchen and to turn a storage room into a training room.

Why a training room? This has come about through people at the hub asking how we cook. Once the ball started rolling several parents asked if we would teach youth how to cook and then we were asked if we could help in the early stages of mental health in children through cooking. All of which was confirmed on many occasions but one very special moment was finding a box in the PCC garage containing all we needed to get started. The box had been in the garage for 10 years and inside (among other items) were aprons for both adults and children. God has provided £20,000 through fundraising which has enabled us to convert the committee room into a training room and provide storage facilities elsewhere.

The funds will also pay a wage one day a week and provide enough money to buy all the food for the ministry to run for a year. I have been attending training courses relevant to this role and have much more to do. We are hoping to start cooking and helping children in the summer term. During the adult training sessions we will take an evangelistic approach where those cooking will share testimonies during each session. We are hoping to start training adults in May/June. Each session will be tailor-made to the group/individuals attending. The ministry is going to be very organic (no pun intended) and we trust the Holy Spirit will lead as he has done up to this point. Training sessions will be held when the hall is not being used.

We hope that the new arrangement will suit everyone and you will enjoy more space, better storage and some nice new equipment. The plan is to use the kitchen itself for cooking only while the training room will store all drinks equipment. Please be praying for this new and developing ministry over the coming weeks and months.

Lynn Everett

Children and family worker

RE Inspired report

Started over 20 years ago by teachers and a local minister, it now reaches over 7,000 pupils in various parts of the country enabling Christians from local churches to share their faith with pupils in their neighbouring schools. At its heart it is about being inspired and making Christianity 'come alive' in RE.

The sessions are based on the local authority RE syllabus that each school uses. The sessions are devised by Project Director Julia Jones and her team.

Prior to Covid St. Matthew's had worked with Southcote School for six years. The school were keen to reintroduce the sessions so last November we started again.

We meet each year group during the year and sessions include topics on Baptism, Easter, Christmas, Death and Prayer. These are delivered in various ways through crafts, Godly Play, Hot Seating to name a few.

Apart from Pads we are all volunteers and are always looking for more to join us.

Mary Day

Southtots report

What a fantastic year we've had at Southtots! We have grown as a group way beyond my dreams. Attendance is fantastic, with around 18 children each session, and of those, 14 are the same children every week. We often have a small waiting list for most sessions.

We welcomed Mamta and Sharon onto the team and they join myself, Jane, Julie and Kirstie. The Southtots team are absolutely fantastic and I thank them for their continued service and faithfulness to God's calling of them, through their volunteering at Southtots. We are also incredibly blessed to have Jonathan Thatcher from Greyfriars Church on team, who faithfully comes along every week with his guitar and helps lead our singing, dancing and musical instrument time.

In July we ended the summer term with a Teddy Bears Picnic, and in September we kicked off the new term by celebrating our First Birthday and welcomed the Pop-Up Play Village for a special celebration. Through the conversations we have had with the carers and parents at Southtots we have seen a few families attending church services, and even some grandmas attended the christingle service - without their grandchildren... They loved it!

I give thanks and praise to our awesome God for all He has provided and for your continued prayers for Southtots. And in the words of the Cheeky Pandas...

'Oh wow what a God..

There'll never be another Awesome God!'

Abbie

Creche Report

I am delighted to be writing a creche report as we haven't run a crèche since covid!

A huge thank you to our new creche team Debbie, Julie, Lydia, Mekdes, Cindy and Amy.

We started at the beginning of January, and it was slow to begin with but it's now picking up. Some parents stay in with their children, so it has been quite a social time getting to know children and parents! We would love to grow the team so please consider joining us.

It is such a joy playing and reading to the little ones. You don't need lots of experience you just need to love children.

Kirstie Dolphin - Associate Minister

Winter Warmers Report

I have thoroughly enjoyed being on the Winter Warmers soup lunch team which ran from the beginning of December to the end of March.

We have some wonderful soup makers at St Matthews and as the team eat with the guests each week you don't know what you are missing!

It's been a regular group of about 14 guests each week and I have grown very fond of them all!

A big thank you to Mary, David, Andrea, Sharon, Anne, Julie, Sarah, Barbara, Rose, Sandra, and Alan and of course Pads - our wonderful team of cooks and servers. It's been a joy to work with you and to serve the community together and I know our guests were sad when it came to the end of another season.

Kirstie Dolphin - Associate Minister

Youth Report

Liberty sailed through her Master's degree last summer and is now working full time in London. We knew the time would come when she stepped down from the role of Youth Worker in September.

She has continued to be amazingly supportive and on team once a month, but a time is coming when she will move away from Reading, so please keep praying for a new Youth Worker.

We would all like to thank Liberty so much for being so faithfully committed to our youth. They love her and so do we!

A big thank you too to our wonderful church family who have stepped up to help with the youth – David, Eleanor, Sharon, Sylvia, Jan, and Steve. Pads and I have enjoyed leading some sessions too.

The youth have been very consistent with a core group of 6 coming most weeks. They did a great job with the Easter Day drama and readings.

We would love to do more with them so let's keep praying God provides us with a Youth Worker soon!

Kirstie Dolphin - Associate Minister

Safeguarding Report

Lots to give thanks for!

Our new Parish Safeguarding Officer, Amy Cadle , is in post and has completed her safeguarding leadership training, which is time consuming, so a big welcome and well done Amy!

Karen, our DBS administrator, and verifier, with the support of Lynn and Jan, also a verifier, have continued updating our processes and bringing everyone's DBS certificates up to date which we are very grateful for.

Both Karen and Kirstie have completed the initial training on the 'Parish Dashboard' for the Safeguarding Hub which has been created to support Parishes' Safeguarding and Recruitment Process.

Everyone who works with children, young people or adults at risk should complete the Basic Awareness and Foundation Safeguarding training which is available online through the Oxford Diocese and has to be refreshed every 3 years.

We have been following the Diocese guidance for safer recruitment for staff and volunteers and are very thankful for our new creche and youth volunteers. We still need to complete this process with some of our volunteers and are very grateful for their time, care and commitment.

The PCC also have to complete the Awareness and Foundation Safeguarding training and most of them have now done that.

If you are reading this and thinking I haven't done the training yet here is the link - <https://oxford.anglican.org/safeguarding-training/>

Please let Karen know when you have completed the training.

There have been no incidents or reports which have had to be investigated. We have taken advice from the Diocese Safeguarding team on several occasions and followed due process.

Kirstie is now stepping down as the 'interim' PSO (Parish Safeguarding Officer) and passing the baton to Amy. Please encourage and support Amy in this new role. We are all as the body of Christ responsible for 'safeguarding one another' so any concerns please contact Amy in confidence on safeguarding@st-matts.org.uk

Many thanks

Kirstie Dolphin and Amy Cadle

Statement of Financial Activities – Year ending Dec 31st 2023

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF READING, ST.MATTHEW

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	2023 Restricted Funds £	Total Funds £	2022 Total Funds £
Incoming Resources					
Voluntary Income	2a	94,971	8,430	103,401	97,724
Other Ordinary Income	2b	17,728	-	17,728	14,338
Material income	2c	-	37,216	37,216	2,109
Total Incoming Resources		112,699	45,646	158,345	114,171
Cost of Charitable Activities					
Clergy Expenses	3a	4,668		4,668	3,603
The Church and Services	3b	18,911		18,911	13,938
Other Parish Expenses	3c	56,029	15,992	72,021	58,076
Payments outside the Parish	3d	48,176	392	48,568	47,167
Development and maintenance	3e	3,418	-	3,418	2,733
Other operating expenses	3f	-	9,397	9,397	
Total Resources Expended		131,202	25,781	156,983	125,517
Net Incoming (Outgoing) Resources		(18,503)	19,865	1,362	(11,346)
Transfer between funds		-	-	-	-
Net movements in funds		(18,503)	19,865	1,362	(11,346)
Balances Brought Forward at 1st Jan		59,705	6,795	66,500	77,846
Balances Carried Forward at 31st Dec		41,202	26,660	67,862	66,500

**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF READING, ST.MATTHEW
AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2023**

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	2023 Restricted Funds £	Total Funds £	2022 Total Funds £
Fixed Assets		9,711	4,378	14,089	12,940
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors & Prepayments	5	2,791	-	2,791	4,528
Bank & Cash Balances		32,705	22,282	54,987	61,261
		35,496	22,282	57,778	65,789
CREDITORS: amounts falling due within 1 year	6	4,005	-	4,005	12,229
NET CURRENT ASSETS		31,491	22,282	53,773	53,560
NET ASSETS		41,202	26,660	67,862	66,500
PARISH FUNDS	7				
General Reserve		41,202		41,202	59,705
Restricted Funds:					
Training Room Fund		-	6,830	6,830	-
Jubilee Fund			1,084	1,084	1,295
Youth Worker Fund			-	-	5,000
Warm Hub Fund			18,746	18,746	500
Total Parish Funds		41,202	26,660	67,862	66,500

The attached notes form part of these financial statements.

Approved by the PCC on _____ and signed on their behalf by _____

Rev. Pads Dolphin (PCC Chairman)

Ms Chisom Umeh(PCC Treasurer)

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF READING, ST.MATTHEW
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

1. Accounting Policies

1.1 Basis of preparation

The Financial Statements have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations and in accordance with the the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and with the Charities Act 2011.

The Financial Statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant notes to these accounts

The accounts include all transactions, assets and liabilities for which the PCC is responsible in law. They do not include accounts of church groups that owe their main affiliation to another body nor those that are informal gatherings of church members.

The accounts have been prepared using the accrual accounting method.

There are no material uncertainties about the PCC's ability to continue, and so the going concern of accounting has been adopted.

The accounts are presented in pound sterling and rounded to the nearest pound.

1.2 Incoming resources

All incoming resources are included in the Statement of Financial Activities when the charity is entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy. The following policies are applied to the particular categories of income:

- Planned giving, collections and similar donations are recognised when received.
- Tax refunds are recognised when the claim to HMRC is submitted.
- Grants and legacies are accounted for when the PCC is entitled to the use of the resources, their ultimate receipt is considered reasonably certain and the amounts due are reliably quantifiable.
- Interest as and when accrued by the payer.

All incoming resources are accounted for gross.

1.3 Resources expended

Expenditure is accounted for on an accrual basis. The diocesan parish share expected to be paid over is accounted for when due. All other expenditure is generally recognised when it is incurred and is accounted for gross.

1.4 Funds accounting

Restricted funds comprise (a) income from endowments which is to be expended only on the restricted purposes intended by the donor and (b) revenue donations or grants for a specific PCC activity intended by the donor. Where these funds have unspent balances, interest on their pooled investment is apportioned to the individual funds on an average balance basis.

Unrestricted funds represent funds of the PCC that are not subject to restrictions regarding their use. Such funds include income funds which are to be spent on the PCC's general purposes and that part of the Legacy Fund which is not restricted by the terms of the individual wills.

Designated funds are general funds set aside by the PCC for use in the future. Project funds are designated for particular projects for administration purposes only. Designated funds remain unrestricted and the PCC will move any surplus to other general funds.

1.5 Fixed assets

Consecrated Land and Buildings and Moveable Church Furnishings

Consecrated and beneficed property is excluded from the accounts by s10 Charities Act 2012. No value is placed on moveable church furnishings held by the church wardens on special trust for the PCC and which require a faculty for disposal since the PCC considers this to be inalienable property. All expenditure incurred during the year on consecrated beneficed buildings and moveable church furnishings, whether maintenance or improvement is written off as expenditure in the Statement of Financial Activities and separately disclosed.

Other Fixtures Fittings and Office Equipment

Low value equipment (less than £1,000) used within church premises is written off in the year of acquisition.

Capitalised electronic equipment used within the church premises is depreciated on a straight-line basis over a period between three and ten years.

1.6 Current assets

Amounts owing to the PCC at the end of each year are shown as debtors subject to provision for amounts that may prove irrecoverable. Bank balances are all short term deposits with the Building Society or at the bank.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF READING, ST.MATTHEW
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

2. Incoming Resources

	2023			2022
	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	Total Funds
	£	£	£	£
a. Voluntary Income				
Tax Recoverable on gift aids	14,457	-	14,457	14,424
Planned Giving	68,598	-	68,598	73,733
Collections at Services & Church Programmes	7,934	-	7,934	3,418
Donations	3,981	-	3,981	1,149
Donations - Youth Worker	-	-	-	5,000
Training Room donations	-	8,430	8,430	-
Total Voluntary income	94,971	8,430	103,401	97,724
b. Other Ordinary Income				
Chapel/Church Income	570	-	570	1,090
Church Hall Income	14,210	-	14,210	10,867
Fees collected on behalf of Diocese	1,268	-	1,268	1,212
Fees for PCC	249	-	249	1,014
Ministry	50	-	50	75
Parish Share Rebate	1,381	-	1,381	-
Organists Fees	-	-	-	80
	17,728	-	17,728	14,338
c. Material Income				
Warm Hub Donations	-	37,034	37,034	500
Charitable Donations - Jubilee Fund	-	181	181	1,609
	-	37,216	37,216	2,109
Total Incoming Resources	112,699	45,646	158,345	114,171

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF READING, ST.MATTHEW
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

3 Cost of charitable activities

	2023			2022
	Unrestricted Costs £	Restricted Costs £	Total Costs £	Total Costs £
a. Clergy Expenses				
The Ministry	4,668	-	4,668	3,603
	4,668	-	4,668	3,603
b. The Church & Services				
Church cleaning	75	-	75	34
Church Flowers	86	-	86	228
Church Yard	302	-	302	32
Electricity	13,857	-	13,857	10,220
Insurance	882	-	882	881
Regular Maintenance Church	1,458	-	1,458	1,449
Upkeep of Services	2,145	-	2,145	1,008
Water Rates Church	106	-	106	87
	18,911	-	18,911	13,938
c. Other Parish Expenses				
Children's Ministry	2,651	-	2,651	1,779
Music Ministry	796	-	796	1,447
Youth Ministry	(207)	-	(207)	30
Lay Staff				
Salaries	29,863	14,941	44,804	32,135
Staff Development	157	-	157	840
Staff IT Facility	451	-	451	56
Personal Expenses of Lay Staff	304	-	304	293
	30,775	14,941	45,716	33,323
Church Hall running costs	11,278	780	12,058	9,255
Mission within the Parish	2,191	-	2,191	3,588
Administration	1,035	-	1,035	741
Affiliations	-	-	-	-
Governance	-	-	-	40
Audit and accountancy fees	25	-	25	-
Bank Fees	-	-	-	24
CLI Licence	861	-	861	821
Depreciation charge	3,228	271	3,500	3,654
Gifts	618	-	618	594
Other Ordinary Parish Expenses	156	-	156	394
Photocopying & Printing Costs	1,619	-	1,619	1,510
Telephone & Broadband	793	-	793	720
TV Licence	159	-	159	159
Payroll costs	50	-	50	-
	8,546	271	8,817	8,656
	56,029	15,992	72,021	58,076
d. Payments Outside the Parish				
Charitable Donations	1,503	392	1,895	814
Fees to Diocese -Payment	733	-	733	644
Parish Share	45,940	-	45,940	45,709
	48,176	392	48,568	47,167

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF READING, ST.MATTHEW
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

3 Cost of charitable activities (cont'd)

	Unrestricted Costs £	2023 Restricted Costs £	Total Costs £	2022 Total Costs £
e. Development and maintenance				
Hall/Garden Maintenance & Redecoration	2,161	-	2,161	878
Set-up of a community garden	-	-	-	1,256
Projector for Church Hall	-	-	-	577
Other expenditure	1,256	-	1,256	22
	<u>3,418</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>3,418</u>	<u>2,733</u>
Total Development and maintenance costs	<u>3,418</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>3,418</u>	<u>2,733</u>
f. Other operating expenses				
Training room expenses	-	1,600	1,600	
Warm Hub expenses	-	7,797	7,797	
Total other operating expenses	<u>-</u>	<u>9,397</u>	<u>9,397</u>	<u>-</u>
Total Resources Used	<u>131,203</u>	<u>25,780</u>	<u>156,983</u>	<u>125,519</u>

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF READING, ST.MATTHEW
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

4 Staff costs

	2023	2022
	£	£
Wages and salaries & NI	44,804	32,135
	<u>44,804</u>	<u>32,135</u>

The average number of employees during the year was 3 (2022:2).

Trustees (PCC members) received no remuneration during the year (2022: none).

During the year 3 trustees (PCC members) were reimbursed expenses amounting to £264.10 relating to general running costs and meeting expenses. Pads and Kirstie Dolphin were recompensed £4,081.20, as disclosed in the Clergy - The Ministry expense account (note 3)

	2023	2022
	£	£
5 Debtors & Prepayments		
Trade debtors	1,631	3,221
Tax recoverable on gift aids	234	446
Other debtors	-	-
Prepayments	926	861
	<u>2,791</u>	<u>4,528</u>

	2023	2022
	£	£
6 Creditors		
Trade creditors	695	2,126
Other creditors	881	6,057
Accruals	2,429	4,046
	<u>4,005</u>	<u>12,229</u>

7 Parish Funds

The movements in funds during the year were:

	Balance Brought Forward	Incoming	Outgoing	Transfer between funds	Balance Carried Forward
	£	£	£	£	£
General Reserve	59,705	108,574	(127,068)	(1,041)	40,170
7a Designated:					
Children & Music Ministry Fund	-	2,040	(1,354)	-	686
Organ Repair/media desk fund	-	1,630	(2,671)	1,041	-
Wreath-making event	-	455	(109)	-	346
	<u>-</u>	<u>4,125</u>	<u>(4,134)</u>	<u>1,041</u>	<u>1,032</u>
Unrestricted Funds	59,705	112,699	(131,202)	-	41,202
7b Restricted:					
Training Room Fund	-	8,430	(1,600)	-	6,830
Jubilee Fund	1,295	181	(392)	-	1,084
Youth Worker Fund	5,000	-	(5,000)	-	-
Warm Hub Fund	500	37,034	(18,789)	-	18,746
	<u>6,795</u>	<u>45,645</u>	<u>(25,780)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>26,660</u>
	<u>66,500</u>	<u>158,344</u>	<u>(156,982)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>67,862</u>

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF READING, ST.MATTHEW
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

7a Designated Funds

Children & Music Ministry Fund was used in 2023 to support family and children's ministries in the church.

The Organ repair and media desk fund was to cover the repair of the organ and replacement of the media equipment.

The wreath making was an outreach event.

7b Restricted Funds

The Training Room Fund was to cover the refurbishment of the committee room into a training room to help in the early stages of mental health in children and adults through cooking. This funds will also cover some of the wages of an employee and other related training expenses.

The Jubilee Fund was is to cover expenses incurred on families with hardship

The Youthworker fund represents donations received specifically for the hiring of a youth worker for children ministry within part of the and this was fully utilised in 2023.

The Warm Hub Fund represents donations received specifically for provision of warm hubs (including staff costs and capital improvement of facilities) for people within the parish who is struggling with keeping their own home warm.

The PCC has a policy of keeping three months running costs in reserve to cover unforeseen circumstances. During 2023 this amounted to £35,162.

Independent examiner's report to the Trustees of Parochial Church Council of Reading, St. Matthew

Independent examiner's report to the Trustees of Parochial Church Council of Reading, St. Matthew

This report on the accompanying financial statements of the PCC for the year ended 31 December 2023 is in respect of an examination carried out in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 ('the Regulations') and section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

Respective responsibilities of the trustees and the examiner

The trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts; you consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 145(1) of the Act and that an independent examination is needed.

Having satisfied myself that the charity is not subject to audit under charity law and is eligible for independent examination, it is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Act;
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act; and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the PCC and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- (1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Act; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the requirements of the Act.have not been met; or
- (2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Hooi Cheeseman

Mrs Hooi Cheeseman ACA
28 Bellamy Close
Uxbridge, Middlesex
UB10 8SJ

Date: 15 April 2024

Contact Us

205 Southcote Lane, Reading,
West Berkshire, RG30 3AX

T: 0118 954 7964

E: hello@st-matts.org.uk

W: www.st-matts.org.uk



DIOCESE OF OXFORD
Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire