

ST BARNABAS CHURCH EMMER GREEN

**ANNUAL REPORT of the Parochial Church Council
(The Trustees Report)**

For the Period ended 31st December 2023

VICAR'S REPORT & OVERVIEW 2023

My first year has been a year of getting to know St Barnabas: its congregation and the wider community: it has been a time of listening and noticing what God is doing here, at this time. I would characterise our progress this year as 're-wilding' following Covid: not putting things back as they were pre-Covid; but prayerfully rebuilding in a way that acknowledges our present needs and resources.

Priorities this year

As I outlined at last years' APCM, three broad themes emerged almost immediately, which define our direction of travel. They remain, although my understanding of their significance has become more nuanced:

1. **Develop our work with families: children and young people.** This has emerged as our biggest single priority. 64% of our worshipping congregation are now over 70 years old (compared to a CofE average of 36%), we have lost three-quarters of our working-age congregation since 2016. These figures are approximate (we are guessing people's dates of birth) but the general demographic picture is clear. We are largely a congregation of retired people seeking to encourage people the age of our children and grandchildren.
2. **Reach out into Caversham Park.** I have found a tricky balance here: we must keep Caversham Park in our minds and plans, yet we also have our buildings in Emmer Green, especially our church and parish centre which offer considerable potential for mission and are under-utilised. Thus our vision is relentlessly outwards and towards Caversham Park: we use every opportunity to be seen as "The Parish church for Caversham Park and Emmer Green" yet we are building from a bricks-and-mortar base in Emmer Green.
3. **Build up our mission capability.** We are a smaller, older, yet more committed congregation than we were a few years ago. God continues to bless us with gifts and energies: the Spirit is in and among us. Nevertheless we must manage practical issues such as our financial income/expenditure (which we have made good progress on, though more remains to be done in 2024). We need dedicated and responsible church officers able to handle our practical and spiritual affairs. We also need to continually build up our spiritual gifts through study and practice.

There is too much to cover everything, but here are some points I would draw attention to:

Worship

- **Sunday 9:30am worship** has continued in its previous pattern, with constant attendance around 45-50.
- **Sunday 11:30am All Age worship:** 2023 began with Café church once a month. In March we introduced a Family Communion (3rd Sundays). Attendance has been steady with several regular families (by the end of the year attendances of 20+ are not unusual). We look forward to an 11:30am service every Sunday in 2024.
- **Sunday 8am BCP Holy Communion** was introduced (1st Sundays) in October with a small but faithful congregation.
- **Morning prayer** (Tues in church, also this year midweek Mon/Weds/Thurs online,) has a following of 4-7 people each day.
- Wednesday **Midweek Communion** continues with a consistent attendance of 10-15 people.

We see a steady flow of new people coming for worship: some visiting, some stay and become regulars. I am working within our gifts and capabilities to offer a diverse range of worship opportunities and to continually improve the quality of what we offer.

Life events

Delighted to conduct **14 baptisms** this year (from tiny babies to mature adults), including two baptisms at our Easter dawn service. We had the first **confirmation** for five years – congratulations to Ted Lamb. We held one **wedding blessing** service but no weddings this year. We conducted 10 **funerals** and memorial services.

Prayer and pastoral

St Barnabas remains an iconic faith building in the community. People seek us out in times of trouble and difficulty: I have sought to open church more hours during the week for prayer and reflection: this has borne fruit. The **prayer station** at the front of church has become a valuable resource. **Visiting** is a constant challenge (the need being greater than my capacity). I am very grateful to the informal network of pastoral care which is going on constantly between members of the congregation – a wonderful testimony to our commitment to mutual care. In my first year, I am particularly thankful for those of you who alert me to situations which have deteriorated significantly.

Sadly I must record that a number of our congregation have died this year: Jim Dunkley, May Smith, Barbara Tee and Eric Dixon. During the year Jannika Samuel also has moved into a permanent care home, which unfortunately means she is no longer able to attend worship.

Families, children and young people

Much of my work this year is about building **trusted relationships with families**, through whatever contact is possible: baptisms; funerals; our 11:30 services; meeting families who come to Christmas services or our fundraising/social events. I also stand outside church gates during school drop-off twice a week and chat to parents and children as they pass. I am thankful to all those of you who join me in this task of ‘giving God a good reputation’: it is slow and unremarkable work, but eventually (in 3+ years’ time) will bear fruit.

Busy Bees has continued on Monday afternoons. I take every opportunity to get into **schools** for assemblies or to encourage schools to visit church, keeping good contact with Emmer Green Primary and The Hill Primary and with Emmer Green preschool and the Kindergarten opposite church (with significant activity around Christmas, Easter and Harvest). I have joined other volunteers supporting REinspired to deliver RE classes.

A major initiative for St Barnabas is our involvement in creating a **Safe Space Hub** for young people. An outcome of the knife crime forum, we received a Diocesan grant for £10,500 to undertake the setting-up phase, after this we will know what the hub will look like, hopefully opening sometime in 2024.

As our Family Communion services have grown, in December I initiated a conversation to consider allowing baptised children to receive **Holy Communion before confirmation**. This will conclude next year.

Learning and discipleship

In my experience learning churches are growing churches: the opportunity to explore faith in a safe setting is a core requirement. Our **Bible Study group** has continued on Monday evenings. We also ran an **Alpha Course** in the autumn. During **Lent** we held insightful group sessions, exploring where we had seen God at work. Later in autumn, another series of challenging group conversations probed into **deeper questions** of

faith. I often explore questions of faith with individuals, in the context of preparation for baptism/confirmation, during pastoral visits and in conversation generally.

Environment crisis

We joined **Eco Church**, achieving a **Bronze award** in November: this both recognises the work we have already been doing, plus it encouraged us to take more specific actions. Our **recycling station** has proved particularly popular.

Outward facing work

- Since October, we have **opened the Parish centre on Wednesday and Thursday** mornings as a warm space and community drop-in for hot drinks and refreshments. We have a small toddler group beginning to meet on Thursdays. I had hoped for higher footfall, but significant pastoral contacts have been made.
- Friday afternoons. **Friday Friendship**, also **Bereavement Café** and **Living with Loss**, these are all really important gatherings: open to community but offering Christian fellowship, love, and hope to those who need it. The **Craft group** and **Mens' breakfasts** meet similar needs.
- In January I introduced **iKnow** (a church administration software package), this allows much better email communication with congregation and our wider fringe audience (it also greatly simplifies the management of baptisms and funerals). We use our website and Facebook constantly to promote our activities. We now have two large colourful 'Welcome' flags outside church to indicate that we are open.
- In May, we held a watch party in the parish centre, for the **Coronation** of King Charles III.

And finally...

I offer a huge, heartfelt 'thank-you' to everyone who supports St Barnabas sacrificially in so many ways:

- My wardens, David and Sandra, treasurer Richard, safeguarding officer Joy and all who serve on PCC.
- All who ensure worship happens smoothly: choir and musicians, sacristan, readers, intercessors, sidespeople, tea- and coffee-makers.
- All who maintain and clean our buildings, grounds, and manage the hire of our premises so diligently.
- All who contribute so much to making our social/fundraising/community events happen, supporting needy people both near and far.
- All who contribute financially to the parish, especially those who give regularly.

And thanks be to God: for the opportunity to serve him in this place; to show his glory to those in our community; and to reflect his love and care for all people through our mission and ministry. Being church in the 2020s is a challenging task: it calls us to be something quite different to the churches we grew up in. Nevertheless I look to the future with hope.

Kevin.

Kevin

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

St Barnabas Church is situated in Grove Road, Emmer Green, Reading. It is within the Reading Deanery, which is part of the Diocese of Oxford. The correspondence address of the PCC Secretary is 10 Barnard Close, Caversham, Reading RG4 6RZ. St Barnabas is registered with the Charity Commission as a charity – number 1164759.

The PCC members who served during the calendar year 2023 were:

Incumbent	-	Revd Kevin Lovell
Wardens	-	David Howell and Sandra Rice

Deanery Synod Representatives	Elected
Mark Burton	re-elected 2023
Roger Moore	re-elected 2023
Members	
Felicity Chapman	2023
Susie Downer	2023
Bob Abel	2023
Irene Lindsay	2021
Noel Drury	2021 (resigned during year)
Richard Cunningham	2022
Wendy Howell	2023
Joy Abel	2022
Christine Bartlett	2023

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The Parish St Barnabas, Emmer Green comes within the Benefice of St Barnabas Emmer Green and Caversham Park which consists of two separate parishes. From the beginning of 2021 only St Barnabas had a functioning PCC.

PCCs are charities governed by two pieces of Church of England legislation: the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956 as amended and the Church Representation Rules (contained in Schedule 3 to the Synodical Government Measure 1969 as amended, particularly by the Church Representation and Ministers Measure 2019). The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. All eligible Church attendees are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC.

The PCC held 8 meetings during the year. The work of other groups are reflected in this report.

The running of the church is supported by volunteers covering all areas of activity – Annex A.

OBJECTIVES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent in promoting, in the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.

It has maintenance responsibilities for the church and the church hall.

COMPLIANCE

The PCC members (the Trustees) of St Barnabas Church, Emmer Green, Reading (Number 1164759) in agreeing this Annual Report noted that they were fully aware of the Charity Commission Guidance on Public Benefit and were of the opinion that the activities of St Barnabas Church met the Charity Commission requirements.

CHURCH ATTENDANCE

Significant changes have taken place to the types and frequency to our service schedule. The 8am BCP service was reintroduced in October and the introduction of a family friendly Communion service at 11:30 bi-weekly.

The Worshipping Community has steadily increased since 2021 (75) to 85 in 2023. However, this is circa 50% lower than 2016 (155). The Worshipping Community as a % of the electoral roll (ER) is about 80% a steady growth from 2021 (65%) but in 2016 it was 112%. Percentage of the Worshipping Community that is of working age is only 24%, this is why it is so important that we support the hard work being undertaken to nurture the Café church and Family Friendly Communion services.

Conclusion over the last 7 years (2016 – 2023)

- The membership (ER number) has fallen by 23%
- The size of the worshipping community has fallen by 45% (Nation average 13%)
- The Sunday attendance had fallen by 31%
- The average weekly attendance has fallen by 23%

Caveat – It's my belief that figures recorded in 2016 may have been inconsistent in their recording. However, this doesn't change the downward trend.

Easter, Christmas and School service attendances remain high, with a clear indication that they are valued by the community.

David Howell

CHURCH MANAGEMENT

Health and Safety

Following the retirement of the health and safety officer the position has remained unfilled. There have been no events of concern during the year.

Roger Moore

Safeguarding

I have again had the privilege of serving as the Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) at St Barnabas Church for the last year.

During this time, the one outstanding safeguarding issue has been brought to a satisfactory conclusion.

All relevant DBS checks have been completed and recorded. My thanks go to Debbie Burton for overseeing this area of work. The Ministry Team have completed all necessary training in Safeguarding. I have also completed my Leadership Safeguarding Learning Pathway. Safeguarding is addressed at every PCC meeting.

The Leaders of all the groups that meet within the Parish Centre have completed their Foundation Level training, and safeguarding is also raised regularly at the Pastoral Care group meetings. We all share in the responsibility of being mindful of the vulnerabilities of others around us, and loving, respecting and caring for our neighbours.

There is a copy of the Safeguarding Policy on display in both the Parish Centre and the Hall.

My contact details are also displayed in the Parish Centre.

In November I attended a Spiritual Abuse workshop run by the Diocese in Christchurch Cathedral in Oxford. This was followed by a service during which all the PSOs were both sworn in and blessed by Bishop Steven.

Joy Abel, Safeguarding Officer

Electoral Roll.

The Electoral Roll is a list of church members who can vote on Church matters, attend the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) and stand for election to the PCC. The number of names on the Electoral Roll as at 31st December 2023 was 104. A revision of the roll will take place prior to the APCM and the revised list of names will be displayed on the noticeboard during April. If anyone has any questions concerning the Electoral Roll, please speak to

Christine Bartlett.

WORSHIP AND MINISTRY

Puppet Ministry

We have a flourishing relationship with the local school for all the major festivals. During Christmas alone we had over 800 children and adults attend church to hear the good news of Jesus' birth.

David Howell

Prayer Chain Ministry 2023

In May 2012 Jean Rae felt guided to start the Prayer Chain initiative at St Barnabas. This she faithfully continued until her death in March 2018. Jean was a very special and talented person whose knowledge and experience I very much appreciated. I am grateful to have known her. I felt her Prayer Chain to be an important part of our life at St Barnabas and felt compelled to continue with Jean's ministry although anxious about following in such able and learned footsteps. It has been a privilege to do so and I have been encouraged by various comments over the years.

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The Prayer Chain is composed of 18 individuals who have committed to pray for those who have requested prayer. We do not physically meet to do so but pray in private as and when we choose. We pray not only for those mentioned in our church prayers but also for those who may not wish to be publicly identified, but who can be assured that all requests are entirely confidentially treated within the group. There is often more detail given with regard to whatever the situation may be that requires prayer.

We pray for those in distress: because of illness, bereavement, life changing events.

We pray for those who have died.

We pray for encouragement and guidance for individuals and events.

We pray with grateful, thankful hearts.

During 2023 we prayed for more than 70 individuals, situations and events.

We firmly believe in the power of prayer. We offer ourselves to God in this ministry and we give thanks for the freedom and opportunity to raise our concerns with Him.

If you feel that you may like to become part of this group you will be most welcome, or if you would appreciate prayer for yourself or someone else then please speak to me.

Susie Downer

Choir and music

We ended 2023 on a high with our traditional service of lessons and carols. We were delighted to welcome a few extra singers, including Kevin, to our Christmas choir.

Over the year we learnt new songs to sing during the 9:30am Communion services, most of these reflected the subject of the Gospel, others celebrated our wonderful environment and encouraged us to think about how we can be better stewards.

As we move into 2024, we intend to learn some of the songs that the 11:30am services use so that we can worship together more easily at joint services for special occasions.

A huge thank you to everyone who has taken part in the music of the church during 2023, especially to those who are coping with health problems or supporting family members. Your dedication to enriching the worship of our congregation is what enables us to embrace a wide variety of music.

Gail Houghton and Guy Watt have both been a great support to me in leading the music. I'd particularly like to mention Gail's beautiful piano accompaniments and Guy's growing knowledge of how to keep the organ running smoothly. Once again, I couldn't have got through this year without the support and understanding of all the choir.

Felicity Chapman

PARISH CENTRE AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

Parish Centre Manager

The Parish centre is in good shape and continues to be utilised by church and non church groups. A small amount of income is derived from its hiring, but this should be reviewed to see what can be done further to offset the increasing utilities bills. We look forward to opening the Safe Space during 2024 if the fact-finding exercise carried out by No5 is successful.

David Howell

Tuesday Craft Group

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All is well. There is no need for a skill. Just come along for a natter and fellowship. The 2 annual in-house lunches are very popular. We open most Tuesdays except around Christmas. I'm thankful for volunteers to cover when I am on holiday

Wendy Howell

Bereavement Support

During 2023 new people continued to attend both groups. One of the most frequently expressed reasons for wanting to meet with others who are grieving is because the bereaved person has received strong messages from people near to them that it is time to move on. The reality is that the loss of someone you love will remain a loss and during the bereavement journey the individual will find their own way of learning to live with this fundamental change to their lives. There is no set timescale for this.

We currently have 3 volunteers helping at each group, and are very fortunate to have been able to recruit someone new to join the team.

Bereavement Café

During 2023 16 new visitors have attended this informal drop-in on the 1st Friday every month, some once, some several times. The average number of individuals per session was 7, and the largest was 11. A significant number of people come every so often when they feel the need to talk to someone who understands but is not directly involved.

Living with Loss

This group meets on the 3rd Friday each month and provides an ongoing support group. 8 new people participated during 2023, with an average attendance of 5. There is a core of regulars, and some people attend either group according to their availability. Group support can be amazingly helpful to anyone going through a particularly difficult time.

Gillian Wilson

Busy Bees

Busy Bees is for pre-school children and those who care for them and is run by myself (Debbie), Mark Burton, Wendy Moore and Roger Moore.

Busy Bees have a small but regular group of families that come to Busy Bees, although attendance can be variable. There are also some families who come occasionally. We also welcome school-age siblings during half term holidays and if they are off school because there is a teacher training day at their school.

We sing songs with Mark playing his guitar, tell Bible stories and have some sort of crafty activity. During the craft activity we have drinks and biscuits where people have time to get to know each other.

Busy Bees meets every Monday in the Parish Centre from 2pm to 3pm during term time, including half term holidays.

Debbie Burton

FUNDRAISING/CHARITIES REPORT FOR 2023

Charity Fundraising Events

The weather was kind to us and all the events took place as usual. Handyman Sale in May, Summer Garden Party in July and the Christmas Fair in December. The Garden Party was enhanced by the addition of the Blue-Sky Big Band. Special thanks to Guy Watt for organising this.

The Christmas Fair also made a record amount of money thanks to some additional pre-sales and a donation from an ex member of the church. The monies were shared between Education for Life and Masiphumelele. As ever, I am thankful for all those who step forward to help me make these events happen.

Wendy Howell

Charities

Donations of £250 were made to 7 charities chosen by congregation members from general funds.

Against Breast Cancer, Reading Family Aid, Reading Mencap, Reading Street Pastors, Sue Ryder Duchess of Kent Hospice, The Ben Kinsella Trust, Wyfold Riding for the Disabled.

Wendy Howell

ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS

During the second half of 2023, the Eco Church survey was completed for St Barnabas. This is part of the drive by Diocese of Oxford for every church in the Diocese to be “carbon neutral” by 2035. St Barnabas achieved a bronze award largely from good practises built up over many years. The survey covers 5 areas: worship and teaching, community and global engagement, land, buildings and lifestyle. It is necessary to reach a certain level in all these areas before an award is given. The plan is now to go for a silver award, which is I think achievable with a few simple and affordable changes. A recycling point has been set up in the porch of the Parish Centre which has been well received and supported by many. Thank you to everyone for your encouragement and keep up the good work!

Christine Bartlett

MEN’S BREAKFAST

Men’s Breakfast continues to thrive and is a permanent diary entry for so many. Social Prescribers continue to recommend us to older gentlemen to meet other men in the community and additionally men attending the Bereavement Café and Living with Loss are also being referred.

David Howell

COMMUNICATION

Read All About It and its Calendar continued to be published each month and was supplemented by the issue of a weekly email with Notices.

Updated wifi was installed by Guy Watt which enabled the use of a card reader.

Ann Mace joined the team of Zoom operators.

BUILDING MANAGEMENT

The church remains well maintained. No work has been carried out since the last APCM to address the matters raised in the Quinquennial.

New WIFI routers have been added in the Parish Centre and Church to enhance the reach.

Gutters are still regularly cleared to prevent issues. We have carried out several minor maintenance repairs during the year carried out by members of the congregation. The major expenditure jobs during 2023 were the pointing of the top eight rows of brick work around the Parish Centre and to correct the water damage of the ceiling in the passageway to the vicar's office. The sewage pump has had several issues and is now working normally.

To the best of my knowledge no work is currently being undertaken on the vicarage

David Howell

GARDENING GROUP

Throughout the year we have been busy with general tidying, weeding, pruning and collecting sticks and leaves from around the church and church hall. We have two large bins behind the church hall where we put all the leaves. These will give us some lovely rich leaf mould in a year or two to use on the beds. Next to them is a fairly big stick pile creating homes for insects etc. New seed was put on the Parish Garden grass last spring and a huge overgrown Viburnum and Laural by the church hall were given a rather drastic haircut. Both have benefitted and have sent up some healthy new shoots. It is much easier to get round with the lawn mower now!

In the Parish garden several plants like the Penstemons and Salvias died as a result of the cold winter. Due to a very generous donation we were able to replant and cover the beds with a thick layer of bark chippings to help keep the weeds out and moisture in.

We are a friendly bunch and would love more people to join us. We will always find a job to suit you so don't worry.

Juliet and Tony Holland

ST BARNABAS HALL REPORT

The important upgrade this year has been the laying of a new floor in the Hall. The old polished pine floor was splintering and it was recommended to lay a new Karndean vinyl floor with plywood under. I arranged four quotes and the least costly was over £5000. The vinyl chosen is called Golden Brushed Oak, but it contains no wood, is advertised as extremely durable and should last in excess of 15 years. The work was expertly carried out and the finished product is level, durable and very attractive.

I have managed the Hall since 2013, this being my tenth report. I am pleased to say that the Hall had hired income of over £19000, which was almost back to pre-pandemic levels. We were able to provide £15500 to our Church, which is a valuable support. The Hall was hired for over 60 family children's parties and 17 community groups, who meet weekly. And of course, our

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Church uses the Hall for fundraising and social events. The result is a popular centre for our Church & the local community.

Thank you to all the Groups who use the Hall. The details for each are shown on The St Barnabas Church Emmer Green website. Why not look up details of any classes that might interest you? Click on “Hall”, then “External Groups”. Choose from Pilates, Zumba, Age UK Taichi, Social Group formerly Rosehill WI, Art workshop, Keep Fit and two Dance groups. Click on the Group name to reveal contact details and leaders of each group.

Thank you to Joanne Earley, who keeps the Hall clean. Its essential with all that use. Thanks to the people in the congregation who help with other maintenance – Guy Watt for lots of handyman work, Bob Abel for accounts & billing, and others for bins, electrical checking and so on.

Jon Barclay, Hall Manager Hall phone 07580 029910

WIDER CHURCH REPORT 2023

Reading Deanery Synod

Reading Deanery Synod is important – not just because it decides our Parish Share, but it is where members can share where their churches are, and consider where they will be in the next few years. Also, it is where members can think how they could learn from each other and support each other.

Mutual support includes the Reading Deanery Quinquennial Inspection Scheme, a mutual support scheme whereby money is pooled and the Deanery pays the Churches’ Quinquennial Inspection fees. Also poorer churches are supported by more affluent Parishes through the Parish Share Scheme.

Deanery Synod is a place to be inspired when members to share where God is working in their churches and explore ways to contribute together to God’s Mission in Reading. For, whilst as a church we are the Body of Christ in our local area, we are part of the wider Body of Christ in Reading and beyond.

Oxford Diocesan Synod

Care for the environment featured strongly in 2023. The Bishop of Oxford, Bishop Steven likened the climate crisis to the Horsemen of the Apocalypse from the Book of Revelation. What can we do? On a small scale Diocesan Synod passed the Wantage Deanery Synod Motion on using locally sourced flowers and not using Oasis, to reduce carbon emissions and pollution. More widely, the Reading Deanery Synod Motion about policy for approving Solar Panels on Church roofs was passed with an amendment.

It is pleasing to see how an environmental Motion passed by Reading Deanery Synod can progress to have a national Impact that may enable churches to pursue a green agenda and put solar panels on their Church roof – to be a prophetic voice within the community and an encouragement to others to care for Creation.

It would be even more pleasing were St Barnabas to agree to put solar panels on both the Hall and Church roofs, and commence a fund-raising campaign to do so.

Also, Oxford Diocese is very wealthy compared with the least affluent dioceses and agreed mutual support for poorer dioceses for 2025-29. It is very heartening that we can demonstrate our Christianity through supporting the poor.

REInspired

Schools are required to deliver a RE Curriculum, but many staff nowadays do not feel confident in delivering it, and are often not aware of what actually goes on in churches or what Christians believe. Therefore they welcome delivery by Christians, who in this area are “subject experts”. It is good that REInspired sessions can be delivered by members of local churches so that children can learn about Christianity from Christians. Of course, there is always a need for more people to volunteer – could that be you?

It is important to note that we are not permitted to evangelise in schools, and REInspired Sessions start with a phrase like: “we are not here to tell you what to believe, but to tell you what we believe”

REInspired Sessions are delivered in a number of primary schools, but it is unfortunate that no Reinspired sessions take place at Highdown School.

CTC Holiday Club

CTC Holiday Club again took place at St Anne’s RC Primary School. Numbers of children attending were higher than the previous year. It is good that we are able to share the good news of Jesus and inspiring to be in a hall full of children loudly singing and doing actions to worship songs.

More volunteers are also needed for CTC Holiday Club.

Mark Burton

Annex A – 2023 VOLUNTEERS AND ACTIVITIES

This statement describes how many of the activities involved in running and sustaining the Church were organized and who as an individual or as a team had responsibility for the various activities during 2023. Some activities changed responsibility and others were no longer supported. New volunteers and members are always welcome.

Worship and ministry

Sacristan:	Joy Abel
Choir and music:	Felicity Chapman
Intercessions coordinator:	Susie Downer
Puppet Ministry	David Howell
Pray Chain Ministry	Susie Downer
Readers coordinator:	Joy Abel
Authorised preachers:	Mark Burton, Noel Drury and David Howell
Chalice administrators:	Bob Abel, Joy Abel, Christine Bartlett, Mark Burton, Noel Drury, Gail Houghton, David Howell, Awaiz Masih, Rohama Masih, Sandra Rice, Lisa Williams, Matt Williams.
AV and live streaming:	Mark Burton
Altar linen	Christine Bartlett
Flowers:	Wendy Howell and Gail Houghton
Sidespeople:	Brian Bartlett, Christine Bartlett, Roger Moore, Wendy Moore, Richard Cunningham, Wendy Howell, Juliet Holland, Tony Holland
Alpha:	Sandra Rice
Environmental champion	Christine Bartlett

Safeguarding

Parish Safeguarding officer:	Joy Abel
Safeguarding verifier:	Debbie Burton

Buildings

Parish Centre manager:	David Howell
Church Hall manager:	Jon Barclay
Grounds and gardening:	Juliet Holland and Tony Holland
Maintenance team:	David Howell

Fellowship and study groups

Busy Bees (Mon)	Debbie Burton, Mark Burton
Bible Study group (Mon)	Noel Drury
Craft group (Tues)	Wendy Howell
Drop-in (Weds)	Bob Abel, Joy Abel
Drop-in (Thurs)	Anne Mace, Roger Moore, Wendy Moore
Bereavement Café (Fri)	Gillian Wilson
Living with Loss (Fri)	Gillian Wilson
Friday Fellowship	Mary Cameron
Fundraising	Wendy Howell

Annex B – Charities

SUMMARY OF CHARITABLE DONATIONS MADE IN 2023

Restricted Fund-Raising

Receipts (£)		Payments (£)	
Handyman Sale, Garden Party and Christmas Fair	4191	Education for Life	2095
Fish and Chip Supper	60	Masiphumelele	2099
Christmas collections	718	Faith Christian Group	125
Christingle Service	166	CIR Drop-in Centre	520
Retiring Collections	383	The Children's Society	225
		Embrace the Middle East	395
Total	5518	Total	5459
		Note: £59 carried forward to 2024	

Donations made from General Funds

Payments (£)	
Reading Family Aid	250
Wyfold Riding for the Disabled	250
Reading Street Pastors	250
Sue Ryder Duchess of Kent Hospice	250
Against Breast Cancer	250
Reading Mencap	250
Disasters Emergency Committee	25
Berkshire Historic Churches Trust	25
The Ben Kinsella Trust	250
Total	1800

ST BARNABAS CHURCH Emmer Green Reading

Registered Charity No: 1164759

REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended

31st DECEMBER 2023

ST BARNABAS CHURCH Emmer Green Reading

Administrative Information

St Barnabas Church is situated on St Barnabas Road, Emmer Green, Reading RG4 8RA. It is in the Reading Deanery of the Diocese of Oxford within the Church of England. It is managed by the Parochial Church Council, which is a body corporate (PCC Powers Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2011) and is a Charity registered with the Charity Commission. Members of the PCC are registered trustees of the charity.

- 1 Registered Charity No: 1164759
- 2 Registered Address: St Barnabas Vicarage, 20 St Barnabas Road,
Emmer Green, Reading RG4 8RA
- 3 Telephone: 0118 947 5214
- 4 Website: www.saintbarnabas.org.uk
- 5 Trustees and members of the Parochial Church Council:

Ex Officio:

Incumbent:	Revd Kevin Lovell
Wardens:	David Howell, Sandra Rice

Elected Members:

Deanery Synod Representatives:	Mark Burton
	Roger Moore (Church Secretary)

Members:

Bob Abel
Joy Abel
Christine Bartlett
Felicity Chapman
Richard Cunningham (Treasurer)
Susie Downer
Wendy Howell
Irene Lindsay

- 6 Independent Examiner: William Harper
Sunnybank, High Street, Upton, Didcot OX11 9JE
- 7 Bankers: Barclays Bank plc
Leicester LE87 28B

CCLA
One Angel Lane EC4R 3AB
London EC4R 3AB

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ST BARNABAS CHURCH Emmer Green Reading

Finance Report

Financial Review

Overall, 2023 was similar to 2022 from the Church finances point of view. We received several legacies which make our finances look satisfactory; however these are one-of items and can't be predicted. Our 2023 total of donations and bequests was £22,953 (£4,313 in 2022)

One important and exciting development is the use of the new "CollectIn" which means those without cash but with a credit or debit card can make a contribution. This has resulted in collections at services rise to £4,544 (£3,235 in 2022).

Another interesting development is the involvement of Revd Kevin Lovell and myself (treasurer, Richard Cunningham) in an initiative being run from the Oxford diocese office named "Cornerstone." This sets out some 'pathways' to increase regular giving and it is intended to try one in our parish.

The income from teas and coffees has also gone up, almost certainly due to the CollectIn to £1,879 (£1,518 in 2022).

Income from weddings and funerals has increased this year to £1,751 (£873 in 2022).

Our investment income rose to £300 (£122 in 2022)

Income from hire of the Parish Centre has decreased to £782. (£1,983 in 2022)

Planned giving (Parish Giving Scheme and Standing Orders) have gone down a little too, £34,196 in 2023. (£35,940 in 2022).

Tax reclaimed from Gift Aid also fell a little, to £10,261. (£10,888 in 2022).

The contribution to parish finances from the Church Hall also fell a little to £15,500 (£17,850 in 2022).

Reserves Policy

It is the PCC policy to maintain a balance on unrestricted funds which equates to at least 3 months' unrestricted payments. This is equivalent to £18,984 (using the 2023 payments figure) and is held to smooth out fluctuations in cash flow. (£19,222 in 2022)

ST BARNABAS CHURCH Emmer Green Reading

Independent examiner's report to the members/trustees of St Barnabas Church, Emmer Green,
Parochial Church Council

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of St Barnabas Church Emmer Green (the Trust) for the year ended 31st December 2023.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust 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

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

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records.

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.

Signed:

Name: William Harper

Address: Sunnybank, High Street, Upton, Didcot OX11 9JE

Date: 26th March 2024

Financial Statements for the Year ended 31st December 2023

1	Receipts and Payments Accounts	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Fund £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Receipts							
Voluntary Receipts							
	Planned Giving		34,196	0	0	34,196	35,940
	Collections at Services		4,544	0	0	4,544	4,703
	Other giving and voluntary receipts	a)	20,953	0	2,000	22,953	4,313
	Gift Aid tax recovered		10,261	0	0	10,261	10,284
			69,954	0	2,000	71,954	55,240
	Activities for generating funds	b)	22,687	0	5,233	27,920	24,833
	Investment Income	c)	300	0	0	300	122
	Church Activities	d)	2,181	0	0	2,181	873
	Total Receipts		95,122	0	7,233	102,355	81,068
Payments							
Church Activities							
	Parish Share		58,381	0	0	58,381	57,227
	Clergy and Staffing Costs		608	0	0	608	1,267
	Church Running and Service Expenses	e)	3,033	0	0	3,033	3,063
	Church Building Expenses	f)	11,914	0	0	11,914	9,040
	Mission Giving and Donations	g)	2,000	0	5,234	7,234	6,951
			75,936	0	5,234	81,170	77,548
	Cost of Generating Funds		9,861	0	0	9,861	4,293
	Total Payments		85,797	0	5,234	91,031	81,841
	Excess/(Deficit) of Receipts over Payments		9,325	0	1,999	11,324	-773
	Cash at Bank at 1st January		27,010	11,400	27	38,437	39,210
	Cash at Bank at 31st December		36,335	11,400	2,026	49,761	38,437
2	Statement of Assets and Liabilities	Notes	Unrestricted Fund £	Designated Fund £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Cash Funds							
	Barclays Bank Church Current Account		25,275	11,400	2,026	38,701	23,112
	Barclays Bank Hall Current Account		1,388	0	0	1,388	7,110
	CBF Church of England Deposit Fund		9,672	0	0	9,672	9,371
			36,335	11,400	2,026	49,761	39,593
Other Monetary Assets							
	Income Tax Recoverable		1,253	0	0	1,253	682
	Parish Share Denary Refund		1,519	0	0	1,519	1,783
			2,772	0	0	2,772	2,465
	Assets Retained for Church Use					410,909	410,909
Liabilities							
	Loan		5,000	0	0	5,000	5,000

Loan: At 31st December 2023 an indefinite loan of £5,000 remained outstanding. This sum had been assigned to the Organ Fund but, with the completion of the organ regeneration, is now available, by agreement, for general church purposes at the discretion of the Vicar and Wardens.

The attached notes form part of these financial statements

Notes to the financial statement for Year Ended 31st December 2023

1	Analysis of Receipts and Payments	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Fund £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Receipts							
a) Other giving and voluntary receipts							
	Donations		11,953	0	2,000	13,953	4,012
	Legacy		9,000	0	0	9,000	301
			20,953	0	2,000	22,953	4,313
b) Activities for generating funds							
	Fund raising events		591	0	5,233	5,824	5,465
	Rent from Church, Centre and Hall Hire		20,217	0	0	20,217	17,850
	Parish centre cafe		1,879	0	0	1,879	1,518
			22,687	0	5,233	27,920	24,833
c) Investment Income							
	CBF Deposit Fund Interest		300	0	0	300	122
d) Church Activities							
	Fees for Weddings and Funerals		1,751	0	0	1,751	873
	Vicar's discretionary fund		0	0	0	0	0
	Other activities		430	0	0	430	0
			2,181	0	0	2,181	873
Payments							
e) Church Running and Service Expenses							
	Alter requisites/flowers		924	0	0	924	19
	Organist/choir		339	0	0	339	100
	Children and young people		0	0	0	0	785
	Stationery/printing		174	0	0	174	524
	Fees and subscriptions		1,596	0	0	1,596	1,635
			3,033	0	0	3,033	3,063
f) Church Building Expenses							
	Equipment/consumables		1,075	0	0	1,075	306
	Church insurance		1,981	0	0	1,981	1,606
	Utilities		4,505	0	0	4,505	4,332
	Maintenance		4,353	0	0	4,353	2,796
	Cleaning		0	0	0	0	0
			11,914	0	0	11,914	9,040
g) Mission giving and Donations							
	Donations from collections at Funerals		0	0	0	0	0
	Donations for charitable purposes	6,7	2,000	0	5,234	7,234	6,951
			2,000	0	5,234	7,234	6,951
h) Cost of generating funds							
	Fund raising events		325	0	0	325	0
	Church hall expenses		9,536	0	0	9,536	4,293
			9,861	0	0	9,861	4,293

4 Designated Funds

There were no transactions to the Vicar's Fund or the Building Fund in 2023

5 Restricted Funds

	Charities £	2023 Total £	2022 Total £
Balance at 1st January	27	27	
Receipts			
Donations received	2,000	2,000	0
Collections at Funerals	0	0	0
Christmas and other collections	1,015	1,015	1,468
Fund raising events	4,218	4,218	3,482
Gift Aid Tax recovered	0	0	196
	7,233	7,233	5,146
Payments			
Donations made to charities	6	5,234	4,951

Version of 30th March 2024

Balance at 31st December	2,026	2,026	27
6 Donations for Charitable purposes from Events and Collections			
Education for Life	2,095		
Masiphumelele	2,099		
Church of England Childrens Society	225		
Embrace the Middle East	395		
CIRDIC	395		
Disasters Emergency Committee	25		
	5,234		
7 Charitable Giving 2023	The following gifts were made from general funds during the year		
Against Breast Cancer	250		
CIRDIC	250		
Reading Family Aid	250		
Reading Mencap	250		
Reading Street Pastors	250		
Sue Ryder Duchess of Kent Hospice	250		
The Ben Kinsella Trust	250		
Wyfold Riding for the Disabled	250		
Total, 2023	2,000		
8 Fixed assets retained for Church use are:			
The Church Hall dedicated as a church in 1897		N/A	N/A
The Parish Centre completed in 2009		332,967	332,967
The Parish Centre garden completed in 2010		18,206	18,206
The regenerated Church Organ completed in 2016		59,736	59,736
		410,909	410,909
2	Basis of Accounting The financial statements of the PCC have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 using the Receipts and Payments basis.		
3	Fund Accounting Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the PCC in furtherance of the general objectives of the Church. Restricted funds are subject to restrictions on their expenditure imposed by the donors or through the terms of an appeal, or fund raising events or collections as agreed by the PCC. The Designated fund represents amounts set aside by the PCC for use at the discretion of the PCC.		
(1d) Fees for Weddings and Funerals are the fees retained by the PCC. Fees received on behalf of the Diocese, vergers and organists and passed directly to them are not included for 2023 in accordance with financial guidance from the Church of England.			
5 The Restricted Fund balance in hand comprises a donation of £2,000 to be applied in 2024, and small sums remaining to be paid to charities.			

ST BARNABAS CHURCH Emmer Green Reading

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Address: Sunnybank, High Street, Upton, Didcot OX11 9JE

Date: 26th March 2024

ST BARNABAS CHURCH Emmer Green Reading

Registered Charity No: 1164759

REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended

31st DECEMBER 2023

ST BARNABAS CHURCH Emmer Green Reading

Administrative Information

St Barnabas Church is situated on St Barnabas Road, Emmer Green, Reading RG4 8RA. It is in the Reading Deanery of the Diocese of Oxford within the Church of England. It is managed by the Parochial Church Council, which is a body corporate (PCC Powers Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2011) and is a Charity registered with the Charity Commission. Members of the PCC are registered trustees of the charity.

- 1 Registered Charity No: 1164759
- 2 Registered Address: St Barnabas Vicarage, 20 St Barnabas Road,
Emmer Green, Reading RG4 8RA
- 3 Telephone: 0118 947 5214
- 4 Website: www.saintbarnabas.org.uk
- 5 Trustees and members of the Parochial Church Council:

Ex Officio:

Incumbent:	Revd Kevin Lovell
Wardens:	David Howell, Sandra Rice

Elected Members:

Deanery Synod Representatives:	Mark Burton
	Roger Moore (Church Secretary)

Members:

Bob Abel
Joy Abel
Christine Bartlett
Felicity Chapman
Richard Cunningham (Treasurer)
Susie Downer
Wendy Howell
Irene Lindsay

- 6 Independent Examiner: William Harper
Sunnybank, High Street, Upton, Didcot OX11 9JE
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	Parish centre cafe		1,879	0	0	1,879	1,518
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c) Investment Income							
	CBF Deposit Fund Interest		300	0	0	300	122
d) Church Activities							
	Fees for Weddings and Funerals		1,751	0	0	1,751	873
	Vicar's discretionary fund		0	0	0	0	0
	Other activities		430	0	0	430	0
			2,181	0	0	2,181	873
Payments							
e) Church Running and Service Expenses							
	Alter requisites/flowers		924	0	0	924	19
	Organist/choir		339	0	0	339	100
	Children and young people		0	0	0	0	785
	Stationery/printing		174	0	0	174	524
	Fees and subscriptions		1,596	0	0	1,596	1,635
			3,033	0	0	3,033	3,063
f) Church Building Expenses							
	Equipment/consumables		1,075	0	0	1,075	306
	Church insurance		1,981	0	0	1,981	1,606
	Utilities		4,505	0	0	4,505	4,332
	Maintenance		4,353	0	0	4,353	2,796
	Cleaning		0	0	0	0	0
			11,914	0	0	11,914	9,040
g) Mission giving and Donations							
	Donations from collections at Funerals		0	0	0	0	0
	Donations for charitable purposes	6,7	2,000	0	5,234	7,234	6,951
			2,000	0	5,234	7,234	6,951
h) Cost of generating funds							
	Fund raising events		325	0	0	325	0
	Church hall expenses		9,536	0	0	9,536	4,293
			9,861	0	0	9,861	4,293

4 Designated Funds

There were no transactions to the Vicar's Fund or the Building Fund in 2023

5 Restricted Funds

	Charities £	2023 Total £	2022 Total £
Balance at 1st January	27	27	
Receipts			
Donations received	2,000	2,000	0
Collections at Funerals	0	0	0
Christmas and other collections	1,015	1,015	1,468
Fund raising events	4,218	4,218	3,482
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Version of 30th March 2024

Balance at 31st December	2,026	2,026	27
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6 Donations for Charitable purposes from Events and Collections

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Masiphumelele	2,099
Church of England Childrens Society	225
Embrace the Middle East	395
CIRDIC	395
Disasters Emergency Committee	25
	5,234

7 Charitable Giving 2023

The following gifts were made from general funds during the year

Against Breast Cancer	250
CIRDIC	250
Reading Family Aid	250
Reading Mencap	250
Reading Street Pastors	250
Sue Ryder Duchess of Kent Hospice	250
The Ben Kinsella Trust	250
Wyfold Riding for the Disabled	250
Total, 2023	2,000

8 Fixed assets retained for Church use are:

The Church Hall dedicated as a church in 1897	N/A	N/A
The Parish Centre completed in 2009	332,967	332,967
The Parish Centre garden completed in 2010	18,206	18,206
The regenerated Church Organ completed in 2016	59,736	59,736
	410,909	410,909

2 Basis of Accounting

The financial statements of the PCC have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 using the Receipts and Payments basis.

3 Fund Accounting

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the PCC in furtherance of the general objectives of the Church. Restricted funds are subject to restrictions on their expenditure imposed by the donors or through the terms of an appeal, or fund raising events or collections as agreed by the PCC. The Designated fund represents amounts set aside by the PCC for use at the discretion of the PCC.

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