

**St. Thomas of Canterbury
Dodbrooke Parish Church**

Annual Report
and
Financial Statement
of the
Parochial Church Council

Year ending 31st December 2023

Charity Number 800215

Priest-in-Charge
(from 26th September 2023)
Revd. Jacqueline Tilbury
The Rectory
Church Street, Kingsbridge
Devon
TQ7 1NW

Asst. Curate
(until June 2023)
Reverend Matt Gorton
The Vicarage
Townsend Close
West Alvington
TQ7 3QA

Licenced Lay Minister
Mrs Mandy Sarjeant

Bank
Lloyds Bank PLC

PCC Hon Secretary
Mrs S Morgan

Independent Examiner
Mrs H Hack
Helen Solomon Ltd
Unit 4G, South Hams Business Park
Churchstow
Devon
TQ7 3QH

The Parochial Church Council of St Thomas of Canterbury, Dodbrooke Annual Report for the Year Ended 31st December 2023

Aims and Purposes

Dodbrooke PCC has the responsibility for co-operating with the Incumbent in order to promote, within the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission of the Church - pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. It also has the responsibility for maintenance of the church building, the churchyard and the parish hall.

Objectives and Activities

The PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship at our church and to become part of our parish family. When planning our activities, the PCC has considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the specific guidance on charities for the advancement of religion. Our services and worship put faith into practice through prayer and scripture, music and sacrament. We try to enable ordinary people to live out their faith as part of our parish family through:

- Worship and prayer: learning about the Gospel and developing their knowledge and trust in Jesus;
- Provision of pastoral care for people living within the parish, and;
- Mission and outreach work.

To facilitate our work, we aim to maintain the fabric of the church building and of the parish hall, as well as the overall condition of the churchyard.

Worship and Prayer

Until an incoming Bishop of Exeter advises otherwise, our Diocesan priorities remain as Growing in Prayer, Making New Disciples and Serving the People of Devon with Joy. Our Mission Action Plan reflects these priorities and is regularly updated at PCC meetings under the leadership of our new Priest-in-Charge, Revd Jacqueline Tilbury who was welcomed to our Benefice in September 2023.

Our regular service pattern has seen across-Benefice Eucharistic worship held in one of our three churches every Sunday. On the 2nd and 4th Sundays these communion services are held at St Thomas's. An Evensong is held on the first Sunday of each month on rotation around the Benefice. Additional 'festival' services were celebrated at Dodbrooke during Lent, Easter, Advent and Christmas.

Our worship is enhanced by the continued dedication of an organist and by a tower captain who leads an enthusiastic team of bell-ringers. A rota for Epistle Readers and Intercessors encourages lay involvement. Morning Prayer is held on Wednesdays and Saturdays with a small number of regular attendees.

On most days during the year, St Thomas's opened from 1000-1400hrs as a minimum, for private prayer. Footfall is not monitored but entries in the Visitors Book indicate that such opening is valued.

Pupils from the nearby Kingsbridge Community Primary School were welcomed into the church on three occasions – for their belated (due to a December '22 Strep A outbreak) Christmas production in January; to 'Experience Easter' (- the whole school of 350+ students); to see at first hand 'the parts of a church building' (Year 2 only). Further involvement with the Primary School is detailed under Mission & Outreach.

As a Mission Community we also draw on the richness of worship and prayer of other denominations when we join together in Churches Gathering Kingsbridge services and events.

Prayer and worship have also continued in the context of House Groups: two such groups operate within the parish attracting approximately six or seven members per meeting, including one or two persons of other Christian denominations.

As well as our regular services, we have sought to serve the communities of which we are a part through the ministry of Occasional Offices, at the milestones of the journey through life. Clergy or our LLM have officiated at 3 weddings, 1 baptism, 10 funerals either in the church or churchyard, 1 funeral at a Crematorium and a number of burials of ashes.

Deanery Synod

Two members of the Parochial Church Council sit on the Deanery Synod and one member regularly offers reports to the PCC.

The Woodleigh Deanery Synod met twice in 2023. At each meeting the Archdeacon Douglas Dettmer, acting Rural Dean, welcomed everybody and opened the meeting with worship and prayer.

The business meeting followed: elements included approval of the Minutes of the previous meeting; Matters arising from those minutes; a financial report given by the Treasurer; correspondence; a time for sharing parish news.

The Woodleigh Award was introduced in July 2022. This award is given to a person or group of people who have contributed to the life of the deanery. The recipients of these awards in 2023 were Martin and Liz Webb for their efforts in producing the weekly YouTube services for the Aune Valley Benefice, and Keith Steer for services to All Saints, West Alvington and St Edmunds, Kingsbridge including being churchwarden for both churches.

A speaker or presentation concluded these meetings. On March 15th Archdeacon Douglas gave an update on the most recent General Synod session. On November 20th Sharon Blyth, Diocesan Children's and Families Mission Enabler, spoke about her work.

All meetings ended in a time of prayer and the Grace.

Church Fabric

The church fabric continues to be adversely affected by water ingress. Looking back to 2022, the ceiling collapse in the Tower staircase was the first indication. Part of the guttering on the north side of the church was near to collapse in the summer of 2023 and so a section was taken down and a small repair to another section was necessary. We are now awaiting contractors to replace the missing sections. The main concern in 2023 was the discovery of a large fruiting body of Dry Rot high up inside the south side of the chancel roof which has spread to the plastered walls of the Sanctuary. A detailed survey report has been obtained and repair work to the lead gully between the main roof and south roof along with replacement of failed adjacent guttering will be necessary - along with the lifting of a number of roof tiles to examine the condition of roof timbers beneath - as the first stage of any works.

West Access came in the autumn to clear the gullies, gutters, downpipes and drains as part of their regular contract.

Annual PAT testing and FFE servicing took place.

The gas-fired, hot-air-blown heating system is old, inefficient and expensive to run and alternative heating systems are being considered. An Energy Efficiency Audit – part-financed by the Diocese to encourage the move towards net-zero carbon emissions by 2030 – was carried out in November.

The churchyard continues to be looked after by a small dedicated team (- one employed; others volunteers) who do a wonderful job of keeping it under control.

The Church Terrier and Inventory and Church Log book are up to date.

Mission and Outreach

The practical application of our Mission Action Plan continues as a priority and is the subject of regular review at PCC meetings.

A rota of volunteers from Dodbrooke has facilitated the church being open to the community 6 days per week for stillness, prayer and reflection.

In the first half of the year our then curate led a programme of monthly visits to Care Homes to offer a short service and was also regularly leading assemblies in the primary schools of Kingsbridge and West Alvington.

The mantle for these two forms of outreach has now passed to our very able LLM who has past experience of supporting those in residential homes as well as long-standing links with local primary education.

Members have been involved in the organisation and offering of meals for school children in the holidays through the local ecumenical initiative 'Soul Food'; other members have supported the work of the Foodbank through deliveries out into the community.

Wordwise - the Christian Bookshop and Community Café - is supported in various ways by an ecumenical group of volunteers, including members of Dodbrooke parish.

The two benefice house groups meet weekly. They are led by gifted and committed members from the Mission Community. The nurturing of disciples in these groups is integral to the development of a mission mindset within our church.

Grants totalling £865 have supported various charities both at home and abroad. Additionally, the church made regular monthly donations to the Food Bank and to Kingsbridge Youth for Christ – a support group for the young people of Kingsbridge. Our Sea Sunday service raised money for the work of the Mission to Seafarers and members also contributed to Christian Aid week. Although not overtly mission focussed, the church continued to prepare, collect and despatch shoeboxes of gifts for the Samaritans Purse initiative for children overseas.

All are welcome to attend our regular and festival services as advertised on church noticeboards or via our 'A Church Near You' website.

Ecumenical Engagement

As a Mission Community we continue to draw upon the richness of the worship and prayer of other denominations through opportunities to join together in Kingsbridge Churches Gathering services and events. A member of our church is Chair of Churches Gathering and a parish representative is on the planning group which meets quarterly.

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity was recognised across the churches of the town opening with an ecumenical service. Lent Lunches were also an across-denominational affair with good support from members of our parish.

On Good Friday a Walk of Witness commenced from our church and proceeded via other churches down Fore Street to a Service of Witness on the Quay

A well-supported Bible Weekend took place in October, held across various of the town's churches.

As has already been mentioned, the two Mission Community house groups also have an ecumenical dynamic for prayer, bible study, worship and fellowship.

The church continues to support ecumenical outreach through volunteer support for the town's Christian Bookshop 'Wordwise' and through joining together there for a monthly prayer meeting.

At Christmas, our Roman Catholic brothers & sisters were warmly invited to join us once again and to participate in our regular carol service.

Financial Review

Giving to the Church of £18,599.49 through envelopes, Bankers Orders, Direct Debits and collections, was gratefully received. Many people now give directly through the Parish Giving Scheme, administered by the Gloucester Diocese. The advantage of this Scheme is that Gift Aid, where due, is automatically reclaimed and transferred to the Church bank account that same month.

Total receipts to the General Fund amounted to £51,269.49. This included income generated from lettings of the Parish Hall (£9.0K), an amount received from the Dodbrooke Feoffees (£6.6K) and dividend payments from Church and Churchyard Investment Funds (£8K and £1.2K respectively).

£69,381.35 was spent to provide the Christian ministry offered from Dodbrooke Church. That sum included our contribution of £35.8K to the Diocesan Common Fund, Church running expenses (£11.3K), Church and Churchyard maintenance (£8.3K) and Parish Hall maintenance (£8.0K). Reconciling income and expenditure

and allowing for current and deposit account balances brought forward at the beginning of the year, resulted in monetary assets of £14,286.13 in the General Fund on 31st December 2023.

Safeguarding

In compliance with Section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure, 2016, the Dodbrooke PCC pays due regard to the House of Bishops policy and guidance on the safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults. To this end, we have a duly-appointed Parish Safeguarding Representative (who is also the Safeguarding Co-ordinator for our Benefice) and both our Safeguarding Policy Statement and Safeguarding Guidelines are reviewed annually by the PCC. Copies of the Parish Safeguarding Handbook are held by Representatives, a pdf version of the handbook is available online for reference and there is an awareness that the Church of England is developing e-manuals (eg Safer Recruitment & People Management Guidance) to complement the handbook. The Safeguarding Representative makes use of the Parish Safeguarding Dashboard to ensure that all practical requirements are kept up to date and to advise the PCC accordingly. The Representative reported no Safeguarding concerns during 2023. Three PCC members either renewed or undertook for the first time, a DBS check. Three members completed online Safeguarding training appropriate to their roles within Dodbrooke church.

Volunteers

The members of the PCC here record their sincere thanks to all the volunteers who have worked so tirelessly to ensure that our church continues to be a welcoming and open community. Our special thanks go to our Churchwarden, to the leaders of our outreach work, to the small team of volunteers who are committed to maintaining the church and its grounds, to those who lead fundraising efforts and to those involved in administration, cleaning and adornment. 'Many hands make light work' and, with succession planning in mind, we are always seeking more volunteers to spread the load and to joyfully sustain the life of our church. Particular acknowledgement of the unstinting efforts of two church members over many, many years need to be set on record: Mary Brett (Treasurer) whose last set of accounts follow this report and David Gidley who retired as Head Server in September 2023. Their quiet dedication and efficiency to their respective roles set a Christian example to us all.

Structure, Governance and Management

The PCC is a body corporate (PCC Powers Measure, 1956 and The Church Representation Rules, 2022) and a Charity registered with The Charity Commission.

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. The Council comprises the ex-Officio members (Incumbent/Asst Curate/LLM/Deanery Synod Reps) and up to 6 lay members elected at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) by those attendees registered on the Electoral Roll. The PCC members, as Trustees, are responsible for making decisions on all matters of general concern and importance in the parish and for all financial matters. The full PCC met several times during the year. The Annual Meeting of Parishioners took place on 14th May 2023: one Churchwarden was elected. The APCM followed.

All those who are regular attendees at church services are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and to stand for election to the PCC.

Administrative Information

The Church is situated at the top of Church Street, Kingsbridge, TQ7 1NW. It is part of the Deanery of Woodleigh in the Diocese of Exeter. The correspondence address is The Rectory, Church Street, Kingsbridge, Devon TQ7 1NW.

PCC members who have served variously from 1st January 2023 until the date that this Report was approved were:

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

Priest-in-Charge	Reverend Jacqueline Tilbury (from September 2023)
Assistant Curate	Reverend Matt Gorton (to June 2023)
Licensed Lay Minister	Mrs. Mandy Sarjeant
Churchwarden	Mrs. F.P. Beauchamp
Deanery Synod Reps	Mrs. A. Cowling
	Ms. S. Morgan (Secretary)

ELECTED MEMBERS

Mrs. M. Brett (Treasurer & Lay Chair)	(to April 2024)
Mrs. B. Gidley (Safeguarding Officer)	(to April 2024)
Mr. R. Brett	(to April 2026)
Mrs. M. Davidson	(resigned May 2023)
Mrs. J. Greenhill	(to April 2026)
Mr. C. Stephens	(co-opted in late 2022; elected to April 2026)

Approved by the PCC on 24th March 2024 and signed on its behalf by:



Mrs Frances Patricia Beauchamp (Church Warden & Chair of Meeting)



Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees of	St Thomas of Canterbury, Dodbrooke		
On accounts for the year ended	31 st December 2023	Charity no (if any)	800215
Set out on pages	7 to 11		

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

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

Basis of independent examiner's statement

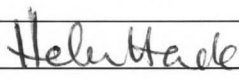
My examination was carried out in accordance with general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures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

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no material matters have come to my attention which gives me cause to believe that, in any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

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

Signed: 

Date: 25/03/2024

Name: Helen Hack FCCA

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

Chartered Certified Accountant

Address:

Helen Solomon Ltd
Unit 4G, South Hams Business Park
Churchstow, Kingsbridge, Devon TQ7 3QH

ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT – DODBROOKE CHURCH – to 31st DECEMBER 2023

RECEIPTS	2023		2022	
	£	£	£	£
Income from Donors				
Gift Aid	13,928.18		14,887.17	
Collections	1,326.40		1,264.61	
Income Tax recovered	3,344.91		3,830.17	
Legacy	0.00		0.00	
Feoffees	6,588.27		10,620.05	
		25,187.76		30,602.00
Income - Other Voluntary Resources				
Donations (General)	1,339.88		1,070.59	
VAT Refund	307.50		1,392.22	
Admin Salary recovered from other churches	0.00		2,695.68	
Insurance Claim	0.00		650.00	
Expenses recovered from other churches	565.05			
		2,212.43		5,808.49
Income – Activities to Generate Funds				
Sunday Morning Coffee			155.75	
Fund Raising	1,853.75		2,126.25	
Fees from Magazine Adverts	215.00		147.00	
Church Hall Lettings & Donations	9,058.50		7,801.85	
		11,127.25		10,230.85
Income – Furthering Work of Church				
Sale of Magazines	293.00		160.00	
Fees	3,044.00		2,860.70	
Goods supplied to other churches	0.00		17.92	
		3,337.00		3,038.62
Income from Investments				
Interest on Current Account	135.36		11.56	
National Savings Interest	30.93		3.72	
Interest from Churchyard Fund	1,200.74		1,196.11	
Interest from Long-Term Fund	8,037.14		8,006.34	
Interest from C'yard & L-T Fund Deposit A/c	0.88			
		9,405.05		9,217.73
TOTAL RECEIPTS		51,269.49		58,897.69

PAYMENTS	2023		2022	
	£	£	£	£
Overseas & Home Mission				
Church Overseas			805.00	
Home Missions	390.00		540.00	
Secular Charities	475.00		300.00	
		865.00		1,645.00
Activities Related to Work of Church				
Diocesan Common Fund	35,828.00		33,360.00	
Church Running Expenses	11,278.94		6,754.71	
Clergy Expenses	464.33		932.11	
Upkeep of Services	1,222.93		208.50	
Church Maintenance/Minor Repairs	940.64		2,136.22	
Church Repairs	5,124.18		1,120.00	
Magazine Costs	693.76		73.59	
Upkeep of Churchyard	2,250.22		1,257.91	
Parish Hall Running Costs	3,603.97		5,240.45	
Parish Hall Repairs/Renewals	4,899.94		384.07	
		66,306.91		51,467.56
Expenses from Activities to Realise Funds				
Cost of Fundraising Events	64.96		162.79	
		64.96		162.79
Church Management & Admin				
Stationery etc	0.00		116.77	
Admin Costs	2,092.48		2,018.15	
Publicity Costs	52.00		82.93	
Administrator Salary/Tax	0.00		3,369.60	
		2,144.48		5,587.45
Previous Year's Creditors		0.00		0.00
TOTAL PAYMENTS		69,381.35		58,862.80

RECONCILIATION OF GENERAL FUND	2023	2022
	£	£
Total Receipts	51,269.49	58,897.69
Total Payments	69,381.35	58,862.80
Balance in Restricted Fund b/f	2,777.85	2,723.50
Outstanding Fees (from previous year) paid	714.00	824.00
Overall Payments	72,873.20	62,410.30
Excess of Receipts over Payments	-21,603.71	-3,512.61
Balance in Restricted Fund c/f	2,287.58	2,777.85
Fees owed to EDBF	580.00	714.00
TOTAL	-18,736.13	-20.76
General Fund as at 1st January	33,022.26	33,043.02
(Current a/c; Covenant a/c; National Savings)		
	-18,736.13	-20.76
General Fund as at 31st December	14,286.13	33,022.26

RESTRICTED FUNDS – INCOME & EXPENDITURE

RESTRICTED FUND (Year to 31st December 2023)

Receipts		Payments	
	£		£
Balance b/f from 2022	2,777.85		
Action Against Hunger	0.00	Action Against Hunger	250.00
U.S.P.G.	145.00	U.S.P.G.	180.00
Gifts recvd for Revd Matt	245.00	Gifts to Revd Matt	532.00
Net Payment from Revd Matt	61.93		
Unclaimed expenses	19.80		
Totals	3,249.58		962.00
Net Balance c/f to 2024	2,287.58		

CHURCH REPAIR & CHURCHYARD FUNDS	2023		2022	
	£	£	£	£
Balance in Deposit Fund at 1 st January		20.55		20.55
Receipts				
Interest from Deposit Fund	0.88			
Dividends from L-T Church Repair Fund	8,073.14		8,006.34	
Dividends from Churchyard Fund	1,200.74		1,196.11	
Total	9,238.76		9,202.45	
Transfers to Lloyds Current A/c	9,238.76		9,202.45	
Excess of Income over Transfers		0.00		0.00
Balance in Deposit Fund at 31 st December		20.55		20.55

ORGAN/MUSIC FUNDS	2023		2022	
	£	£	£	£
Balance in Deposit Fund at 1 st January		6,678.01		6,190.30
Receipts				
Interest from Deposit Fund	218.73		84.87	
Dividend from Investment Fund	405.07		402.84	
Total Receipts	623.80		487.71	
Payments	0.00		0.00	
Excess of Receipts over Payments		623.80		487.71
CBF Deposit Fund as at 31 st December		7,301.81		6,678.01

STATEMENT OF ASSETS & LIABILITIES
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MONETARY ASSETS	General Fund £	Organ/Music Fund £	Repair & Churchyard Fund £	TOTAL £s	
				2023	2022
Bank Current Account	5,382.47			5,382.47	6,098.99
Gift Aid Account	4,874.96			4,874.96	22,925.51
National Savings	4,028.69			4,028.69	3,997.76
Cash in hand, not banked	0.00			0.00	0.00
CBF Deposit Funds		7,301.81	20.55	7,322.36	6,698.56
TOTALS	14,286.12	7,301.81	20.55	21,608.48	39,720.82

INVESTMENT ASSETS – RESTRICTED FUNDS		
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	2023	2022
	£s	£s
Church Repair Investment Fund – Income Units		
14752.47 units @ £19.845 per unit as at 31 st December 2023	292,762.77	268,124.67
Churchyard Investment Fund – Income Units		
2204.02 units @ £19.845 per unit as at 31 st December 2023	43,738.78	40,057.84
Organ/Music CBF Investment Fund		
655.56 shares @ £22.6053 per share as at 31 st December 2023	14,819.13	13,544.79

Approved by the PCC on 24th March 2024 and signed on its behalf by:



Mrs Frances Patricia Beauchamp (Church Warden & Chair of Meeting)