



**The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of
St Luke with St Bartholomew**

Reading Reg. Charity No. 1158694

**Annual Parochial Church Meeting
Sunday 14 April 2024, 12 Noon,
In-person at St Luke's Church and via Zoom**

Agenda

Minutes of 2023 Meeting

Parish Reports including Parish Accounts



Sunday 14 April 2024, 12 Noon, In-person at St Luke's Church and via Zoom

Meeting of Parishioners for the Choice of Churchwardens

(Anyone on the electoral roll of the church, OR resident in the parish may vote in this meeting)

AGENDA

1. Election of Churchwardens

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

*Only those on the electoral roll of the parish may vote in this meeting.
Others may ask questions and join in discussion at the discretion of the Chair*

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence

2. Minutes of the 2023 APCM

3. Confirmation/Elections of Deanery Synod Members

4. Elections of PCC Officers and Ordinary Members

- I. Election of PCC members
- II. Appoint independent examiner if necessary
- III. PCC Secretary

5. Outline of the Annual Reports:

- I. Chair of PCC Report
- II. Warden's Report
- III. Electoral Roll Update
- IV. Treasurer's Report

6. The Year Ahead

7. Feedback, Questions and Any Other Business

(Items to be considered for AOB to be sent to the Chair via office@redlandsparish.org.uk no later than 12 April 2024)

8. Closing Prayers

9. Dates of PCC meetings – to be agreed by members of the PCC



Minutes of the 2023 Meeting of Parishioners for the Choice of Churchwardens

(Anyone on the electoral roll of the church, OR resident in the parish may vote in this meeting)

Attendees: Rev'd Ross Meikle (Vicar), Rev'd Christine Blackman, Jane Kenyon, Kirsten Bayes, Libby Stroud, Elizabeth Rebbeck, Alan Tonkyn, Shelagh Tonkyn, Chris Wakelin, Melanie Shrubsall, Sylvia Rayner, Mary Evans, Barbara Walton, Sally-Ann McDowell, Julian Pratt, Janet Davis, Janet Shield, Francis Jakeman, Gillian Lyne, Ola Cassels-White, Lynne Webb, Hilary Jakeman, Sarah Collins (PCC Secretary), Sheila Cox, Gordon Cox, Leslie Green, Bridget Green, Marion Pitman; Dianne Tavares

- 2. Election of Churchwardens – Janet Davis and Lynne Webb no objections received. All in favour.**

Minutes of the 2023 Annual Parochial Church Meeting

***Only those on the electoral roll of the parish may vote in this meeting.
Others may ask questions and join in discussion at the discretion of the Chair***

- 10. Minutes of the 2022 APCM – approved – Proposed Sally-Ann McDowell, Seconded Kirsten Bayes.**

- 11. Confirmation/Elections of Deanery Synod Members – Hilary Jakeman re-elected to 2026**

- 12. Elections of PCC Officers and Ordinary Members**

- IV. Election of PCC members
- V. Appoint independent examiner if necessary, SAM last year we requested have a new IE, one appointed, Harriet not able to fulfil the requirements in time. SAM used another person can use either one or the other for net.
- VI. PCC Secretary – no person from the congregation – paying Administrator but if someone would like to save the church some money at any point do come and speak with Sarah or Ross to chat about what is involved and what training is required, reappointed.

- 13. Outline of the Annual Reports:**

- V. Chair of PCC Report – Rev. Ross Meikle talked about the work done over the previous year of “getting our house in order” and some of the strangest fruits of that have been around the appointment of the Hall Manager and

separation of roles of Hall Manager and Parish Administrator. Appointment of Jane Kenyon as Hall Manager and already seeing fruitfulness of Jane's focus on hall and Sarah on Parish Administrator on our life. Thanks to the efforts of Gillian Lyne, we have jumped leaps and bounds with safeguarding, well ahead of other parishes. Now on level three and 78% through the requirements, close to achieving 100%. There is a requirement that all PCC members complete their safeguarding training and DBS checks, one current member outstanding. We have seen wonderful work on Garden of Wholeness and Healing and the parish history project. Teaching has been provided through house group and the parish weekend. Many thanks to those who have continued to work in these areas over the year. I arrived in the pandemic and struggled to see you all, the progress and settling into service routines has helped me to get to know you all. James was appointed as music leader; different types of music and we will be working with James to see how we can continue to play around with music and put him in touch with Sunday club to see if we can grow a children's choir. Read College has been significant in PCC life this year given their financial difficulties and recent announcement of closure this year. I would like to commend the PCC on their handling of this, they are excellent trustees looking out for our best interest, seeking to be compassionate but wanting to stick to letter of the law. There has been a huge Impact on our financial situation and we are currently not paying parish share. I will meet with the Deanery team soon to discuss. We hope to generate a steadier income stream moving forward. The church has seen several deaths of our family and seen several actual and spiritual births this year. I would like to give some general thanks to Sarah as PCC Secretary and to Roger Cox and Marion Pitman who are stepping away after many years of service to the PCC and the church family in general. Roger, it has been very beneficial to have your knowledge and skills. Sally-Ann McDowell and Leslie Green - many thanks for your service to the church through Deanery synod as your terms come to an end but also for remaining on the PCC. Jane appointed to Hall Manger so has stopped being a Churchwarden. Thanks to Jane for her 15 years at St Bart's – saw read settled into St Bart's and congratulations for being appointed to the role of Hall Manger. Thanks too to Kirsten for her time as Churchwarden, seeing the church through interregnum.

Questions. Gillian Lyne – where are we with Read college? – RM - Sarah Collins and I spoke with the legal team at the Diocese. Currently Read has paid all that is owed to date, pressure was put on them to do that. Read has been told it will not get access to the building if they do not pay. Their current plan is to vacate by June 19 and we are having conversations about how they will honour the licence as the first break clause is 2030 – we are unlikely to see any of that money but need to make sure we go by letter of the law. Bit of wait and see but they are vacating. Conversation about future of building and how to pull that together. Don't want to speculate at this point. Leslie Green - this is the right thing to do as under the licence we cannot actually rent St Bart's to anyone else until the Read licence ceases. Need to be careful legally as we are also committed to 2030 under the terms. Melanie Shrubsall – with a break clause in 2030 is this the earliest the licence may be brought to a close? LG – licence is very clear that Read college cannot end until 2030 but if they fail to meet their obligations then the PCC has the right to end the licence, so not all black so if for a number of months they do not pay we have the right to close them but this needs to be done legally rather than accept the keys and move on. Once the licence is defaulted upon, we have the right to move forward. Need Read college to acknowledge their responsibility under the licence. RM – generally conflict adverse – grateful to Sally-Ann, Leslie and Sarah for understanding it better than I do and encouraging me to make sure we take a very professional approach.

- VI. Warden's Report – Kirsten Bayes - refer you to report which has been circulated in the annual report. As warden been member of three team – Ministry Team – Ross, Sarah, Jane and Christine, we meet weekly to discuss the affairs of the church and it is good to have a place to go for a cuppa; Team two - Chalice servers and Welcomers – I hugely appreciate all the fun we have had and sorting who does what. Finally, Team three - the PCC. I have enjoyed being on PCC and looking forward to continuing with my membership there.
- VII. Electoral Roll Update – Gillian Lyne, Electoral Roll Officer confirmed the details from the Annual Report. Speak with Gillian if you are interested in being added and serving the church.

VIII. Treasurer's Report – Sally-Ann McDowell – within the APCM notes there is a summary, also been sent larger document of the full accounts one and is the one which has been reviewed by an independent inspector. These now need to be signed by Ross and Kirsten then will be uploaded to Charity Commission as required.

14. The Year Ahead – RM – I have preached several times about cultural development among us how they affect and influence our life together. Soon will be at end of the year of Wholeness and Healing and it is good time to recognise how we have changed – last year creeping out of covid restrictions and where we are now. When I arrived, I had to be very reactive which meant I had to say no a lot of the time rather than yes. Hope that I will be moving to be a more proactive vicar, establishing a more productive way of working and will be setting up new system of meeting and looking at more effective way of working. Feedback at my Ministerial Development Review said people wish that I was more prepared and less reactive and more organised. I want to work closely with the new wardens. I am working on a worship booklet. I have been discussing about praying deeply about how people encounter church. Thinking about theme parks – the experience begins before you arrive – what does that look like, the queue, the ride etc. When I think about the worship booklet I am aware of how we do it and how it is communicated from the moment people step in to the moment they leave. How do we curate that as a community. I want us to be very deliberate and aware that as people come to a church that they are safe, loved and cared for. Not proposing that we have another year of something and something – but considering faith sharing and fund raising. Faith sharing takes precedence. Can be scary to some people. How do we explore and communicate the language we use and how do we speak together. How might that be shared with those around us. Faith sharing not with the intention of converting people or getting them to church on a Sunday. We are now a poor church and need to be responsible and watch our spending and look at growing our coffers. In the works we are exploring a way for new members to contribute financially, and new ways of existing people to give more. Finally, looking ahead to the next year. Some members of PCC said this will be their final year - what will their legacy look like? Please do pray and reflect if you would like to join the PCC either this or next year. What will be helpful to you to know or be trained in over the next year to help you participate more effectively? We do have some extra

baptisms in place and the work with Read and St Bart's ongoing but don't want that to detract from what happens here.

Sheila Cox – last year been wonderful with lots of activities, looks very vibrant.

Thinking ahead we need to think about fundraising and getting balance in outreach and beyond church, making decision as a church where we are putting the effort in and getting people to attend events. We need more people to attend to raise funds.

RM – proposed meeting structure - worship, events, etc keener eye on the ball as to what is coming up and may help with negotiating a balance. Bridget Green - St

Peter's – when they hold an event they split fundraising between charity and the church – maybe think about here when we are doing outreach events and

fundraising – split things 50:50 to help our church as well. Gordon Cox – hope we can keep our commitment to Christian aid – last night an example – attracts people and reaches out. RM – Alan last year of organising event, no one else yet willing to

take on coordinating that type of event. Two ways – advertise – who would like to be CA co-ordinator to run events, or part of a committee – it was a group who put

together last night's hugely successful event. We can have a discussion if the CA fundraising is in the name of this church or a passion of that group of people within

the church. Last night was an amazing event would be good to see more of that even if just for fundraising. If anyone has any ideas how we might move this

forward. Gillian Lyne – we have a commitment to the wider church through parish share to support those get their pension and salaries from parish share. RM – it is

really important to recognise that we have been a very good church paying parish

share. I hope we are in Deanery good books but will be a conversation soon about our finances. Don't mean to scaremonger but one of the conversations at Deanery

level is that there are too many churches in Reading, what that means is that for

some churches if they do not pay parish share they end up sharing vicars. Maybe if we cannot get finances in better shape that deanery may look to see where they

can combine ministers again. Bridget Green – in this church you have regular committee members. We do have newer members, but they have not stayed for

the meeting. Unless we sort this out our parish share contributions, we will be a dying church. RM – We are looking at publicity for new people. Christine Blackman

– should we do welcome breakfast drinks?

Francis – reflecting that this summer he will have been retired for 10 years without responsibility. Been able to go to local church, absorb it all and appreciate the other side of organisation and burden of trying to keep the show on the road and I am

very grateful to those who do this. It is very easy, in my experience, particularly when finances are tight, for those in responsibility to feel that weight. Please don't feel that way if you are on the PCC or Ministry Team. It is a whole church, we are all part of it, and when we do what the church is about then other people see that they want to be part of it and although it takes time, enjoy his holy spirit and fellowship.

15. Closing Prayers – Francis prayed for the church community, parish and the year ahead.

Meeting closed at 13.10

16. Dates of PCC meetings – to be agreed by the members of the PCC



ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST LUKE WITH ST BARTHOLOMEW FOR THE YEAR ENDED APRIL 14 2024

Administrative information

St Luke's and St Bartholomew's are two churches joined into one parish, situated in Reading, Berkshire. They are part of the Diocese of Oxford within the Church of England. The correspondence address is ***The Parish Office, St Luke's Church, Erleigh Road, Reading, RG1 5LU.***

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is a charity which is registered with the Charity Commission.

Members of the PCC from the last APCM (22 May 2023) until the date this report was approved are:

The Rev'd Ross Meikle, Vicar, Chair (to March 10 2024)
The Rev'd Christine Blackman, Associate Priest
Lynne Webb, Church Warden
Janet Davis, Church Warden

Deanery Synod representatives

Hilary Jakeman

Other elected members:

Leslie Green	Paul Carnell
Marion Pitman	Sally-Ann McDowell, Treasurer
Gillian Lyne	Kirsten Bayes

Co-opted members: (no voting rights)

Sarah Collins (Parish Administrator and PCC Secretary)
Jane Kenyon (Hall Manager)
Folake Bisiriyu (Application made to the Diocese for LLM)

Officers newly elected at APCM 14 April 2024

Gordon Cox (from 14 January 2024), Chair to PCC from March 11 2024

Structure, governance and management

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. All Church attendees are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election on the PCC.

Objectives and activities

St Luke with St Bartholomew's PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the Vicar in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. It also has the maintenance responsibilities for the Churches of St Luke's, Erleigh Road, Reading; St Bartholomew's, London Road, Reading; and the Parish Hall, Erleigh Road, Reading.

Church attendance

The number on the Electoral Roll at 14 April 2024 is 109. We continued to provide zoom links for services which were appreciated by people who were unwell or out of Reading. The average weekly in attendance in October was 49 (of which 5 was under the age of 16) at St Luke's and 0 at St Bart's. A family service was held at St Bartholomew's just before Christmas. This was attended by 14 Adults and 6 Children. On Christmas Day 70 adults and 12 children attended the services in person with a number of others joining via Zoom.

Review of the year

The PCC has met on 6 occasions since the last APCM.

Churchwarden's Report 2024

We stepped into the roles of Churchwardens at the tail end of our successful 140th celebration year of Wholeness and Healing. We thankfully were guided by our long-established predecessors Jane and Kirsten and are now feeling confident in our new positions.

Being a Churchwarden and attending weekly team meetings, finance and buildings committees, has given us a true insight into the running of the church. We would like to thank everyone involved, our Clergy, our Office Administrator and Hall Manager, the PCC, our Treasurer and all involved in Safeguarding. Then we have our team of volunteers who we couldn't possibly do without including Welcomers and Chalice bearers, Readers, Flower Arrangers, Refreshment Providers, Ben our Server, Cleaners, all those involved with The Toddler Group and Monthly Coffee Morning and our technical sound and lighting expert who is always on call for sound system failures.

It was with regret that our Organist James had to leave in the Summer but thanks must be given to our stand in organists, our Choir who robe up each week and lead us in our singing and our Band who attend the Messy Service and provide us with a modern approach to our music.

Our social activities continue to flourish including the Harvest Lunch, Hymns and Pimms, Soups and Puds, International and Nigerian Meal nights, Pancakes and Prosecco, Muppets Movie Night, Art Exhibitions, Christmas Fair and Coffee Mornings.

Unfortunately, with Reed College moving out of St Barts and various other expenses our financial position is not where it was and we have had to make a few cut backs but with the hope of future lettings in St Bartholomew's and the increased number of hall bookings at St Luke's we should be well on the road to recovery.

Our Congregation continues to grow. Baptism's included Conrad Slack and Annabelle Mason from our church family and the Wedding highlight in September was when Christine married her Step Grandson Alex Baker to Zoe. After the hard work of clearing out the mess left by Reed College had been completed by a willing team, the Sanctuary at St Bartholomew's has been restored to a place of worship once more.

We were shocked to hear that Ross would be leaving us in February and that we would be entering another interregnum. We are so grateful that Christine has agreed to lead us through this period and ask for you to all support her and your church in prayer.

We wish Ross well in his new position at Salisbury Cathedral.

Lynne and Janet

Annual report from PCC Buildings Committee

Last year I reported that "The maintenance of our three buildings remains a challenge. Fuel prices have soured. The trees continue to grow so overhanging the public highway and need lopping. The valves and pumps on our heating systems approach the end of their useful life and need replacing".

I am pleased to report that despite financial constraints we have:

1. Lopped the trees at St Bart's,
2. Repaired all heating systems
3. Continued to maintain all our buildings to a satisfactory Standard.
4. All of the statutory inspections and annual maintenance contracts on our three properties are up to date.

This year the Quinquennial Inspections are due but by good governance over the past five years I do not expect any major items of expenditure.

The Chancel at St Bart's has been restored to its original splendour and the church largely cleared of all of Read College's redundant equipment. A Faculty to make the Rood screen's sound proofing a more permanent fixture has been sought. Negotiations are on-going to lease the building under licence.

Storage in the Hall is being addressed and there are plans in place to provide a toilet accessible directly to garden users. The Turner room has been redecorated and is a much warmer meeting room.

New phone lines and Internet contracts have been set up for the church and hall. The Wi-Fi service to the office still needs attention but generally Wi-Fi performance has been improved and is expected to save money.

The sensory Healing Garden is starting to take shape. The trees have been planted and the bench is securely sited, (and in regular use).

The retractable posts have helped to safeguard our parking, but parking remains an issue. This year we plan to install a few cycle racks next to the hall entrance.

The PCC has approved the expenditure to upgrade the St Luke's sound system and work is expected shortly.

We again owe a huge thank you to Roger Cox for project managing and, in many cases, undertaking the tasks involved in maintaining and refurbishing our three properties. I am

mindful of Roger's desire to step back from this role. One of our new members, Paul Webster has joined the group and is working with Roger.

The Buildings Committee would also like to thank Sarah and Jane for the day-to-day management of the Hall and the Church.

May I conclude this report by thanking all members of the congregation who have assisted the Buildings Committee in maintaining the fabric of our buildings.

**Leslie Green,
Chair of the Buildings Committee
February 2024**

Finance

Treasurer's Report

Utilities and insurance (excluding water)

Insurance in the two churches (and hall) increased to £15,900 from £15,500 in 2022. Read College covered a portion related to building and contents at St Bartholomew's as per their agreement whilst they were there. However, since they left and we have started to hold occasional services at St Bartholomew's, we have moved back to standard church insurance rather than landlord insurance which saves us money. As we have spent a considerable amount of time reinstating the Sanctuary at St Bartholomew's we are able to hold occasional services there now.

Electricity in the two churches was about £4,400 which is about £200 more than the previous year. Even though the buildings were in more use (specifically the hall), our utility prices dropped in October which is the time our contract renews.

Gas in the two churches was about £7,250 which is more than 2022, but that was due to us being in credit for the majority of 2022 at St Bartholomew's.

Hall gas was about £7,000 so considerably more than in 2022 (£2,650), but this was due to greater use of the hall as well as increased gas from October 2022. In 2023, electricity was about £2,000 compared to about £850 in 2022. Again, this was largely due to additional use plus increased energy prices from October 2022.

Charitable giving:

Our plan continues to be to donate to some local charities regularly and then do one off fundraising for others throughout the year. From our coffee mornings and other charitable events, we managed to give about £4,900 to charities which is slightly higher than 2022 (£4,600) and 2021 (£2,500).

Parish Share:

Our Parish share was £26,700 in 2023 compared to £45,800 in 2022. This is due to our request to only pay half our parish share due to the loss of income at St Bartholomew's. From 2024, we are in a recovery plan which increases the amount each year by 10% so that we will be able to return to paying full parish share in a few years' time. However, should we finalise the licence with our new tenants, we may wish to speed this up.

Parish Administrator and Hall Manager:

In April 2023, we split the role that our Parish Administrator was doing and appointed a Hall Manager. We also increased the salaries to be more competitive. As such the costs

increased to about £15,900 from about £11,750 in 2022 which included tax (where appropriate), national insurance (where appropriate) and pension. Although this is an increase, we have seen a benefit as the Hall Manager has more time to dedicate to increase hall use and this has paid off with increased revenue.

BALANCE OF FUNDS

Our usable funds have increased from last year to £45,800. These were £33,866 in 2022, £86,700 in 2021 and £103,000 in 2020.

We do also have some untouchable funds, which were valued at £289,500 on 31 Dec 2023 compared to £268,620 on 31 Dec 2022. These are the Lawrence Bequest, the Curacy fund, the Schoolrooms fund, and the Cockburn Bequest.

Reserves Policy

The usable funds that we hold in reserve reduced due to a decrease in the value of the investments plus the major works and repairs at St Barts. The reserves policy was not discussed in 2023, however our accounts show that we still meet the reserves policy as set in 2011.

The reserves policy is still to maintain reserves of at least £5,000 per building for emergency maintenance to the buildings. The maximum amount to be held in reserves was agreed to be £100,000, although we could potentially hold more if the PCC determined there was a valid reason for doing so.

All reserves are held as funds invested with the Central Board of Finance of the Church of England for the time being.

Finance Committee

The finance committee met several times in 2023 to ensure the finances are regularly reviewed. It was as a result of one of these meetings that we proposed to the PCC that we request to reduce our parish share, which the PCC approved. If anyone has an interest in joining, please do let me know.

Sally-Ann McDowell
Treasurer

Safeguarding report 2024

‘For I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord. Plans to prosper you and not to harm you’ Jeremiah 29:11

The safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults continues to be an important priority within our church and the responsibility of each and every member of the church community.

To this end it is important that there is a culture of understanding and awareness of the appropriate interaction with individuals where all are welcomed, feel respected and safeguarding concerns can be raised and responded to openly, promptly and consistently.

Safeguarding is a standing item on every PCC agenda. At the last PCC meeting on 11th March 2024 the Safeguarding Report was presented to the PCC and approved.

All those who require DBS checks and safeguarding training are up to date. These checks and training need to be repeated every three years. Some people will be getting reminders in the next few months to do this.

An audit of safeguarding was also presented to the PCC on 11th March 2024. Using the Diocesan Safeguarding Dashboard an Action Plan has been created which has identified several areas where activity risk assessments and job descriptions need to be completed. This is work for the upcoming year.

Currently we are on level 3 of the Safeguarding Dashboard and have made 95% progress towards completing all its requirements.

I have been on several courses about a new Safeguarding Hub which has been set up by the Diocese of Oxford. It will help with the creation of job descriptions and keeping track of training and DBS checks. It requires a lot of time to put in the relevant information but should be very helpful in the long run.

My thanks, once again, to Jenny Page for all her work as DBS verifier and to all those people who have undertaken the online training and recruitment process.

Gillian Lyne

Gillian Lyne

Vicar's Report – The Reverend Ross Meikle

The year began with the appointment of two new Churchwardens, Lynne Webb and Janet Davis. Though new to the office of churchwarden, they are by no means new to the church having served as members of St Luke's congregation since childhood. It has been good to work with them, although none could have foreseen quite the year we have had!

It was a year of significant and unexpected change for Redlands Parish, kicking off with what I called a *summer horribilis* at PCC in September. We have seen: the liquidation of Read College, and with it the end of a significant source of regular income for the parish, uncertainty regarding our parish finances and the future of St Bartholomew's church building; the departure of James, our Music Leader, after he was given notice on his house and relocated; and, the parish entering into interregnum after my own appointment as Missioner for Young People at Salisbury Cathedral. Our sound system at St Luke's has also been problematic this year.

At time of writing, I am still with you in the hope that nothing else dramatic will happen before this is published. But even as I write this, there are more reasons to celebrate than there are to bring us down. After all, this has also been a year when our setbacks have not defined us, and we have borne witness to new life and new opportunities in response to these challenges.

There is new life at St Bartholomew's after a summer of intentional prayer, discernment and conversations. We had a Day of Prayer for the Holy Spirit in the church, including a prayer labyrinth. The result of that summer was a new relationship with Community (AF) - a community interest company with a history of supporting young people and community projects in Newtown - moving in and injecting a new level of energy and enthusiasm to the space. They have helped with the clearing and cleaning of the building, and it has been a privilege to see St Bartholomew's loved after falling into a state of dust and disregard.

The sanctuary space around the high altar will remain designated as a holy and quiet space intended for worship and reflection.

Music-wise, we have new relationships with local organists who play for us on Sundays, as well as continued support from Tim and Gordon. Furthermore, Christine is exploring ways of introducing more modern music to the church during the vacancy.

Jane, having had a full year as dedicated Hall Manager, has stimulated the life of St Luke's Hall, both in regard to its service to the local community through art exhibitions and Bed For The Night, and also financially. The PCC agreed in a conversation around "what do we call ourselves?" that we seek to call the building as "St Luke's Hall" (rather than the Parish Hall or Church Hall). Plans for the future redevelopment of St Luke's Hall to maximise its missional and financial potential are ongoing, dependent on grants.

From a worship perspective, we have continued our regular Sunday worship at 1030am, seeing gradual and maintained growth, welcomed new members, and increased in diversity. Our midweek services of Holy Communion (Tuesday 7pm and Thursday 10am) have also shown times of growth and been of service to members of the community not previously known to us.

I led a short service at the War Memorial in the cemetery at Cemetery Junction on Remembrance Sunday - a traditional service of readings, prayers, and with a student bugler from the University. The event was at the request of local historians keen to preserve and maintain the history and significance of the cemetery and the lives of those remembered there, and also included ministers and worshippers from Park URC and the parish of St Stephen and St John.

We enjoyed a Parish Weekend in Bournemouth in 2023, and even though parish finances don't allow for a Parish Weekend in 2024, there is a fun-packed parish day planned and a hope to reinstate the Parish Weekend in 2025.

It is in that expression of hope that I draw my Vicar's Report to a close.

I had not expected to leave Redlands Parish as soon as I am. As I wind down, I put aside my own plans, ideas, and ego putting my trust in Christ and the power of Christ within each of you that God's love will continue to be made known - as it was before me, and will be after me. I relinquish control over vision and decision-making, and over what my legacy may be, giving such authority to the Churchwardens, the PCC, and the church.

I arrived in the midst of the Covid lockdown, a new incumbent, facing trials most vicars rarely face in their entire ministries. I have endeavoured to put our house in order, to clear the clutter, to free the parish up and return to basics, so that we can rebuild upon the foundation of Christ and not a foundation of nostalgia. I am sad I won't be part of that rebuilding, but as one friend reflected to me, perhaps my role among you has been, after the example of James and John with their father Zebedee (Bible reference), to mend the nets so that another may come and help you to cast the nets, leading you and others into new life.

God bless you in the vacancy, lead you wisely in discernment, and keep you open to the movement of the Spirit among you and the Church in the years to come. Amen.

Ross

Sunday Club Report

Sunday Club meets in Hall on the last Sunday of the month during the main service.

We begin with a song and prayers and then we do activities based on the Gospel for the day.

Sometimes there is a story to tell or act out, sometimes we will hear Jesus' teaching and apply the lessons to our own lives.

There is then a chance to let off steam with a game that relates to our learning and finally we all join in doing a craft activity.

There are about 20 children who have attended over the past year but on an average Sunday there will be around 6 in attendance.

There will be at least one leader and one helper (who have appropriate Safeguarding training) present each week, from a team of half a dozen, and more adults will be present if necessary.

Those of us involved always have a great morning.

Christine

Pastoral Care Team Report February 2024

The Pastoral Care Team and other supportive parishioners have offered Care and Support to members of the congregation. The Team consists of Christine Blackman, Mary Evans, Everette Marshall, Ross Meikle and me, Sheila Cox. I'd like to thank all members for their support and for keeping contact with parishioners who cannot get out to church or to social events.

Shopping support is available to those who need this form of help.

Parish members can ask their fellow friends for lifts if required.

Sheila tries to give the names of those who need prayers to Sarah when possible. This year the congregation have been asked to write down names to be prayed for, on Sunday mornings, on a sheet at the back of church. Permission needs to be sought from the people who would like to be prayed for.

The teas for Senior Citizens continue to be held every other month. Thank you to the hosts and those who supply refreshments.

Sheila Cox - Pastoral Care Leader

Parish Toddler Group

The Toddler Group meets in the hall on Erleigh Rd. every Wednesday morning except in the main school holidays at Christmas, Easter & in the summer. We welcome anyone who wants to bring in their little ones, up to about age 4, and we have lots of toys. We used to take a break in the half term weeks but realised that families whose children are not yet at school are often not tuned in to the half term breaks, & really appreciate being able to attend Toddler Group in the October & February weeks. Having said this, we did actually take a break in the May half term week in 2023, as we thought people would know about the Bank Holiday at the start of the week, & the weather might be good enough to take little ones to the park.

Our numbers since last April average 17 children, but we never know how many to expect, & we have had numbers on a Wednesday from 8 to 30 (this was the day of the Christmas party & included a few school-age children). The adults who bring little ones to Toddler Group can be parents (usually the mother, but not always), grandparents, aunties, minders and friends. We noticed it when 2 childminders turned up, each bringing 4 little boys! We have also on occasion had 4 generations of one family - 2 children, their mother, her mother, and her mother! All fit and well and enjoying the company in the hall! Some adults attend the group with friends, or as mother & daughter, while some arrange to meet up at the group. Others have bravely attended alone with their child and made friends at the group. Numerous languages can be heard in the hall at any meeting.

We give out information about church activities, drawing people's attention to any notices that might be of interest, and it is a great joy when a family brings a child to church for baptism. We regularly have a big turnout for the Christmas party, and almost everyone went into the church after the party last December, when Ross kept everyone interested with his telling of the Nativity story. We shall give every child an Easter egg at the last meeting of the spring term, on 27 March.

It is noticeable that most people who attend Toddler Group walk to the hall, which means they live locally. Such a flourishing group is a gift to any clergy who want to make contacts in their local community.

The Group could not function without the people who turn up faithfully to make tea & coffee & chat over the kitchen bar.

Hilary Jakeman, on behalf of the team –
Janet Shield, Melanie Shrubsall, John Starr & Francis Jakeman, and the coffee team -
Elizabeth Andrews, Janet Davis, Bridget Green, Libby Stroud, & Shelagh Tonkyn.

Monthly Coffee Morning

There is a long tradition of coffee mornings at St. Luke's. The main aim is to bring people together in a relaxed social setting - church members and people who live locally - but we also have fund-raising stalls. At present the coffee mornings meet on the first Saturday of the month, in the hall, from 11 am - 12 noon. There is a break in August, and usually we do not hold a coffee morning on the first Saturday in January.

The December coffee morning used to coincide with the church Christmas Fair, so the coffee morning team took their full part in that. However, last Christmas the Fair was held

a week earlier, in November. The first Saturday in December was also the day before the first Sunday of Advent, and people were in the church to put their angel decorations on the church windowsills. We set up several of the usual coffee morning stalls & a good number of people were happy to come into the church ("I've never been in here before!") so we were able to raise some money to go towards the expense of running Bed for the Night in the hall, from January - March.

The coffee morning in November was, as always in recent years, for the Chocolatada, in Pilcomayo, Peru. With some very generous donations, we were able to send £337 to John Starr's daughter-in-law, whose parents still live in the village & arrange the Christmas party for the local children.

In October we sent £116 to Reading Family Aid, for their work with poor families.

In September our gift of £96 went to the UNHCR

In July we sent £131 to Open Doors, an international organisation supporting Christians who suffer persecution.

June's gift of £202 went to the Berkshire Care Trust, supporting ex-offenders.

Our work in May raised funds for Christian Aid, which were added to the fund-raising across the whole church in Christian Aid Week

This year, 2024, we have held coffee mornings in February - raising £152 for Reading Refugee Support Group - and in March, with some generous donations, we were able to send £243 to Medical Aid for Palestine.

The next coffee mornings will be held on 7 April & 4 May. We try to support a charity local to Reading, in one month, & in the next, an international charity.

We have also since last September been able to make some donations to church funds, to help with heating costs & with the costs for Bed for the Night.

Hilary Jakeman

on behalf of Melanie Shrubsall, Elizabeth Rebbeck, Mary Evans,
Libby Stroud, Margaret Carter, Sally-Ann McDowell

Traidcraft

Since the demise of Traidcraft it has still been possible to obtain fairly traded goods in Reading. While Traidcraft published a catalogue from which you could order all kinds of items, making life easy, now you have to research availability. However, many supermarkets & grocers stock food with the fairtrade mark, the best of these being the Co-op. There is also of course the World Shop, part of RISC, on London St. in central Reading, the various Oxfam shops, and the shop at Greyfriars, in Friar St., which stocks Easter eggs from the Meaningful Chocolate Company. We know that the fairtrade premium has helped countless producers' co-operatives round the world to invest in things which make a huge difference. They buy a van to be able to transport goods quickly to market, or they build a health clinic or a school, or they train farmers in better & climate-friendly techniques. The trade justice movement is a good example of how a small change in our shopping habits can benefit the people who produce the goods we need.

Hilary Jakeman

House Group/ Evening Lent Group report 2024

Our monthly House Group has comprised ten regular (or fairly regular!) members and we have enjoyed some very stimulating and challenging discussions, some as 'one-off' Bible Studies, and others as a sequence of parts of a course.

We began in May with a session that was a follow-up to a discussion at the Parish Weekend which had been led by Christine and focused on the theme of Wholeness and Healing. We looked at John Ch. 9 (the healing of the man born blind) and Galatians Ch. 5 (the works of the flesh and the fruit of the spirit). We noted that Jesus, in defying the Law by healing on the Sabbath, caused divisions amongst the Pharisees, and asked if he still causes divisions in our society, and how we handle that. We particularly enjoyed the feisty sarcasm of the healed man in dealing with the Pharisees. ("I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?")

From June to November we followed one of the York courses, entitled (with a nod to John McEnroe) 'You Can be Serious! - Meeting Jesus Afresh in John's Gospel'. As is usual with the York courses, this course featured alongside a text and questions, representatives of different Christian churches in an audio-recorded discussion: David Wilbourne, Anglican Bishop of Llandaff, Olivia Amartey of the Elim Pentecostal Church, and Brendan Walsh, the Editor of the Catholic weekly *The Tablet*. In reacting to the panel's discussion of John's Gospel, we wrestled with such questions as:

- In what ways does John's Gospel seem different from the other three?
- Are we sometimes, like the Pharisee Nicodemus, 'baffled' by Christ?
- What makes an act of worship inspiring and exciting?
- When have you sided with Jesus and stood against the crowd, as Jesus did in talking to the Samaritan woman at the well?
- Should God be blamed for suffering? (A question that, in one form or another, keeps coming back to haunt us at the group!)
- Do you feel guilty about how you keep the Sabbath?
- Are human beings a curse or a blessing to the earth?

In the last session, we were also asked to give our favourite Bible passage, which led to some interesting examples, and explanations.

For our Advent session, in December, we focused on one of the Advent readings from the church Lectionary: Mark, chapter 13, which recounts Jesus's prophecies about the future sufferings of his followers, and the end of the world, or possibly just the destruction of the Temple, and the end of the world as the Jews knew it. Our discussion of the chapter led us to ponder, amongst other things, on the nature of the persecution of Christians today, including the disregard, or worse, of Christianity in our society. We also thought about how to interpret Christ's final injunction: 'Keep awake'.

For our one-off pre-Lent meeting, we were led by Francis Jakeman in a discussion of the concept of God's Grace, which, as he pointed out, is mentioned far more frequently in the New Testament than the Old. Looking at the Sanskrit, Latin and Greek origins of the word, Francis emphasised its meaning as both something offered and also something for which we should give thanks. He argued that the Grace of God which is made known in Jesus

Christ does not represent a new divine power or virtue, but rather a new way in which God's power is expressed. Finally, we looked at the story of Zacchaeus in Luke's Gospel, as an example of the expression of God's Grace, through Jesus, to a repentant sinner.

In Lent, we have, as in the past, split into a daytime group, led by Francis and Hilary Jakeman (see separate report), and a smaller evening group of five members at the Tonkyns' home. In both groups we have been following the Diocese's 'Come and See' course, presented by the Bishop, Steven Croft, with its central theme of Jesus's interpretation of the Ten Commandments in the form of two key instructions to love God wholeheartedly and our neighbour as ourselves. At the time of writing, we have covered three of the six sessions. Each session focuses on a video presentation by the Bishop and an additional Bible passage. In the first session, Steven Croft presents the opposition of 'Two Ways' of viewing life and its purpose: the atheist and the Christian, seeing the latter view as focusing on the love shown by God in creation. Paired with this is a discussion of 1 John 4, a discourse on the nature of God's love. In the second session, entitled 'Two Treasures', Croft argues that our identity is 'grounded in the deep powerful truth that God loves us', and sees God's love as a 'hidden treasure' waiting for us to discover. The related Bible reading is an excerpt from Psalm 119 in which the writer expresses his love for God's law. The third session, with the title 'Two Tablets', looks at the first four of the Ten Commandments, with their focus on worshipping only the one God, and respecting His name and the Sabbath. Croft sees these Commandments as showing us how to love God. The selected Bible reading, from Hosea 6, recounts the Lord's despair at the faithlessness the people of Israel, and His desire that they should love and know Him, rather than offer mere ritual sacrifices. In our discussions, we have looked at such questions as:

- How might an atheist respond to Steven Croft's description of the atheist viewpoint?
- What relevance, if any, is there in still having "commandments" for Christians?
- Why would a failure to accept that we are loved by God make us unable to give love to others?
- How does the idea of the steadfastness of God's love make you feel?
- In what ways do you find it easy or difficult to love God?
- How can we, in Steven Croft's words, 'set the worship of God at the heart of our focus and energy and daily lives'?

We have enjoyed the engaging and pleasant manner of Steven Croft's presentations, and felt that, of the sessions so far, the third was the most impressive in the way that it opened up the significance of the first four Commandments and invited us to think about them afresh. The course so far has also made sense of the way in which Jesus was able to summarise the Ten Commandments in the form of his two 'greatest' Commandments. We look forward to further stimulating discussions based on the final three sessions.

Alan Tonkyn
08/03/23

Daytime Lent House Group 2024

Ten of us have been meeting together on Monday mornings. We have met 3 times so far with 3 more sessions to go. The subject for our discussions is 'The Commandments'. The material has been designed by the Diocese of Oxford as part of their 'Come & See' initiative. It involves studying passages from Scripture using a method called 'Dwelling in the Word'. The notes on each passage are backed up by a short talk each week from the Bishop of Oxford. Each session concludes with a different contemplative exercise explained in notes from the Diocese.

Our experience of the material has been very positive so far. Dwelling in the Word has allowed a variety of responses to each passage to emerge from those attending. In Week 1 we were challenged to consider two ways of approaching life. The first is to see it as the product of coincidences with no purpose beyond the purpose we create for ourselves. The second is to see life through faith in the God who created the heavens and the earth. His divine plan gives us purpose and a moral order beyond anything we might invent. God's love was explored through studying 1 John 4:7-19. The session ended with a group exercise on Stillness.

The pattern for the other sessions is similar. Week 2 is entitled the 'Two Treasures' and reminded us of the stories Jesus told of the Treasure in the Field and the Pearl of Great Price. Our study of Psalm 119 provoked a response from members in which we talked about 'savouring' the Word. Week 3 was called 'The Two Tablets'. It focused on the first 4 Commandments in Exodus Chapter 20 which address our relationship with God. Here we found ourselves noting the difference between rules or routines which we have adopted ourselves personally, and those prescribed by others. Recognising that what others, including in the Bible, say can contain real wisdom, we agreed that it is only when we adopt them for ourselves that they become truly beneficial.

We still have 3 weeks to go. They are entitled 4. Two trees; 5. Two questions; and 6. Two houses. Although we can't predict what we shall learn from the rest of the course we are convinced that studying together will continue to be enjoyable and fruitful. Jesus told us that when two or three are gathered together in His name, He is there in the midst of us. Our experience has borne that out, and is encouraging us to renew our trust in Him. We look forward to joining with others as we discern God's vision for St Luke's ready for the appointment of a new vicar.

Francis Jakeman
March 2024

Erleigh Road Community Garden

Last year was another busy one in the garden and it was lovely to see both regular and new people coming along to the community gardening sessions. We were also delighted to be awarded the Level 5 Outstanding Award in the Community Gardens category at the RHS It's Your Neighbourhood awards.

Alongside our regular gardening sessions, we also held additional talks and workshops. We took part in Wild About Reading and Edwin Trout came back to the garden to talk

about toads and Dr Chris Foster from the University of Reading came to talk to children about insects in the garden and to help them identify various insects they found in the garden which is always fascinating! We continued to run cooking sessions using produce from the garden as well as apple and grape pressing.

Thanks to funding from the Diocesan Development Fund via the Church we were able to purchase some new picnic tables for the garden last year which are a walk-in style so more easily accessible and have wheelchair access too.

Regular sessions have now started up again after the winter with sessions on Thursday mornings from 10-11.30am and Saturday afternoons from 2-3.30pm. These sessions are funded by Activate Learning and are open to all. As well as various tasks around the garden we will be sowing vegetable and flower seeds ready for another plant sale in June. The sale we held last year was a great success and Mary's cream tea sold out in record time and the jams and chutneys made from produce from the garden were very popular too!

For more information, please contact Naomi at garden@redlandsparish.org.uk

Naomi German

Deanery Synod

The Deanery Synod has met 5 times in the last year. I find it is always a great place to meet people from churches around Reading Deanery, and to hear interesting news. Some of the debate is not ever so riveting, but finance has to be discussed & churches need to feel they have been considered, before they are asked to increase their Parish Share! One point made recently, sadly, is that a church which is in vacancy, but which is not paying its full Parish Share is unlikely to get any applicants for the job of vicar.

There is usually a guest speaker at Synod, and at a recent meeting we heard from the assistant priest at one of the churches in East Reading. She spoke of the ways to get people to volunteer to do the things that need doing in a church! Some people do not respond to a general invitation to volunteer. They may have a history of rejection when they did offer to get involved, or they may think that any general invitation just does not include them. It falls to church leaders to know their congregation members' gifts & experience, then ask people with the appropriate skills to do the job in question.

Another speaker was a newly appointed worker for Berkshire, appointed by Bishop Steven, to work with parishes on enhancing their children's work and youth work. The Bishop is asking every congregation to assess its work and let him know, so that he can support all efforts. We shall be discussing the initial clergy responses to this, at the next meeting, on 30 March.

Hilary Jakeman

World Day of Prayer

The World Day of Prayer is held every year on the first Friday in March. You may remember it as the Women's World Day of Prayer. Men and children were always welcome, & it was renamed recently to make its inclusiveness clear. The order of service is always written by a group of Christian women, a long time in advance, so that it can be translated, printed & distributed to the national groups in good time for the day of worship itself.

For 1 March 2024 the order of service was written by Christian women in Palestine, long before the present war erupted in October, but it gave us a chance to pray for Palestine now, as well as using the prayers which were appropriate at the time of writing. We already know that next year's worship has been written by Christian women on the Cook Islands.

The one service held in Reading may not seem very significant, but it is part of a great wave of prayer in native languages, encircling the globe, beginning as the sun rises over Samoa, continuing around the earth, ending back in the Pacific as the sun sets over American Samoa. This year we joined with people in 146 countries & islands, to pray with & for the people of Palestine.

We were made very welcome this year at the Salvation Army central, in Castle St. People attended from various churches across Reading. Another church will host the service on 7 March 2025: last year, 2023, St. Luke's hosted it.

Hilary Jakeman

St Luke with St Bartholomew, Reading

End of Year Financial Statements

Year ending 31 Dec 2023

Introduction

The accounts have been produced directly from the accounting system (Finance Co-ordinator online) and are rounding up rather than showing only the pound.

Statement of Financial Activities

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Prior year total funds
Income and endowments from:					
Donations and legacies	72,788	-	-	72,788	66,884
Income from charitable activities	16,449	-	-	16,449	7,809
Other trading activities	4,491	-	-	4,491	3,454
Investments	22,396	-	8,986	31,382	36,286
Other income	-	-	-	-	1,620
Total income	116,124	-	8,986	125,110	116,053
Expenditure on:					
Expenditure on charitable activities	104,513	234	8,986	113,733	171,188
Other expenditure	275	-	-	275	250
Total expenditure	104,788	234	8,986	114,008	171,438
Net income / (expenditure) resources before transfer	11,336	(234)	-	11,102	(55,385)
Transfers					
Other recognised gains / losses					
Gains on revaluation, fixed assets, charity's own use	-	-	20,870	20,870	(32,892)
Net movement in funds	11,336	(234)	20,870	31,971	(88,277)
Total funds brought forward	16,889	647	259,364	276,900	365,177
Total funds carried forward	28,225	413	280,234	308,871	276,900
Represented by					
Unrestricted					
General fund	28,225	-	-	28,225	16,889
Restricted					
Administrator	-	761	-	761	1,000
Parish Weekend	-	(349)	-	(349)	(353)
Endowment					
Cockburn Bequest	-	-	151,544	151,544	138,489
Curacy Fund	-	-	8,715	8,715	7,986
Lawrence Bequest	-	-	24,048	24,048	25,212
Schoolrooms Fund	-	-	95,927	95,927	87,678
Total funds	28,225	413	280,234	308,871	276,900

Balance Sheet detailed

Class and code	Description	As at 31/12/2023	As at 31/12/2022
Fixed assets			
	Schoolrooms Fund	95,926	87,677
	Cockburn Bequest	151,817	138,762
	Lawrence Bequest	33,269	34,432
	Nuttall Bequest	-	-
	Curacy Fund	8,477	7,748
	Total Fixed assets	289,489	268,620
Current assets			
	NatWest St Lukes	11,793	5,069
	NatWest Hall	5,204	715
	Lloyds St Barts	2,050	6,473
	Santander St Lukes	-	-
	CCLA (CBF) St Lukes deposit account	15,187	13,036
	CCLA (CBF) St Barts deposit account	2,053	1,989
	CCLA (CBF) Hall deposit account	2,299	2,228
	Cash in hand	144	37
	Accounts Receivable	4,486	4,317
	Total Current assets	43,217	33,866
Liabilities			
	Agency collections	-	-
	Accounts Payable	23,835	25,585
	Total Liabilities	23,835	25,585
	Net Asset surplus (deficit)	308,871	276,900
Reserves			
	Excess/(deficit) to date	11,102	(283,214)
	Starting balances	303,113	619,219
	Gains/(losses) on investment assets	(26,213)	(26,213)
	Gains/(losses) on investment assets	20,870	(32,892)
	Total Reserves	308,871	276,900
	Represented by Funds		
	General (Unrestricted)	28,225	16,889
	Restricted	413	647
	Endowment	280,234	259,364
	Total	308,871	276,900

Statement of Assets and Liabilities

Class and nominal code	General	Designated	Restricted	Endowment	Total	Last year
Fixed Asset - Tangible Assets						
Schoolrooms Fund	-	-	-	95,926	95,926	87,677
Cockburn Bequest	273	-	-	151,545	151,817	138,762
Lawrence Bequest	34,325	-	-	(1,056)	33,269	34,432
Curacy Fund	-	-	-	8,477	8,477	7,748
Total	34,598	-	-	254,892	289,489	268,620
Current Asset - Cash At Bank And In Hand						
NatWest St Lukes	75,492	-	12,194	(75,893)	11,793	5,069
NatWest Hall	17,634	-	(11,703)	(727)	5,204	715
Lloyds St Barts	(31,278)	-	270	33,058	2,050	6,473

Santander St Lukes	3,468	-	-	(3,468)	-	-
CCLA (CBF) St Lukes deposit account	(32,238)	-	-	47,425	15,187	13,036
CCLA (CBF) St Barts deposit account	2,053	-	-	-	2,053	1,989
CCLA (CBF) Hall deposit account	2,299	-	-	-	2,299	2,228
Cash in hand	144	-	-	-	144	37
Total	37,575	-	761	395	38,731	29,548
Current Asset – Debtors						
Accounts Receivable	4,486	-	-	-	4,486	4,317
Total	4,486	-	-	-	4,486	4,317
Liability - Agency Accounts						
Agency collections	141	-	(141)	-	-	-
Total	141	-	(141)	-	-	-
Liability - Creditors: Amounts Falling Due In One Year						
Accounts Payable	48,292	-	490	(24,948)	23,835	25,585
Total	48,292	-	490	(24,948)	23,835	25,585
Net total assets	28,225	-	413	280,234	308,871	276,900
Represented by						
General (Unrestricted)	28,225	-	-	-	28,225	16,889
Restricted – Admin	-	-	761	-	761	1,000
Restricted – PWE	-	-	(349)	-	(349)	(353)
Endowment – Cockburn	-	-	-	151,544	151,544	138,489
Endowment – Curacy	-	-	-	8,715	8,715	7,986
Endowment – Lawrence	-	-	-	24,048	24,048	25,212
Endowment – School	-	-	-	95,927	95,927	87,678
Total	28,225	-	413	280,234	308,871	276,900

Fund movement summary

	Fund	Opening	Incoming	Outgoing	Transfers	Gains/Losses	Journals	Closing
Admin								
Restricted		1,000	-	239	-	-	-	761
Sub-totals		1,000	-	239	-	-	-	761
Cockburn								
Endowment		138,489	4,150	4,150	-	13,055	-	151,544
Sub-totals		138,489	4,150	4,150	-	13,055	-	151,544
Curacy								
Endowment		7,986	232	232	-	729	-	8,715
Sub-totals		7,986	232	232	-	729	-	8,715
Lawrence								
Endowment		25,212	1,982	1,982	-	(1,164)	-	24,048
Sub-totals		25,212	1,982	1,982	-	(1,164)	-	24,048
PWE								
Restricted		(353)	-	(5)	-	-	-	(349)
Sub-totals		(353)	-	(5)	-	-	-	(349)
School								
Endowment		87,678	2,622	2,622	-	8,249	-	95,927
Sub-totals		87,678	2,622	2,622	-	8,249	-	95,927
General								
Unrestricted		16,889	116,124	104,788	-	-	-	28,225
Sub-totals		16,889	116,124	104,788	-	-	-	28,225
Totals		276,900	125,110	114,008	-	20,870	-	308,871

PARISH OF ST LUKE WITH ST BARTHOLOMEW, READING

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 1997 to 2001 together with applicable accounting standards and the Charities SORP (FRS 102).

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention as modified by the annual revaluation of listed investments to market value.

Funds

General funds represent the funds of the PCC that are not subject to any restrictions regarding their use and are available for application on the general purposes of the PCC. Funds designated for a particular purpose by the PCC are also unrestricted.

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

Incoming Resources

Voluntary income and capital sources:

- Collections are recognised when received by or on behalf of the PCC.
- Planned giving receivable under covenant is recognised only when received.
- Income Tax recoverable on covenants or gift aid donations is recognised when the income is recognised.
- Grants and legacies to the PCC are accounted for as soon as the PCC is notified of its legal entitlement and the amount due.
- Income from fund raising events is accounted for net of incidental expenses.

Other ordinary income:

- Rental income from the letting of church premises is recognised when the rental is due.

Income from investments:

- Dividends and interest are accounted for when receivable. Tax recoverable on such income is recognised in the same accounting year.

Resources used

Grants:

- Grants and donations are accounted for when paid over, or when awarded, if that award creates a binding obligation on the PCC.

Activities directly relating to the work of the Church:

- The diocesan quota or parish share is accounted for when payable.

Fixed assets

Consecrated land and buildings and movable church furnishings:

- Consecrated and beneficed property is excluded from the accounts by s.10 (2)(b) of the Charities Act 2011.
- No value is placed on movable church furnishings held by the churchwardens 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 or benefice buildings and movable church furnishings, whether maintenance or improvement, is written off as expenditure in the SOFA and separately disclosed.

Investments:

- Investments are stated at market valuation.

Current assets:

- Short-term deposits include cash held on deposit either with the CBF Church of England Funds or at the bank.

Analysis of income and expenditure

					Total	
	Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	Endowment	This year	Last year
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM:						
Donations and legacies						
Gift Aid – Bank	38,494	-	-	-	38,494	43,570
Gift Aid – Envelopes	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other planned giving	1,750	-	-	-	1,750	1,652
Loose plate collections	622	-	-	-	622	689
One-off Gift Aid gifts	1,180	-	-	-	1,180	-
Donations appeals etc	7,684	-	-	-	7,684	7,590
Tax recoverable on Gift Aid	10,895	-	-	-	10,895	9,987
Legacies	8,293	-	-	-	8,293	-
Non-recurring one-off grants	2,500	-	-	-	2,500	3,395
Other funds generated	1,369	-	-	-	1,369	-
Donations and legacies Totals	72,788	-	-	-	72,788	66,884
Income from charitable activities						
Fees for weddings and funerals	865	-	-	-	865	645
Church hall lettings – objectives	15,584	-	-	-	15,584	7,164
Income from charitable activities Totals	16,449	-	-	-	16,449	7,809
Other trading activities						
Rummage sales etc	1,982	-	-	-	1,982	1,120
Bookstall sales - fund raising	2,510	-	-	-	2,510	2,334
Other trading activities Totals	4,491	-	-	-	4,491	3,454
Investments						
Dividends	-	-	-	8,986	8,986	8,889
Bank and building society interest	514	-	-	-	514	213
Rent from lands or buildings	21,882	-	-	-	21,882	27,184
Investments Totals	22,396	-	-	8,986	31,382	36,286
Other income						
Insurance claims	-	-	-	-	-	1,620
Other income Totals	-	-	-	-	-	1,620
Income and endowments Grand totals	116,124	-	-	8,986	125,110	116,053
EXPENDITURE ON:						
Expenditure on charitable activities						
Giving to missionary societies	1,650	-	-	-	1,650	376
Giving - relief and development agencies	-	-	-	-	-	933
Home mission	2,426	-	-	-	2,426	2,340
Secular charities	795	-	-	-	795	931
Ministry parish share etc	17,913	-	-	8,754	26,667	45,813
Assistant staff costs	2,903	-	-	-	2,903	2,548
Salary of parish administrator	15,855	-	-	-	15,855	11,740
Working expenses of incumbent	-	-	-	-	-	(25)
Education	75	-	-	-	75	-
Parish training and mission	-	-	(5)	-	(5)	1,491
Church running – insurance	15,921	-	-	-	15,921	15,464
Church office – telephone	1,216	-	-	-	1,216	1,171
Organ / piano tuning	-	-	-	-	-	271
Church maintenance	2,632	-	-	-	2,632	42,328
Cleaning	1,099	-	-	-	1,099	1,975
Upkeep of services	3,549	-	-	232	3,781	2,832
Upkeep of churchyard	9,848	-	-	-	9,848	2,651
Administration	5,190	-	239	-	5,429	976

Church running – electric	4,394	-	-	-	4,394	4,189
Church running – gas	7,249	-	-	-	7,249	4,227
Church running – water	480	-	-	-	480	329
Church running – emergency heating	-	-	-	-	-	11,114
Hall running – electricity	1,986	-	-	-	1,986	853
Hall running – gas	6,995	-	-	-	6,995	2,655
Hall running – maintenance	2,215	-	-	-	2,215	726
Hall running – water	122	-	-	-	122	420
Church major repairs – structure	-	-	-	-	-	12,860
Expenditure on charitable activities Totals	104,513	-	234	8,986	113,733	171,188
Other expenditure						
Governance costs examination/audit fee	275	-	-	-	275	250
Other expenditure Totals	275	-	-	-	275	250
Expenditure Grand totals	104,788	-	234	8,986	114,008	171,438

FIXED ASSETS FOR USE BY THE PCC

INVESTMENT ASSETS

Investments held by the Central Board of Finance – Investment units.

Cost at 31 December 2023 was £64,633 (market value £289,489) and at 31 December 2022 £64,633 (market value £268,620).

ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BY FUND

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	Total
Fixed assets and investment	-	-	289,489	289,489
Current assets	43,217	-	-	343,217
Current liabilities	(23,835)	-	-	(23,835)
Fund balance	£19,382	-	£289,489	£308,871

See note below for identification of funds.

LIABILITIES: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2023	2022
Accruals and deferred income	£23,835	£25,585

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FUND DETAILS

The endowment fund comprises the Church School Rooms Fund, Curacy Fund, Lawrence and Cockburn Bequests.

This report dated 14 Feb 2024:

Approved by the Parochial Church Council on 14 Apr 2024 and signed on its behalf by:

Gordon Cox

L Webb

J. Davis

John H. Owell



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/
members of

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of St Luke with St Bartholomew Reading

On accounts for the year
ended

31-12-2023

Charity no
(if any)

1158694

Set out on pages

See accompanying Annual Report and Financial Statements

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/12/2023.

Responsibilities and
basis of report

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent
examiner's statement

The charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 and I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of Association of Accounting Technicians.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

** Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.*

Signed:

Date:

11/03/2024

Name:

Jo McAllister

Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):

Licenced Accountant; Association of Accounting Technicians.
Member:20024190

Address:	4 Danvers Close
	Thatcham, Berkshire
	RG19 3XT

Section B**Disclosure**

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.

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