

**THE PARISH OF HOLY TRINITY, LEVERSTOCK GREEN
IN THE BENEFICE OF LANGELEI**

**MEETING OF PARISHIONERS &
ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING**

**AT HOLY TRINITY CHURCH
ON SUNDAY 14 APRIL 2024 at 11.30 am**

Contents

Agenda

**Minutes of Meeting 23 April 2023
Proceedings of the PCC and Parish Activities
Audited Accounts for 2023
Fabric, Goods and Ornaments Report
Report of Deanery & Diocesan Synods**

AGENDA

Prayers

ANNUAL MEETING OF PARISHIONERS

1. Apologies for absence – *please advise the Secretary if you are unable to attend*
2. Election of Churchwardens - see nominations for election on the notice board.
(Those entitled to vote are either on the Electoral Roll of the parish, or live in the parish and are on the register of local government electors)

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

(Church members are invited to attend and those on the Electoral Roll to vote)

1. To approve the minutes of the APCM held on 23 April 2023
2. Matters arising from those minutes.
3. To receive reports for 2023/2024
 - 3.1 Electoral Roll report
 - 3.2 Report on the proceedings of the PCC including Safeguarding, and parish activities
 - 3.3 The financial statement of the church for the year ending 31 December 2023, and to approve the accounts
 - 3.4 Report on the Fabric, Goods and Ornaments of the church
 - 3.5 Reports from Deanery and Diocesan Synods
4. Elections
 - 4.1 To elect lay representatives to the Parochial Church Council
 - 4.2 To elect lay representatives to the Benefice Team Council
5. To appoint an Independent Examiner for the PCC accounts for the coming year.
6. To receive a report from the Rector
7. Any other business

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Items 1& 2: Minutes of the last APCM, 23rd April 2023

THE PARISH OF HOLY TRINITY LEVERSTOCK GREEN In the Benefice of Langelei MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL CHURCH MEETINGS Held on Sunday 23 April 2023 at 11.30am

ANNUAL MEETING OF PARISHIONERS

Rev'd Lizzie Hood opened the meeting with prayers.

Apologies for absence were received from Pat Brown, Suzanne and Chinyanta Nkonkomalimba, Elizabeth Cooper, Liam Derham, Pat Driver, Lorraine Ellis, Frances Lawson, Martin Gouch, Marjorie-Knight, Terry Perry, Gillian Redman and John Warden. This year the meeting was not broadcast on Zoom because the Bishop has not given his permission. 45 Parishioners attended in church.

Election of Churchwardens: Lizzie thanked the churchwardens for their immense support and hard work throughout the year. She thanked the deputy wardens, Kathy Perry, Beverley Burgess and Mike Hawtin for their commitment. Special thanks to John Walker who was stepping down as Churchwarden after a 6 year term. Lizzie presented John with a gift in appreciation of his commitment and support. Karen Ball agreed to continue as Churchwarden, proposed by John Walker and seconded by Beverley Burgess and Mike Heylin was proposed by Miles Cooksey and seconded by Sue Gouch. Both were duly elected with thanks.

The Annual Meeting of Parishioners closed at 11.40 am.

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

1. **Minutes of the APCM held on 3 April 2022** were approved and signed as a true record.

2. **Matters Arising** – There were no matters arising.

3.1 **Electoral Roll Report** – Noted that the roll had increased from 142 to 147 following the deaths of Stella Hancock and Don Evans with some movement of church members leaving and joining. Lizzie extended thanks to Norah Tattersall for her work on the Electoral Roll.

3.2 **Report on the proceedings of the Parochial Church Council (PCC) including Safeguarding and Parish Activities** – Lizzie thanked Sue Gouch for stepping up as PCC secretary. John Walker reported that he and Karen would like to express their appreciation to the Deputy Churchwardens Mike Hawtin, Kathy Perry and Beverley Burgess for their support and hard work during the last year. Mike has continued to use his knowledge and experience in maintaining the fabric of the church, and Kathy has handled the cash, organised our merchandising and carried out a wide range of tasks ensuring the church runs smoothly. Beverley has organised the catering and managed social events with her usual efficiency. We would also like to thank Terry Perry for undertaking a myriad of tasks during the year.

The Archdeacon's Visitation was carried out in July by Revd Mike Macey. He was satisfied with all aspects of the inspection including the maintenance of church records. As stated in the fabric report, the structure of the church is basically sound. The refurbishment of the Trinity Room has been completed although the state of the roof remains a cause for concern. We will be looking at further improvements to create more storage space. As part of the drive to meet the Church of England's Net Zero Carbon target by 2030, an energy audit has been carried out with the aim of replacing the oil-fired heating system. The latest 5 yearly Electrical Installation Condition Report recommends some work to comply with the latest regulations.

We are grateful to Terry, Mike and Miles for streaming our services which now benefit from an additional camera. We also need to thank the Parish Trust for funding the CCTV system.

We continue to be indebted to our volunteers for maintaining the churchyard. Simon Bounds and Patrick Joyce work tirelessly throughout the year, and we are most grateful for their hard work and dedication.

We need to thank the members of the PCC for their sound governance of the church, and we are indebted to all the volunteers who willingly give their time and effort to help with the running of the church. Without their contribution, the church would not function.

We would like to thank Lizzie for her strong leadership, inspiration and hard work during a particularly eventful year. As I have said before, the Church and the whole village are privileged to have her at the helm! We are also most grateful to Jos for supporting Lizzie and undertaking a sizeable share of the workload. Jos has become a most valued member of our leadership team.

Finally, I am standing down after 6 years. It has been an honour and a privilege to be a Churchwarden, and I would like to thank everyone for their encouragement and support.

The written reports were noted.

Safeguarding - Pauline Lindsey said that DBS and basic levels of training would now be provided by Pauline to the PCC. Lizzie thanked Pauline for her work as Safeguarding Officer.

Parish Activities - Lizzie thanked group leaders for their work throughout the year.

3.3 The Financial Statement of the Church and to Approve the Accounts - Martin Chapman thanked everyone for their contributions and time. We made an operating gain of £7,556 but will need these funds for repairs and decoration. Everything has gone up especially the cost of electricity. He asked that everyone consider what they could contribute financially. He thanked Kathy Perry and Sue Gouch for counting and banking the church money. Martin thanked Geoffrey Dix for inspecting the accounts. Martin Chapman proposed the accounts which were seconded by Tim Bourne. All in favour.

Lizzie expressed her huge thanks to Martin for managing the accounts throughout the year.

3.4 Fabric, Goods and Ornaments of the Church – This was covered in the report, except for the loss of Mary and Joseph figures which had been stolen. The report was received, and Lizzie extended her thanks to the Churchwardens for all their hard work and to all who help maintain the church and churchyard.

3.5 Reports from the Deanery and Diocesan Synods – The reports were noted and our representatives thanked.

4. Elections

4.1 To elect lay representatives to the Deanery Synod The following people were elected for a 3 year term:

Colin Gage – proposed by Lesley Ripley and seconded by Lorraine Ellis
Liam Derham – proposed by Lorraine Ellis and seconded by Ruth Carl
Sam Stanbridge – proposed by Miles Cooksey and seconded by Ruth Carl

4.2 To elect lay representatives to the PCC -- Gillian Redman, Cathy Ayling, Suzanne and Chinyanta Nkonkomalimba and Mike Hawtin had reached the end of their term of office and did not wish to be re-elected. The PCC consists of Clergy, Lay Reader – Tim Bourne, 2 Churchwardens – Karen Ball and Mike Heylin, 3 Synod representatives and 12 elected members. Lizzie thanked the current PCC. The following people were elected for a 3 year term:

Beverley Burgess - proposed by Karen Ball and seconded by John Walker
Frances Brown – proposed by John Walker and seconded by Kathy Perry
Martin Chapman – proposed by Sue Gouch and seconded by Malcolm Lindsey
Sue Gouch – proposed by Dick Selby and seconded by Val Selby
Lesley Ripley – proposed by Matt Tattersall and seconded by John May
Richard Selby – proposed by Terry Perry and seconded by Lorraine Ellis
Lee-Anne Visagie - was co-opted onto the PCC

Mike Hawtin was stepping down from PCC after a number of years – Lizzie thanked him for his support and presented him with a gift,

4.3 To elect Lay Representatives to the Benefice Team Council – the Team Council representatives will be elected at the next PCC meeting on 10th May 2023.

5. To appoint an Independent Examiner for the PCC accounts for the coming year – Martin Chapman said that Geoffrey Dix was willing to do this and was proposed by Martin Chapman and seconded by Karen Ball. All agreed. Lizzie asked Sue to send a letter of thanks to Geoffrey Dix on behalf of the PCC.

6. To receive a report from the Rector

I am delighted to have all the crucial posts - church wardens, Deanery Synod reps and PCC members - filled with willing and committed volunteers. Thank the Lord!

There is a great deal to be thankful for in our parish life, and I would like to highlight some of the things that I have found encouraging this year:

- The number of new people who have joined us and have already made a solid commitment to HT, some moving from other churches, some exploring faith for the first time. The wardens and I held a lunch for 20 to give them a proper welcome, as some joined when the church was not fully operational during lockdown.
- We baptised 16 children and 3 adults, admitted 5 children to Communion, and confirmed 3 adults. It's wonderful to witness growth in people's spiritual lives.
- We have young people serving at the altar at all-age worship.
- Toddler Church has new leadership and is going well. Some families are joining us regularly for all age worship, and supporting one another in a lovely way.
- Youth Group is going well, with up to 14 young people, and new leaders on the team.
- We have a new venture in collaboration with the school - a monthly Woodland Worship, held outdoors around a campfire.
- Various nurture activities have been well received - home-grown Advent and Lent courses, and a sermon series 'This is our Faith' through the autumn. The discussion group held after the services was lively and resulted in us starting another new venture - Stop for a Second, a discussion group on the sermon theme and other topics.
- The recent Confirmation group was exhilarating in its vibrancy - Jos and I loved leading it, and the participants would like to continue learning. Would anyone like to join them for discussion on a Saturday morning once a month?
- The Wednesday Eucharist has provided a safe haven for those cautious about mixing in large groups, and the minibus on the 3rd Wednesday is very much appreciated, with as many as 20 people attending that service.
- We have offered a varied programme of regular and special services, and I have heard from several people that their experience of worship is transforming their lives - they are actually changed week by week by their experience of it.
- Numbers at Sunday Eucharists are nearing what we used to think of as the 'normal' mark, while some of our regulars are still content worshipping from home.
- We have responded well to the needs of the community:
 - Marking the death of HM the Queen with a commemorative service and church open for prayers and condolences.
 - The Talking Elephants bereavement support group goes from strength to strength.
 - We responded to the Economic crisis by registering as a warm space
 - We are contributing to our team's Community Foodbank at St B's.
 - We have made a good link with Dacorum Family Services to serve young families in need.
 - We are making the Trinity Room available for addiction support groups.
 - We recently hosted a DBC 'Cost of living' event.
- We have offered a variety of social and fundraising events at which the community has been warmly welcomed - all the regular schedule, plus an Advent Window Trail, Nativity Crib Festival, family films, and an amazingly popular Halloween stall in the church porch.

I feel things are moving forward very positively.

But of course, not everything in the garden is rosy. We've not accomplished all we set out to do, and some things have to cease to enable the new ventures space to grow.

- Children's Praise on a Sunday afternoon has reached the end of the road.
- The Pilgrim Group, which was always meant to be time-limited, has drawn to a close.
- The very popular Music & Meditation, and the Horseshoe Study Group have been in abeyance while Frances has been unwell.
- Sunday 8 o'clock services on the 1st Sunday of the month are struggling for numbers.
- Some of our volunteers are overburdened, and we need to spread the tasks more widely so that no-one becomes wearied.

- My planned sabbatical was a disaster and was spent largely in Watford General Hospital. The resulting fatigue lasted several months and some of our MAP objectives suffered as a result. I am very grateful to the Ministry Team and all who covered during my absence and staged return.
- We have said farewell to several regular members of our congregation who have died this year, and we remember with affection and gratitude those who have shared fellowship with us - Don Evans, Vera Weight, Stella Hancock and Jack Glister. May they rest in peace and rise in glory.

On the wider front of the Langelei team, this time last year we were in vacancy. We weathered that and welcomed Mother Alice as our new Team Vicar at her installation service on 6th September. The ministry team meets on a weekly basis to discuss matters of mutual concern and to support one another. After Alice's arrival we made changes to the way the team operates, so that we now try to visit one another's churches once a month, so we all get a sense of being part of a team. We also changed the pattern of our joint services, so we now worship together on the 5th Sunday of the month, and this year that will be at a standard time of 10.30am. Our 4 churches have varying strengths and weaknesses, and it's important that we offer one another support where needed. I am very grateful that members of HT have stepped up to support St Benedict's while it is at a low ebb - the social committee organised a concert there, Martin Chapman is acting as their treasurer, Karen arranged a team to spring clean for Easter, and we have several people who have agreed to be on call to support Mother Alice with their expertise.

Mission Action Plan

My illness last year brought it home to me in a heightened way, what I have always believed and preached, that lay participation is vital to a church community; every members ministry is the very nature of the church, and our calling in baptism. The Vicar is not here to do everything for a passive audience! We are essentially and intrinsically corporate. Literally a body. We are the Body of Christ.

Having had time to reflect I am clear that, for health of the parish, I need to focus more on ministerial tasks (sacraments, teaching, preaching, nurture, pastoral support) and trust the social & administrative aspects of parish life to our capable laity. This has informed the review of our Mission Plan, which took place at our PCC in January.

We judged that 2 of our priorities had been achieved and could be removed from the MAP - the promotion of Wednesday morning Eucharists, and the reintroduction of social activities following the Covid restrictions.

These are our MAP priorities for the year ahead:

Priority 1 - Develop worship within the Church

to continue the journey back to 'normal' and consider new patterns of worship

SMART Goals

- continue to develop monthly all age worship to provide a variety of styles for different ages and tastes, and encourage new worship leaders
- rebuild, recruit and train altar servers, sides-people, intercessors and leaders for all children's groups and weekday worship
- form a Worship Committee to look at all aspects of our services, especially music, and include young people in it. Continue to consider those people who are still not comfortable coming to church with the high incidence of COVID, and make provision, where possible

Priority 2 - Develop active participation and active discipleship

encourage all church members to discern what they can contribute to the running of the church, giving time, talents and finance as appropriate

SMART Goals

- use APCM and other gatherings eg simple lunches at which Rector & wardens can listen to views on nurture needs and present picture of the church's breadth of activity
- keep list of vacancies in public view via a leaflet, posters or bulletin notices
- develop the finance committee into a stewardship committee, with remit to oversee stewardship appeals and to look for cost savings
- plan and deliver an appeal for church and community members to review their financial support of the church

Priority 3 - Develop our buildings

to continue work started during lockdown to improve facilities, reduce clutter, improve storage and make our church and Trinity Room complex fit for current use

SMART Goals

- keep up the momentum on rationalising storage and developing the Trinity Room and Church to meet our current needs. Carry out 'quick wins'
- open the church during daylight hours. Install CCTV cameras, make provision for safe storage of valuables, rotas for opening/closing, and develop guides to help visitors interpret the building
- re-form the Fabric Committee with a remit to consider more major works that would require costing and prioritising. Consider the suggestions put forward by surveyor Anthony Parisi and church members, and report to PCC
- make progress towards our aim of net zero carbon by 2030

Finally, I would like to offer my thanks:

- to the Ministry team - to Jos, Tim and Jane, and to James and Alice, for their support and friendship,
- to Norma who supports us in the office,
- to Rosemary and Matt who have continued to serve through their gift of music despite personal challenges this year,
- to our wardens and PCC members, and all who contribute to the life of this church family.

Thanks be to God for all that has been and let us commit the year ahead to his service.

7. **Any other business** – Sam Stanbridge asked if there was any safeguarding advice for people working in the church (ie cleaning, flower arranging etc) and should they be working in pairs rather than alone? John Walker said that there is a lone working policy, and that common sense and basic precautions were recommended.

The meeting closed at 12.30pm with The Grace.

APCM 2024

Item 3. Reports for 2023/2024

3.1 Electoral Roll Report

The electoral roll at last year's APCM opened with 147 members.

Changes to the roll for this year are as follows:

6 new people have joined the electoral roll.

2 people have left the roll having died during the year.

The number on the roll at this year's APCM is therefore 151 – an increase of 4 people.

Applications to join or re-join the roll open again at the end of the APCM.

Norah Tattersall, Electoral Roll Officer

3.2 Report on the proceedings of the PCC including Safeguarding, and parish activities

Proceedings of the Parochial Church Council 2023 – 2024

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is a corporate body established by the Church of England and operates under the Parochial Church Council Powers Measure. It is a charity excepted from registration with the Charity Commission. PCC members are appointed in accordance with the Church Representation Rules. It has the responsibility of co-operating with the Incumbent, Rev'd Lizzie Hood, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. Its membership consists of the Clergy, one Lay Reader, two Church Wardens, three representatives to the Deanery Synod, those elected by the Parish to serve on the PCC for a period of three years.

Following the APCM in 2023 those on the PCC are: Rev'd Lizzie Hood (Incumbent and Chair), Rev'd Jos Perris (Associate Priest), Karen Ball (Church Warden), Tim Bourne, Frances Brown, Beverley Burgess, Martin Chapman (Treasurer), Miles Cooksey, Liam Derham (Deanery Synod rep), Lorraine Ellis, Colin Gage (Deanery Synod rep), Sue Gouch (Secretary), Mike Heylin (Church Warden), Pauline Lindsey (Safeguarding Officer), Kathy Perry, Lesley Ripley, Dick Selby, and Sam Stanbridge.

The PCC meets every other month, in person, and at its meeting in May 2023 it approved the following appointments: Treasurer – Martin Chapman, Secretary – Sue Gouch, Deputy Wardens - Beverley Burgess and Kathy Perry, Health and Safety Officer – Karen Ball and Electoral Roll Officer - Norah Tattersall. Lee-Anne Visagie was co-opted onto the PCC for 1 year and was appointed as our representative on Churches Together in Hemel Hempstead. All on the Electoral Roll were appointed as Sidespeople. The PCC is required to appoint a Standing Committee which has power to transact the business of the PCC between its meetings, subject to the overall directions given by the Council. This comprises the Rector, Church Wardens and Deputy Church Wardens, Secretary and Treasurer. The Standing Committee conducts business by email and its work is reported to each PCC meeting.

The prevalence and threat of Covid has reduced during 2023 but we continue to remain mindful of the ongoing risk of infection - the PCC decided and agreed that we should continue with intincting the Bread at Services. The Mission Action Plan was discussed at the January 2023 meeting and Approved by PCC at the March 2023 meeting. The major discussions and decisions this year were regarding the new heating system as the boiler was practically defunct and spare parts were no longer available. An Extraordinary meeting was called in August to discuss and ratify the decision to proceed with the electrical heating system. This was successfully installed and operational before the Winter cold set in. Sadly, at the January 2024 meeting Revd Lizzie Hood discussed her Retirement from Holy Trinity confirming her last day would be 30th April 2024.

Sue Gouch, PCC Secretary

Safeguarding Report

I have reported at each of the bi-monthly PCC meetings on Disclosure and Barring clearance and the required training of individuals to support this.

There have been no reported safeguarding incidents within Holy Trinity since the last APCM.

Our Safeguarding policies were reviewed, approved and signed off at our March PCC meeting and updated copies are in all four folders (EH, PL, vestry cupboard and the bookcase in the Trinity room for public access.)

Lizzie and I have run an hour-long Basic Awareness training course for those people whose job roles mean that they have to interact with visitors to the church but who do not need to have a full DBS clearance. There are still a few outstanding, but another course will be offered soon.

All the information on DBS certificates and training has now been loaded onto the Diocesan website and we are 93% compliant on Stage 1 and are working on Stage 2, I have attended online workshops to support this.

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

Pauline Lindsey, Parish Safeguarding Officer

Reports on Parish Activities: Worship and Spiritual Growth

Baptism Report

This year we have had 18 baptisms of both adults and children here at Holy Trinity.

Baptisms services are generally held after our Sunday service or on Sunday afternoons. Church families may choose to make it part of morning worship.

Lizzie holds preparation classes for parents before booking and a member of the team assists her, providing hot drinks and biscuits.

On the day, two people are there to welcome the families and their guests, and act as sidespeople during the service. One of the team will come forward with a taper lit from the Easter candle to light the Baptismal candle which is then given to the child/adult. Once the families have left, the church is then tidied and the register completed.

If anyone is available to join the team and would like information on what being a helper entails, please contact me.

My thanks as always go to the whole team Ruth Carl, Linda Cooke, Lorraine Ellis, Jean Hunter and Sue Gouch for ensuring a warm welcome for baptism families at Holy Trinity.

Kathy Perry, Baptism co-ordinator

Choir Report

The choir has continued to support the congregational singing on Sundays and holy days and has sung an anthem and an introit at each service, except at non-eucharistic family services. The choir sang for the switch on of the village lights in November and at the Carols by Candlelight in church in December. They also sang for two weddings and three funerals. In December the choir joined the choir of All Saints Kings Langley to sing at the Benefice service, and some choir members also took part in a combined evensong at Kings Langley at Candlemas.

We are grateful that Matt Tattersall has continued to accompany the service once a month, and that John May (trumpet) has played for special occasions such as Remembrance Sunday and Christmas.

Sue Gouch (soprano) has unfortunately left the choir during the year for health reasons. We are now down to eight members, who show remarkable tenacity and loyalty as well as musical ability. We really need some new members to relieve the pressure on our existing members. If you care about music in worship, please consider joining the choir. It is not necessary to read music, just to be prepared to listen to the other singers and sing in tune.

Rosemary Knight

Junior Church Report 2024

As one would expect, Junior church has continued to change in size and shape over the past twelve months, welcoming several new joiners plus some older children starting to feel drawn towards the main Sunday service. We are pleased to see all the children continue to grow in confidence, each exploring their own faith journey in a fun and accessible way.

The leadership team aims to deliver a diverse learning plan that covers a wide range of topics and at an appropriate age and learning level. While this works well for the younger children, we recognise that there is a gap for the older members of the group. Should there be sufficient interest and commitment, we would be happy to consider resurrecting the bible study group for this demographic (age 10+) during the Sunday services alongside Junior Church lessons.

We remain a small, dedicated and focussed leadership team, bringing with us a wide range of life skills and experiences. With lessons delivered by both male and female adult role models, the children are able to access guidance and practical examples of faith from different perspectives. We have also recently been pleased to welcome a young volunteer, currently undertaking her Bonze Duke of Edinburgh award, as a junior leader. This is for the Service section of the award, which requires three months of volunteering effort to complete.

The Junior Church team welcome all children from nursery age upwards. Should any child have specialised requirements or require adjustments to be made, please feel free to speak to any of the leaders in confidence.

Miles Cooksey

Music & Meditation report

After a year's hiatus due to illness, the group met to discuss the way forward. We decided to resume meeting four times a year rather than every month. This new pattern obviously lends itself to a seasonal theme of meditation with readings and music ranging across nature, traditions, faith and the human experience within our religious year. It also provided up with a fresh start after finishing the books of the Bible, which we had studied and used as our chronological guide since forming the group nearly two decades ago. Restarting afresh in December 2023, we enjoyed a contemplation of Winter and Christmas as well as our usual chat, refreshments and company. We look forward to our next meeting on March 19th, at 63 The Horseshoe and our upcoming meetings for 2024 on the third Tuesday in the months of June, September and December. My thanks to the group for their help with resuming, organising and, for those who want to, with voicing some of the readings. New members are always welcome. Frances Lawson

Nurture and Growth Team Report

The team continues to meet several times a year to consider how the church can nurture and grow the faith of our church community.

In Lent 2023, we prepared materials called a *Journey into Prayer* which outlined a variety of ways to approach praying in Lent and beyond including art, scripture, music, centring, prayer walks and reflection. Many people reported that they found these useful. In Advent 2023 and for this Lent, we have sourced materials and booklets to help with reflection.

We commenced monthly *Stop for a Second* sessions which give people the opportunity to stay behind after church on the second Sunday of the month to reflect and discuss the readings and the sermon of the day. These have been generally well attended and everyone is very welcome to drop in. Similarly, we have recently commenced *Bible Bites* which take place over breakfast (9am) on Saturday mornings before coffee shop. We are using Bible Society materials to take a journey through the bible. Once again, everyone is very welcome.

The members of the team are Lizzie, Tim, Jean, Linda and me so please give us your ideas and feedback so that we can try to help to meet the needs of our church family. Norah Tattersall

Occasional Offices

Four marriages were conducted at Holy Trinity during 2023. Each couple is invited to a wedding preparation evening in January, after which one to one support is offered throughout the planning process, culminating in a wedding rehearsal a day or two before the 'big day'.

Nineteen funeral services were held at Holy Trinity, seventeen at local crematoria, and a further eight interments of ashes over and above those funerals taken by the ministers of the parish. Ongoing support is offered through pastoral visits, the annual Service of Thanksgiving and Remembrance, and by invitations to join Talking Elephants, Friendship Teas or Saturday Coffee Shop. During the year the new Hemel Hempstead Crematorium opened, off Bedmond Road. This is beautifully planned, and very convenient for our community.

There were 18 baptisms, 5 of them adults and 13 children, and 4 Confirmations. Lizzie Hood

Servers and Sacristy Team Report

It has been good to see new people join the team of altar servers during the past year and we are also pleased that some members of junior church serve on the altar during all age worship and on some special occasions. It is great to have them on board! If any further members of the church family would like to join the team, please get in touch and I will arrange a further training session. You would be very welcome.

I would like to thank, on behalf of the team and whole church, Maureen Bellett, who has recently stood down from the team after many years of faithful serving. We will miss you Maureen!

In addition to the team that is seen on the altar, thanks are also due to a number of other members of the team who might not be as visible. Our sacristan, John Buxton, works so hard behind the scenes particularly at the end of services. We are also grateful to Simon Bounds who recently covered the role and to Sarah Kiesa who continues with the important job of organising our rota! Norah Tattersall

The Youth Group (TYG) Report

TYG has met monthly throughout the year, with a steady attendance of around 5-8 regulars. The group is largely made up of members of the immediate church family, but we have also welcomed friends of regulars, cousins and schoolmates. Membership is open to all in the community and Benefice - the more the merrier!

The group has enjoyed a wide variety of activities, including team games, puzzle solving and escape-room games, team-building exercises, a cooking and nutrition lesson, scavenger hunts, codebreaking exercises, faith-based learning, discussion & debate and many other fun activities! As we approach the warmer

months, we plan to do more outdoor activities and have invested in some sports equipment to support this endeavour with fair play and fun being the focus. We often include a spiritual element around the Church season and our activities feed into this where possible. Some of our discussion activities revolve around significant points in the school term, such as moving up in school years or moving on to secondary school. TYG is led by a volunteer group of experienced youth leaders from within the clergy and congregation, who provide both guided activity leadership as well as acting as spiritual role models. TYG is open to any young person who is in year 6 or above. We have great fun and share a supper together as part of the friendship of our group.

Miles Cooksey

Toddler Church Report

We have had a very enjoyable year during 2023, with a lot of new 'toddlers' joining us - a lot of under 1's this year - and new mums enjoying the company and welcome of those already coming along. The church has resounded every week with the sound of musical instruments, singing and actions, including some new songs learnt from Carole who has returned to join us helping to lead the group.

The toddlers have made sheep, drawn round their feet and got them dirty, made jam jars with fishes in them, had parties, painted Christmas tree decorations and this year, because of the church heating installation, enjoyed a trip to the Zoo, plus many other fun activities. The once a month family services have been enjoyed by several of our regulars and we had a very good turn out of helpers for the Christmas Fair and the Summer Fun Day. We even had one toddler dressed up, aged about 18 months, who came out especially to join in the fun at our Churchyard walk on Halloween! As usual we provided the characters for the Nativity Service in December, the total age of the wise men was three which made a lot of the congregation go aahhh, but they all behaved extremely well,.

As is normal, we have lost some of our older toddlers to the School nursery and a warm welcome awaits anyone wishing to join us on a Thursday morning from 10.00am.

We would like to say a big thank you to everyone who comes along to help, but especially Lizzie who has steered us in the right direction throughout the year and will be very much missed when she leaves at the end of April.

Lesley Ripley and Lorraine Ellis

Welcomers' Report

We are always looking for "meeters and greeters" to stand at the church door to smile and say hello to new and old faces. It's a great way of getting to know people - Please step up and help - you're at church anyway and it's an important form of outreach to make people feel comfortable and welcome. Also, to nip out at the end of the service to stand by the door to say goodbye - you wouldn't not say cheerio to guests who come to your home.

We are really short of volunteers to make coffee after the service. It's not difficult, just arrive at church 10 minutes early and bring milk, set the cups and to leave the service 5 minutes before the end to put the coffee on, serve, clear up and stack the dishwasher. Please help

.If you are scheduled to help on any rota and are unable to do so please can **you** arrange a replacement and then let Sarah Kiesa know.

As ever - a massive thanks to Sarah who organises our rotas.

Gillian Redman and Sarah Kiesa

Woodland Worship Report

Woodland Worship has now been successfully running for a whole year having launched in January 2023. Numbers attending fluctuate each month and can be impacted by school activities, for example there is a notable rise in numbers when the date of Woodland Worship falls at a point in the term when there are no after-school clubs.

Attendance does primarily come from the Leverstock Green School community despite advertising to the wider community. We've had some visitors along the way and more recently attendance from children in The Zone After-School club.

We started on a cold and frosty January afternoon in 2023 with a whopping 45 people attending our first session. This was based on the wise men following the star to find baby Jesus thus we made our own stars from sticks then went on a journey in Paddy's Patch to find stars and ponder what the wise men felt on their journey.

Other themes that we have explored over the year include shrove Tuesday in February 2023 thinking what we could 'take up' for Lent, a focus on Psalm 139 in April celebrating how God has made us all unique and St Alban in June. July we thought about transformations and new creations before taking a break for August and September. We finished the year by celebrating World Apple Day in October and exploring the case of Two Doors in November. December found our worship area to be a mud bath so we enjoyed a wonderful session in the outdoor classroom thinking about God's light shining in dark times. Despite no fire in our

outside firepit, we were still able to toast marshmallows over tealights in a very magical atmosphere in the dimly lit classroom with a spontaneous rendition of 'Away in a Manger'. Suzanne Nkonkomalimba

Reports on Parish Activities: Fabric Finance and Mission Charity Donations 2023

Mostly from funds set aside in 2022

	£
Toilet twinning - Uganda	60.00
Medecins Sans Frontier Gaza appeal	165.00
Christian Aid – Libya/Morocco	232.00
Marie Curie – Lent Lunches	267.00
Action Aid	277.41
Embrace the Middle East	393.00
UNICEF Ukraine	393.00
Christian Aid Earthquake appeal fund (Turkey/Syria)	645.00
Bishops Harvest Appeal	685.73
Essex & Herts Air Ambulance	750.00
Combat Stress	750.00
Fareshare UK	750.00
Mercy Ships	750.00
St Francis Hospice	750.00
Weekly donations to St Benedict's Food Bank	

Children's Society

This is my last AGM report as I am passing the coordinator role for The Children's Society on to Eileen Heylin. I wish her well.

Last year's box collection and coffee morning raised £1089.02 for the Society. A very commendable amount as change is becoming so scarce to put into the boxes. The Christingle service raised £460.60.

This year the box collection is on March 16th with a coffee morning & raffle. If anyone would like to have a house collection box, please speak to Eileen. Pat Driver

Church Cleaning Report

It's sad that the church is only cleaned twice a month as so few folk have volunteered to spare an hour to help, which means the burden rests on 3 people and this is very disappointing. The more people who help the fewer times your name is on the rota. It's only the church and porch - the TR, kitchen and loos are cleaned by a contractor. Please put add your name to the list in the Trinity Room. Thanks.

Gillian Redman

Leverstock Green Religious Education Fund Accounts for the period 1st January -31st December 2023.

Income	£
Interest C.B.F Deposit	599.83
Interest C.B.F. Share Fund	10,844.83
Increase in Market Value on C.B.F. Share Fund	34,981.19
Total Income	46,425.85

Expenditure	£
Grants paid: -	
Mrs J. Smart - Book Grant 2022 (212)	27.08
All Saints P.C.C - Roots subscription (213)	164.00
Mrs J. Smart - Book Grant 2023 (214)	39.96
P.C.C. Holy Trinity – Books for Childrens Books/Nurture (216)	462.96
St Mary's -Bibles for leavers Nash Mills School (217)	389.74
St Mary's – Bibles for Year 3 Nash Mills School (218)	263.70
P.C.C. Holy Trinity Bibles for leavers Leverstock Green School (219)	321.30

Revd. A Jolley -Book Grant 2023 (220)	60.00
Revd. L Hood – Advent & Confirmation Materials (221)	77.21
Total Expenditure	1,805.95

Excess of Income over Expenditure **44,619.95**

Mission Action Plan

The Mission Action Plan (MAP) was revised by the PCC at its meeting in January 2024 and many of our targets had been achieved. A new MAP was drafted with an eye to the forthcoming interregnum and this was adopted at the March meeting. Progress on the MAP is discussed at every PCC meeting, and this enables the PCC to keep our goals in view.

MAP 2024:

Priority 1 - Develop active participation and active discipleship

encourage all church members to discern what they can contribute to the running of the church, giving time, talents and finance as appropriate

SMART Goals

- use APCM and other gatherings eg simple lunches at which Rector & wardens can listen to views on nurture needs and present picture of the church's breadth of activity
- create a list of vacancies and bring it to public attention via a leaflet, posters, bulletin notices or a 'time and talents' event
- revise guidance notes and offer training in the various duties
- develop the finance committee into a stewardship committee, with remit to oversee stewardship appeals and to look for cost savings
- plan and deliver an appeal for church and community members to review their financial commitment to the church

Priority 2 - Develop our buildings

to continue to improve storage and facilities to make our church and Trinity Room complex fit for current use

SMART Goals

- open the church during daylight hours. Make provision for safe storage of valuables, rotas for opening/closing, and develop guides to help visitors interpret the building
- keep up the momentum on rationalising storage and developing the Trinity Room and Church to meet our current needs.
- newly formed Fabric Committee to plan, cost and prioritise developmental works and refer them to PCC
- consider our 'net zero carbon by 2030' objective in all our decisions

Priority 3 - Maintain church life during the forthcoming interregnum

the Rector retires on April 30th 2024 and we can expect approximately a year without a leader

SMART Goals

- aim to maintain the energy and goodwill of our flourishing church, and the balance of worship, nurture, social and missional activities
- decide realistically which activities can be sustained through the vacancy, which will need to be put on hold, and who will take a lead on different aspects of parish life
- continue to develop all age worship and encourage new worship leaders
- foster active relationships with our sister churches in the Langelei team, its ministry team, our Rural Dean and Archdeacon, for support and the sharing of resources

Publicity

Publicity is key if we are to be an inclusive church. There is little point putting on an array of services and social events if no-one knows about it! It's also important that we use a variety of media to reach different parts of the community. So the task is complex - weekly bulletins and email newsletters for our regular worshippers, up to date information on our various websites, social media posts, items in the School newsletter, as well as leaflets, posters and banners on site and around the village. It's an uphill task producing and distributing these materials.

I am grateful to Mike Hawtin and Rebecca Lawson for maintaining our websites, Lee-Anne Visagie and the AV operators for updating Facebook, Sue Bassett in the team office for huge amounts of printing, the

churchwardens for updating the notice boards, Kathy and Terry for postering the village, and all those who have distributed leaflets for us.

I have masterminded publicity this year, but in readiness for the vacancy the Publicity Group has been re-formed with Sam Stanbridge as its lead. We would love to hear from anyone who would be happy to help put posters up around the community.

Lizzie Hood

Reports on Parish Activities: Community and Social Craft Group

The group continues to meet on Wednesday afternoons with an average of 20 members each week, there has been a small turnover of members and we continue supporting some of our members who have health problems, much of it via our lively WhatsApp group. We have raised over £1000 for the church with our various sales events at the Village hall, Cricket Club and here at our own Church events. We enjoyed our usual bring and share Christmas lunch which Lizzie joined us for.

Jean Britt, Jenny Chaney & Pauline Lindsey

Events Committee Report

Another busy year. We held two very popular quizzes, Hymns and Pimm's, a couple of family film nights. Trinity Sunday BBQ at the rectory garden. The popular strawberry tea in July moved to a new location, with Lesley and Mike Hawtin hosting in their lovely garden. The 31st October, Light Night returned, with a very steady flow of ghouls, witches and ghosts passing through the churchyard, raising some unexpected funds for the church. We also support the school and LGVA by providing a stall at their events – this year winning the best stall at the LGVA summer fete.

We watched the coronation of King Charles III in church, together with cake and fizz, had a trip to Wintershall to see the Life of Christ enactment and a retreat to Pleshey.

The weather for the Summer Fun Day wasn't kind. However, despite the downpour we did raise a few hundred pounds. The Christmas Fair on the other hand was a resounding success with very good quality donations, an excellent atmosphere and very good profits!

'Stir up Saturday' provided all the ingredients to make Christmas puddings. Chris Lawrence and friends entertained us with a very enjoyable evening of Blue Grass music and songs and our harvest supper had a sing along film with pizza and apple pies. Carols by Candlelight with mulled wine and mince pies and the Service of Thanksgiving and Remembrance followed by tea were well supported.

The "Some Enchanted Evening" concert in January was standing room only and the Caribbean Curry Night was sold out. The Pancake tea was also a success.

Lorraine Ellis and Gillian Redman

Friendship Teas

Friendship Teas have remained stable over the last year with our regular participants who are joined by new people wishing to meet new friends. Tea and cake are provided by Women's group and the two local WI's. This year the number of church members wishing to support has increased and I hope that we always provide a welcoming and friendly environment with the added bonus of good cake!

If anyone would like to join the team of helpers they would be very welcome.

Pat Driver

Leverstock Green CE (VC) Primary School Foundation Governors' Report

Our services in Holy Trinity, continue to be a joy and we are grateful to the church for allowing us to worship there on special occasions. We are currently in the process of revising our vision statement to ensure it is fit for purpose and reflect our ever-changing community, although it will still be based on Galatians 3:26 'For you are all the children of God, by faith in Christ Jesus.'

In September, the new locally agreed syllabus for RE came into force. As a voluntary controlled school, this means we follow the same RE curriculum as locally maintained schools. Our RE leader, Miss Wilson, left in July after 20 years' service at our school and Mrs Burgess has taken over responsibility for RE throughout the school. We are proud to serve families from a wide range of faiths and feedback from the children shows they enjoy learning about one another's beliefs.

Woodland Worship in Paddy's Patch continues to go from strength to strength, on the third Tuesday of every month during term time. Although the number of families attending can be variable according to the weather, everyone enjoys the worship and, of course, the fellowship before and after. Our thanks go to Lizzie, Suzanne Nkonkomalimba and Anne Sentance for leading and organising the sessions. We have been delighted to welcome school leaders from Chess Valley Multi Academy Trust who were so impressed they have begun to develop their own Woodland Worship experience.

Our RE Ambassadors have been busy supporting younger children with their experiences of spirituality. They wrote and read prayers at our Harvest and Christmas services and have just created a Lent activity

book for Nursery and Reception children. We continue to support Melany in Peru, through the Christian charity Compassion. We exchange letters several times each year and the children were fascinated to learn how they celebrate Christmas in her village.

The school continues to be over-subscribed each year and we are currently over our maximum number in two classes. While this is a good for us, there is a certain level of frustration that we cannot fulfil our deed of trust to educate all the children of the village. As the housing stock in the village grows, so will the demand for places and our notional 'catchment area' will shrink even further.

Planning is underway for Lizzie's retirement and the subsequent interregnum. The weekly pattern of collective worship is well established and we are grateful to Jos for offering some of her valuable time. We look forward to meeting her very soon. We will be using this as an opportunity to invite other friends of the school to lead worship, which was one of the actions from the RE Ambassadors' worship evaluation in July. Although we will miss Lizzie very much, we wish her well and know she will enjoy her retirement.

Terry Perry

Pastoral Care Group

The group meets bi-monthly to share updates on home visits and phone contact with people who have asked for support, all home visits are logged. Home Communion is being given when requested, with Lizzie's departure we will only have two people to do this. The group are Pam Batten, Tim Bourne, Pauline Lindsey, Gillian Redman, Lesley Ripley and Rev Lizzie Hood.

Pauline Lindsey

Talking Elephants

We meet on the 3rd Tuesday every month 11am-1pm in conjunction with representatives from Neville's and the hospice of St. Francis to offer a friendly face, support and companionship for and from others who have experienced loss and grief.

The meetings are well attended by a range of people from the church and the wider community, and the conversations cover so many different subjects from general light-hearted stories to important issues in an environment that respects and values each other's individual journey over tea and biscuits.

Everyone can be assured of a friendly and warm welcome by just turning up on the day and talking to anyone.

Lesley Ripley

Traidcraft and Coffee Shop Report

Coffee Shop continues almost every Saturday, and is usually full at some point during the morning. We are very grateful to all the volunteers, and particularly to those whose name appears almost every month - but more are always welcome!

We have reluctantly decided that in view of ongoing supply difficulties on household items with Traidcraft and "We Are Fair Trade", and declining demand for other items, it is not viable to continue to maintain the stock necessary to provide a Traidcraft stall. When there is an opportunity to sell goods at Christmas at a fair or festival, though, it is hoped that arrangements will be made to include items from these and similar sources.

Tim and Sue Bourne

Trinity Men's Group Report

The Trinity Men's Group met monthly through the year with between 14 to 22 attending regularly with an average of 18 present. We had seven speakers on a range of topics – diving on the Mary Rose – the history of a fiddle – the story of a General on the River Kwai – a funeral manager – an optician – a life story from Gary Townsend and the Rev'd Lizzie Hood herself – plus a Christmas Party. The other meetings were just sociable chats.

Our members are from our congregation, friends of the church and others who just attend because they enjoy our fellowship. We meet on the second Tuesday for a pizza supper, a beer or similar and good company.

We are encouraged that the numbers in our mailing list increased to 28 and we hope that other men will join us this year.

Dick Selby

Trinity Women's Group Report

The Group is still recovering from the Covid years in that we have lost several members who have not returned. The Group, like others, struggles to recruit committee members and we still have several vacancies. However, this has not stopped us and we have a very full agenda through 2024 with interesting speakers booked. We are reaching out via Facebook, the Church bulletin, posters and also with emails to members to inform them of the next meeting which we hope will improve membership. Our full programme is displayed on the notice board in The Trinity Room. New members are always welcome.

Catherine Ayling (Leader)

Item 3.3 The financial statement of the church for the year ending 31 Dec 2023

Firstly, a big **thank you** for the contributions of time and money during 2023 which allow us to continue the work of this Church. We ended the year with a **running costs gain of £5,749** This was much better than anticipated due to fundraising efforts. However, Church members regular contributions were not as high as anticipated which means that the Church has to find **£274 a week** from reserves, grants, donations or fundraising to cover costs.

The figures above do not include the costs of replacement heating which we needed as our oil fired system failed during the year. The new system cost £35,782 from our reserves, or which we were able to obtain 40% in grants and VAT reclaim. It will reduce energy costs and emissions as we aim towards net zero environmentally friendly systems.

Our total assets fell to £153,867 (£171,598 in 2022) and our CCLA investments could realise a further £33,000 when we need them. We **will** need them for:

- Repairs to walls and windows due to extensive settlement cracks
- Replacement of rotting Trinity Room roof
- Removal of obsolete heating system
- Redecoration of Church interior
- Increased insulation to reduce energy costs and to help preserve the environment.
- Increases in Parish Share (£4,223) to pay for Clergy and support from the Diocese

A building of this type will always be expensive to maintain, and we would like to extend the ministry of the Church in Leverstock Green - which will require further resources.

In comparison with 2022:

- Collections and Regular Giving did not increase in line with inflation
- Income from donations was up by £309
- Electricity cost £7,065, £1187 in December alone (2022 was £4,120)
- Our contribution to the Diocese for Clergy & central services was £66,579 (2022 was £59,798).
- Fund raising was increased by £794

Highlights!

- We have provided varied opportunities for worship, ministry and friendship every week. This ministry benefited from the use of web technology, email, and printed material to keep in touch with our members and the wider community. This was facilitated by a small group of members to whom we are very grateful.
- We received an energy grant from the diocese of £7,598 towards new heating.
- Our members contributed £6,369 in fundraising through concerts, quizzes, selling tea towels, books, craft and other items.
- We held a Christmas Fair which raised £3,400 – well worth the huge amount of hard work involved.
- We took part in the Rotary Club Santa Sleigh collection which raised £350

Charities

- We contributed to Action Aid, Moroccan flood, Turkey/Syria earthquake and Ukraine support appeals, The Children's Society, The Hospice of St Francis, Air Ambulance, Combat Stress, Fareshare, Mercy Ships, and Embrace the Middle East., amongst others.
- We have set aside £5,233 for Charities, 5% of our income, as in previous years. Suggestions for this year's distribution of the 2023 allocation will be most welcome.

The Future - Budget for 2024

Our unavoidable expenditure continues to rise, and our Parish Share and fuel costs will rise considerably, so we would welcome an increase in income from regular giving and donations from our Members. We would strongly encourage members to join the Parish Giving Scheme, or to consider payment by regular banker's standing order. Anyone who is a taxpayer can Gift Aid their donations by completing a Gift Aid form, available from the Treasurer, to enable us to reclaim tax, which added almost £13,400 to our funds in 2023.

As Treasurer I am in the fortunate position of rarely having to handle cash as paying in and Gift Aid records are all handled by Kathy Perry and Sue Gouch. I would like to thank them for all their hard work. We are most grateful to Geoffrey Dix who has undertaken the task of Independent Examiner.

Martin Chapman, Treasurer

HOLY TRINITY CHURCH - LEVERSTOCK GREEN

FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR 2023

Year Commencing 01/01/2023

2023 Full year budget £		To Date Actual £	To Date Budget £	To Date Exceeding budget £	Difference £	2022 Actual this time last year
	INCOME :					
8000	General Collectors	10,545	8000	2,545	3,090	7,447
51500	Planned Giving	48,299	51500	-3,201	-500	48,898
15875	Tax Refund (with collectors)	12,938	15875	-2,937	-1,540	14,480
7000	Fees	5,590	7000	1,590	-1,173	5,763
8000	Donations	7,600	8000	-400	-309	7,291
9000	Fund Raising	5,794	9000	790	1,802	6,032
400	Hall Hire (fund raising)	2,540	400	2,140	2,290	250
400	Interest and Dividends	3,897	400	3,497	3,429	460
100175	TOTAL	104,202	100175	4,027	5,974	97,220
	EXPENDITURE :					
2000	Clergy Expenses	1,343	2000	637	243	1,500
2800	Church Servants	2,923	2800	-123	-459	2,465
1500	Security	1,472	1500	28	40	1,429
3000	Administration	7,183	3000	817	-192	7,375
10000	Church Upkeep	9,898	10000	114	1,074	8,813
66579	Parish Share	66,579	66579	0	6,781	68,798
4150	Repairs and Maintenance	4,284	4150	-134	-453	3,831
5009	Charitable Giving (5% of income)	7,205	5009	2,195	2,345	4,859
100038	TOTAL	100,876	100038	838	11,268	89,872
137	Gain					
	Operating Surplus >>	3,328	137	3,189	< above budget	7,556

New heating 25,782 Paid from Sygrave Income & building Fund

BALANCE SHEET FOR 2023

ASSETS :	2023 £	Gain/(Loss)	Brought Fwd. 2022
CCLA Deposit Accounts 4.6%	82,041	CE3033320 3,000	89,041
Diocesan Board of Finance - Sygrave Fund	23,252	Cannot use 0	23,252
Debtors			
Inland Revenue 0	8,768	Accrued -451	8,215
Investments: DOBF(Restricted)	601		601
Cash : Bank Accounts & cash	39,104	As Cash sheet -20,280	59,384
CCLA Investment Account	22,813	375 60 shares 0	10,000
CCLA Global Equity Fund	11,034	1020 44 shares 0	10,000
TOTAL Value**	163,897	-17,731	171,886

REPRESENTED BY SOURCES OF FUNDS AS FOLLOWS :

General Reserve - Accumulated Surplus	73,549	9,191	64,357
Emergency Building Fund (Designated/Unres)	27,079	1,555	25,524
Sygrave Capital (Untouchable Endowment)	23,252	Cannot use 0	23,252
Sygrave Income restricted for Church Repair	34	-19,703	19,737
	4,933	335	4,598
Expenditure			
Charitable giving 5% income 4,833		2024 distribution	
Holding Account	12,276	-5,148	17,422
Vicar's discretionary fund	490	-23	813
Junior Church	705	223	482
Hall Hire (COGS)	2,540	-5,895	8,406
Toddlers Church	682	304	378
Youth Group	97	0	87
Choir Fund	211	0	211
Tridcraft	3,851	1,344	2,507
Car Park Fund (Restricted)	915	0	915
Flower Fund	298	-200	525
Poultar Grave Fund for churchyard	1,191	-94	1,275
Craft Group	1,098	400	698
Sundry Trust Funds	601	0	601
TOTAL ASSETS	163,897	0.00	171,886

Signed  Independent Examiner

Date 4/3/2024

Income from Investment Funds

£ Confirmed by DOBF statements

Poultar (Churchyard Upkeep)	350.06
Child (organ Maintenance)	3.87
Sygrave (Church Repairs)	4,894.86

The Benefice of Langelei

Parish of Holy Trinity Leverstock Green

Independent examiner's report to the Parochial Church Council of Leverstock Green – 2023 Accounts

I report to the Parochial Church Council (PCC) on my examination of the accounts of the Parish of Holy Trinity Leverstock Green for the year ended 31 December 2023.

Respective responsibilities of PCC and examiner

The PCC are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The PCC consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

Having satisfied myself that the charity is eligible for independent examination, it is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of Independent Examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also include consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the PCC 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 next statement.

Independent Examiner's Statement

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

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the requirements:
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 130 of the Charities Act 2011; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act

have not been met; or

2. to which my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:



Geoffrey Dix
Independent Examiner

Date: 04 March 2024

Item 3.4 Report on the Fabric, Goods and Ornaments of the church

Fabric

1. Corinthian Stone carried out repair work to the cracks in the Chancel and a small section of the north window in the Chancel was removed, repaired and reinstalled. The repairs have settled and the situation will continue to be monitored.
2. Early last year the heating system was due for a service when the engineer found the boiler to need repair or replacement. Spares were no longer available, and the boiler was condemned. This meant we had no heating in the church, a major concern with winter approaching.
Using an energy survey from ESOS and speaking to recommended suppliers we developed a suitable heating system design using under pew heaters, infra-red radiant heaters, black space heaters and an air curtain.
The Diocese was very quick to issue a Faculty allowing us to proceed with the installation and conversion to 3 phase power.
This system was specified in September and installed early in October but could not be fully tested at the time because we still only had a single phase power supply, the other two phases were present but had never been capped out so were inaccessible to us at the time.
We had been seeking a change over to three phase for weeks prior to the install and this was finally completed in early November, just in time for Remembrance Day.
We had been very lucky with Autumn being quite warm and little or no frost before November.
After the conversion to 3 phase supply we were able to run the whole system and parishioners started to comment on how warm the church was. As winter has progressed there have been some very cold days and there is more work to do in terms of improving heating performance.
The system is being reviewed as winter progresses and we have a number of possible pathways to improving it in an old and draughty church. The good news is that not only is it cleaner than the old gasoil system, but it seems to be cheaper to run with our present calculations.
As an investment in net zero we got all the VAT back and the Diocese granted us 20% of the capital cost. We spent a net £28,000 from church funds and now need to consider how we can replace that money for future investments in the fabric. There will be costs in clearing the stale gasoil and removing the tank from the north side of the church.
3. There is still much to do in preserving our fabric and the work will continue, however it is expensive to physically maintain old buildings and we can only do so because of the generosity of our congregation and the local community.
We would like to thank the past wardens for their support, and sharing their knowledge, the members of the fabric committee for their support, advice and assistance and all of you for your support. You have all been amazing.
4. Lighting in the Trinity Room and Old Vestry was updated with new LED units and required redecoration of the surrounding areas was completed.

Goods and Ornaments

1. A new CCTV system, which had been approved by DAC with an Archdeacon's letter, was installed during May with a CCTV Usage Policy put in place with Miles Cooksey taking the role of Data Protection Officer.
2. A new larger tablet was donated to replace the existing unit which is used for credit card donations. Thanks to all involved for donating, preparing and readying the tablet for use.
3. The Church Inventory and Terrier were completed by the Church Wardens in February. All items were present and the inventory was signed off by the Incumbent.

Churchyard

1. The wall on Church Road, which had suffered damage, was repaired by DBC contractors.
2. Many items of church property had been in long term storage at a parishioner's garage and are now securely housed in a container sited in the car park. The container is shelved internally and everything we use and need in the church is now on church property and no longer needs to be transported every time we need it.
Many thanks to Terry and Kathy Perry for shelving it out and organizing the stock.
3. Outside early in the year I asked Simon Bounds what he would most like for maintaining the graveyard and he said, "A Billy Goat."
I thought he was joking until he explained that it is a large suction device for easy clearing of leaves in the autumn! As you know we have lots of trees in the graveyard and they produce massive volumes of fallen leaves in the autumn. As a result of that conversation, we found a Billy Goat in Kent, almost brand new, which did not suit the guy who had bought it and we got it from him for a bargain price and saved Simon and his team hours and hours of raking up leaves.

Church Wardens

1. In August the Reverend Canon John Williams from St Mary's, Old Town, carried out the annual Archdeacon's Visitation inspection. All went well with all registers and relevant documentation checked as being in order and up to date.
2. From early in the year a steady clearing out of various areas of the church has been going on with the Trinity Room, Alban Room and Old Vestry all having any unrequired items disposed of. With the arrival of the new container it has been possible to store items previously held either in the Church or in Pat Brown's garage. Many thanks go to Pat Brown for the use of her garage for a prolonged period of time which helped the Church out when space was limited. Thank you to Kathy and Terry Perry for all their hard work in systematically clearing the areas noted.
3. A review was carried out in respect of the church keys and keyholders. A new listing has been drawn up and keyholders identified. All spare keys have been labelled and a new key hook has been installed in the Sacristy.

Item 3.5 Reports from Deanery and Diocesan Synods

Deanery Synod Report

This report covers the proceedings of the Hemel Hempstead Deanery Synod for the period from January 2023 to December 2023. During the year there were three Deanery Synod meetings, covering a variety of different topics. The key areas of discussion are reported below:

Thursday 23rd February 2023 at St Benedict's Bennetts End - We welcomed Mandy Davies, Assistant Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser, who gave us an overview of what she and the Diocesan Safeguarding team do. She shared information about their workload, and the kinds of things that they are dealing with day to day. She talked about Safeguarding Training and gave us some ideas of how to make the training less onerous, and how she could help.

Mandy then invited a Q and A from the synod members and safeguarding leads who were present, and answered several queries about training and certification. Positive feedback was given to Mandy that it is good to know there are experienced people at diocese level giving support where needed to parishes.

The Deanery Treasurer Peter Bladon reported on deanery expenditure for the prior year, and parish share payment – a good result with only 2 churches not paying their full parish share (both with an action plan to tackle this).

We shared news from each parish.

April 2023 at the APCM we saw the term time of Deanery Synod Rep for Colin Gage, Mike Hawtin and Beverley Burgess draw to an end and new members volunteering. We welcomed Colin Gage back as he volunteers for another term and two new members welcomed. Liam Derham and Sam Stanbridge.

Wednesday 5th July 2023 at St John's Boxmoor - This month we had no guest speaker. So, we spent the time wisely, greeting and welcoming all new synod members and returning members. Allowing our deanery teams to meet and greet and get to know each other. An informal gathering learning about our roles and how our parishes are getting along. Highlighting to one another challenges and achievements.

We also welcomed Matt Reynard, the newly appointed vicar at St Barnabas where we learnt of his journey leading up to his role at his new parish.

The Deanery Treasurer Peter Bladon reported on expenditure and again shared some positive results. It was also mentioned that two churches are still struggling to pay their parish share which opened up a topic of discussion; as others made suggestions and offered words of support and encouragement.

Peter also brought to the meeting his plan to hand over the role of Deanery Treasurer and is encouraging us all to bring this news back to our churches. His plan is to step down over the course of the year and has confirmed the role is very straightforward and would be delighted to discuss it with anyone wishing to step forward. We drew the meeting to an end with a more formal sharing of parish news from each of the church representatives and plenty of wonderful news was brought up and that there is a lot of positive work happening across the Deanery. Concluded with compline.

Thursday 19th October 2023 at St Alban Warners End - The final meeting of the year saw the welcoming of our guest speaker the Reverend Canon Will Gibbs. Canon for Mission and Pastoral Care, St Albans Cathedral.

Will spoke on two topics. The first being wellbeing within the church with particular reference to clergy wellbeing, and secondly, he consulted the group to help establish a vision statement for St Albans Cathedral for the coming year.

Will is the chair of the Diocesan Wellbeing Group which looks at the wellbeing for each other in leadership roles in the life of our churches. Not just clergy, but anyone in the form of ministry. Also discussing the support available, which includes SIM consultants who mentor/advise/listen and challenge one to one. In

addition to this, confidential clergy counselling services which is also available to spouses. Mediation services are also available in times of conflict. All information is available on the Diocesan website.

With plenty of feedback being offered from the Synod, the discussions were thorough and met with lots of positive feedback and plenty of Q&A.

Moving onto the consultation to establish the Cathedrals vision statement, a MAP is currently being updated for the Cathedral. Hot topics raised by Will were – What’s the purpose of the Cathedral? – What do you most value about your Cathedral? – How should the story of Alban be reflected in the Cathedral? – How would you like the Cathedral to change the world (or a small part of it)?

All of this information can be found in greater detail in the Deanery Synod Minutes dated 19th October 2023. Peter Bladon the Deanery Treasurer produced his report with an explanation on the current accounts. Mentioning all zoom payments had been paid except one. He also mentioned reduced zoom rates which can be discussed with Paul Boggis who can advise.

We concluded the meeting with news from the parishes. One thing to be thankful for and one challenge. A wonderful discussion with plenty of thanks across the Deanery.

The meeting ended with Compline.

Liam Derham

Diocesan Synod Report

The Diocesan Synod is the democratically elected decision-making body of the Diocese of St Albans. Its membership comprises some 200 clergy and laity split approximately 50/50 and elections from the Deanery Synods to the Diocesan Synod are held every three years. Hemel Hempstead Deanery is allocated four clergy and three lay member places on the Diocesan Synod. The three elected lay representatives from our Deanery include Colin Gage and Mike Hawtin and the clergy members include Rev Lizzie Hood.

The Diocesan Synod appoints the members of the various Councils and Boards which govern the Diocese, with the exception of the key body The Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF), whose members are directly elected by the Deaneries from among their members of the Diocesan Synod. Colin Gage is a member of the DBF and the Diocesan Property Company. The Synod itself meets three times annually, and its president is the Bishop of St Albans. The DBF and other Councils and Boards, with their various sub-committees, meet up to six times annually.

At its first meeting in 2023 on **11th March 2023**, the Synod concentrated on:

- Deciding the Diocese response to the Living in Love and Faith proposals and the General Synod resolution on same sex marriage etc
- Changes to the Diocese Grant schemes.
- How to carry forward the proposals in the recent Growing Younger and More Diverse report

The meeting on **17th June 2023** was held by Zoom to reduce the need for travel as part of the Diocese’s efforts to move towards Net Zero Carbon and covered:

- An address by the Lord Bishop of Belize who was visiting the UK as part of the Windrush 75 commemorations.
- Approval of the 2022 statutory Reports and Accounts
- A presentation by the Dean of the Cathedral on plans to revise the Cathedral’s Ministry and Mission
- Details of the Diocese’s bid to secure national funding for our Growing Younger and More Diverse plans.
- The Diocese plans to implement Net Zero Carbon

The third meeting during 2023 took place on **14th October 2023** at the new excellent venue at Putteridge Bury near Luton, and included:

- Further updates on the Diocese plans for Growing Younger and more Diverse.
- Various technical presentations and discussions on the Diocese Budget for 2024 and Stipend levels
- A further update on Net Zero Carbon plans
- Proposals to revise the Parish Grant scheme.
- A lengthy presentation, discussion and question and answer session on what is taking place to facilitate greater diversity and racial justice throughout the Diocese.

The next Diocesan Synod takes place on 9th March 2024 and will be reported on at next year’s APCM.

Colin Gage