

St Peter's Church, Grandborough



Annual Report and Financial Statement of the Parochial Church Council for 2023

PRIEST-IN-CHARGE

Rev Phil Price

BANK

CAF Bank
23 Kings Hill Avenue
Kings Hill
West Malling
Kent ME19 4JQ

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

Mr A Robinson
School Street
Churchover
CV23 0EG

St Peter's PCC has a duty to work with their Incumbent in the Parish in promoting the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, ecumenical, evangelistic and social.

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL AND OFFICERS 2023

Ex Officio members

Priest-in-Charge	Rev Phil Price
Churchwarden	Vacant
Deanery Synod Representative	Alex Suffell
Elected members	Phil Blundred Tom Crane Peter Johnson Dave Proctor Alex Suffell Charmaine Williams Kay Worrall
Officers appointed by the PCC	
Secretary	Tom Crane
Minute Secretary	Dorothy Johnson
Treasurer	Dave Proctor
Electoral Roll Officer	Charmaine Williams

The PCC met 5 times during the year 2023. In view of the small number of members there are no sub-committees

ELECTORAL ROLL - The present total is 16

OCCASIONAL OFFICES - During 2023 we held:

Funerals	4	Jean Sensecall Sandy Marshall Diana Steriopulus David Quartermaine
Memorials	1	Colin Whittaker
Weddings	2	Rebecca Mawby and Nicholas Brown Hailey Ward and William Cooke

Church Attendance Figures	2023
Easter	No service
Christmas Carol Service	220
Christmas Day	No service
Holy Communion (9.00 am)	12
Breakfast Service	14
Remembering Service	22
Remembrance Service	75
Harvest Festival	38
Messy Church (4.30 pm)	10A + 9C

Vicar's Report

2023 was another good year for the Draycote and Leam Valley Benefice as we consolidated and built on the progress made in 2022.

This year it has been particularly pleasing to see our Sunday Worship Streams grow as individuals have embraced them, leading to a significant increase in the number of people willing to travel between the Churches in the Benefice to access a style of worship that works for them.

This is particularly pleasing because it means:

- People are attending Church more often, giving them more space to deepen their faith.
- A sense of community is growing across the benefice, making the sharing of resources easier and more fruitful.
- Attendance at individual services is increasing, making them more attractive and encouraging for both regulars and visitors.

The biggest success story of the new streams is the new '**Celtic Stream**'.

- We have seen the Breakfast service at Flecknoe continue to bring people in.
- A new breakfast service was launched in Grandborough as part of the stream which has been a success, both in terms of bringing people in and offering the opportunity for lay members of the church to take on responsibility for aspects of the service.
- The Communion service in Grandborough has now changed to become a 'Celtic Communion' which has been well received and now attracts people from across the benefice, not just Grandborough.
- The new breakfast service at Bourton has remained small in terms of attendance, however as the same people return to it each month there is a strong sense of community building amongst the congregation which is setting us in good stead for the future.

The **Allsorts** stream has been the biggest 'mixed bag' of the new service pattern.

- It has been a particular struggle in Leamington Hastings where the appetite for a more contemporary informal service has not been strong, despite increasing links with the local school.
- In Willoughby we have seen attendance at Allsorts grow dramatically on the weeks in which the Children's Choir sing at the service.
- In Stretton and Birdingbury the Allsorts services is a bit of a work in progress. Both Churches have seen people coming out to support these services and the Allsorts services in these churches have been particularly successful when linked to festivals (e.g. Harvest, Christingle, Plough etc.).

The **BCP** and **Communion streams** continue to be valuable and appreciated by those who attend them.

- The Communion stream is our most popular stream with our 11.00 am Communion services consistently our best attended services each Sunday.
- The BCP stream is our smallest stream but is valued by those who attend it. It is probably the stream that has the highest percentage of people actively seeking it out across the benefice.

Whilst we have been working hard to tweak and improve our Sunday Worship, this year we have been increasingly aware that the Church is about so much more than what happens on a Sunday morning. The long-term future of our churches relies on us being a community that is at work throughout the week.

In 2023 we saw some successes in the work that we do outside of Sunday morning services:

- The coffee stop in Stretton has been one of the big successes of 2023. It has gone from strength to strength and had to relocate to the Village Hall to be able to accommodate all those who wished to attend.
- The Farmers' Market in Grandborough has also continued to be a community hub within the Benefice with many people coming through the doors once a month to socialise over a drink and have a look at what is on offer in the local stalls.

The success of these two ministries shows that there is a desire for community within our parishes and that our Churches are well placed to take a lead in addressing that need. Going into 2024 onwards being part of creating community within our parishes will be a key part of our mission strategy.

Whilst we have seen success in engaging with members of the wider community who are available during the day, outreach to those who aren't available during normal 9-5 working hours has been more problematic.

- Messy Church continued throughout 2023, run by a dedicated group of volunteers who have been running this ministry for over 12 years. During the year we have seen attendance fluctuate. Some months we saw 20 children attend. This illustrates the enthusiasm for child friendly ministry in the benefice. However, the months where we had 5 or fewer attendees underlines the challenge of finding a time and venue that families can regularly commit to.
- During 2023 our Celebrate@4 service ended after 7 years. This service was affected by similar issues to Messy Church; namely that whilst there were decent number of families that wanted to come, it was rare that they were all available at the same time which was leading to low monthly attendance.
- 'Knightlow Reunited', our youth group for school years 7 & 8 has shown a need for work with teens across the benefice (we have interacted with 45 different 12- and 13-year-olds in the last 2 years). However, we have struggled to find a venue, suitable time slot and volunteers to run it effectively.

Despite these challenges there have been successes in 2023, most notably the continuation of the Children's Choir in Willoughby which has continued to meet and now regularly sings in our Allsorts services and in a local old people's home.

Although it has been challenging finding effective ways to regularly engage with families and older children, we have continued to work closely with the two church schools in our benefice which has brought opportunities to

- welcome families into our Churches for school services
- minister to the children directly through; assemblies, our annual 'moving on day' for year 6's at Knightlow and class visits from clergy
- build relationships with members of staff in our schools

In summary, 2023 has been a positive year. We have achieved a lot in the last 12 months and as I finish, I would like to acknowledge that none of this would be possible without the hard work of too many individuals to mention. The following list is in no way exhaustive, but includes some key groups of people who have been vital to our ministry over the last 12 months

- Our ministry team (made up of Barbara Clutton, Karen Hatch and Karen Armbrister)
- All of our PCC and Benefice Council members
- All of those who have given their time to our work with children and young people (through Messy Church, Celebrate@4, The Children's Choir, Knightlow Reunited and our Schools team).

- The Stretton Coffee Stop and Grandborough Farmers Market teams
- All of those who uphold our Benefice in prayer
- Everyone who makes up our rotas across the whole benefice ensuring that our individual churches and services keep running smoothly

All of these people and so many others have contributed to keep our parishes flourishing in 2023 – but ultimately the one who is responsible for it all is the God who made us all. So, I think I should give the final words to God who tells us in his word that ultimately, he is the one that builds the Church.

I always find this verse grounds me when we have successes and comforts me when we face challenges:

Unless the LORD builds the house,
those who build it, labour in vain.
Psalm 127:1

Chairman's Report

Acts 2:42 in the New Testament includes what could be considered a purpose statement for the church in Grandborough "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer."

Throughout the year our church offered regular worship services, enabling teaching, fellowship and prayer. Our new breakfast service enabled the breaking of bread and time for worship. Alongside this new service the church in Grandborough continued to offer regular communion services, Messy Church for children and much else.

In undertaking these activities we appreciate the support and leadership of our Benefice Clergy Team, who have continued to provide leadership and guidance through the year.

The PCC has sought to play its part in the life of the church in Grandborough and I think this report shows that it discharged its duties faithfully and diligently throughout the year.

I think particular thanks should go to two individuals. First, Pauline Stratton, who retired at the 2023 AGM from the role of Church Warden, after many years of service. Pauline's contribution, both in terms of time and talents has been extremely significant. Second, Dorothy Johnson, who helped with the last "Messy Church" in April 2024, a service she has been coordinating and helping to run for over 10 years. Our thanks to Pauline and Dorothy for all they have done and continue to do for our church.

Finally, the last 12 months have seen two new members of the PCC- Alex Suffell and Phil Blundred joining us. It is great to have new perspectives to help us promote the role of the church in this parish. I should also note with sadness the passing of long standing PCC member Kay Worrall. Kay was a valued contributor to the PCC and she is much missed.

Tom Crane

Chairman, Grandborough PCC

Maintenance Report

During 2023 there were no major maintenance or refurbishment activities undertaken.

The main activities which were completed included the replacement of a window which was damaged during a storm, tree maintenance and regularly scheduled maintenance for the organ, fire systems and lawn mower.

Painting works in the south aisle were undertaken by Peter Johnson and he has the PCC's thanks for all the work completed on this project. The project was challenging as it required use of specialist paint to stop mould appearing in this area. All indications since the works were completed are that this objective has been successfully completed.

In 2023 the church clock began to malfunction on a regular basis. The PCC arranged for a number of quotations to be obtained from specialist clock repairers. Following receipt of these quotations a faculty was applied for to enable repair of the clock and this was approved in April 2024. A number of grant applications have been made and we are waiting to hear back on this. If grant applications are successful it is envisaged that the clock will be repaired in the second half of the year.

Also in 2023 the PCC approved the construction of a new cupboard to be installed in the Church tower at ground level and a new noticeboard. Sufficient funding has now been secured from a range of funders and it is hoped these works will be completed in the second half of the year as well.

Treasurer's Report

The accounts for the year ended 31 December 2023 have been independently reviewed. These show that we have made a net operating surplus of £7,232 in the year to 31 December 2023. The main constituent elements that contributed to this were:

- the increase in covenanted giving;
- an increase in the number of weddings and funerals during the year;
- the grants and refund of electricity charges;
- a reduction in the restoration work to the fabric of the church.

We have received refunds of VAT from the **Listed Places of Worship** for these works and other maintenance works totalling £421.

Following the expiry of our three year policy with **Ecclesiastical Insurance** for insuring the church, we took out a policy for a year to enable us to evaluate options. We will look at the most economical policy, including what cover we actually need and can afford when this comes up for renewal in May 2024 which will include piggy backing on the policies held by other churches in the benefice which may provide us with a more economical policy.

We have paid all of our Parish Share in 2023. For 2024 our share remains at £9,300 which equates to £775 per month. This along with the insurance of £349 a month, contribution to the benefice expenses and our energy costs are not covered by our income from collection, covenanted giving and any gifts and donations we receive. We effectively rely on grants that we apply for, gift aid and the refund of VAT to undertake any major maintenance to the fabric of the church.

We have a fixed price contract with SSE for our electricity until December 2024. Our unit rates are 17p for day and 13p for night. Following an over estimation of our usage in 2022 we received a refund following SSE obtaining readings from our smart meter. The diocese also provided a grant in early 2023 towards our costs which has resulted in us receiving a credit of £1,550 over the year.

We are now contributing £80 a month to the **Draycote benefice**. The account is used to pay Phil's expenses, the Draycote administrator and items which are common to all churches in the benefice such as the website, Zoom licences, printing and materials for bible study/lent services/advent services.

Bank charges – following the increase in interest rates we are now receiving interest on our bank balance and the monthly fee is now £5. The interest rate on our account with the Coventry Building Society has also increased.

We paid all our **Parochial fees** in January totalling £954 for 2023 to the Diocese.

Gift Aid – we claimed Gift Aid on our covenanted giving, collections and gifts and donations in April and received £4,024. We will apply again in April and it is likely that we will be claiming a similar amount.

Dave Proctor
Treasurer

Church Rotas – Readings/Sidesperson/Cleaning/Flowers

We are very fortunate to have an excellent team of volunteers to help with church cleaning and arrange flowers for Easter, Harvest and Christmas. We have had one new volunteer this year. We are very appreciative of all that they do.

Pennies from Heaven 2023

We raised the sum of £100 from our collection boxes during the year and are very grateful to all the parishioners who donated. As less and less people are now using cash, it has been decided to stop door to door collection of the boxes. Everyone has been advised of this change.

Lent Lunch and Christian Aid Coffee Morning

We were delighted to raise £150 for the Leprosy Mission at the Lent Lunch and at the Christian Aid Coffee Morning we raised the sum of £246.50. Added to this, donations were made by e-envelope, and together with Gift Aid, we made the grand sum of £559 for this very worthy cause.

Leam Valley Messenger

We continued to print 650 copies of The Messenger bi-monthly throughout 2023. However, in December this was taken over by the Draycote and Leam Valley Administration Office. The name has been changed to Draycote and Leam Valley Messenger. Although this will continue to be issued bi-monthly, it will mainly be sent by email with paper copies only being delivered to people who have specially requested to receive it, otherwise copies will be left in the churches. This will cut down considerably on costs and time.

Messy Church

Messy Church have met monthly throughout the year, with the exception of January and August. Numbers have dwindled very much this year with an average of 8 children, mainly due to children in the village outgrowing this activity or after school clubs. It wasn't unusual to have more Mums and helpers than we had children. We have been running Messy Church for 12 years and the structure of this may well change in 2024.

Farmers' Market

Farmers' Market is still very popular and brings in a good source of income. During 2023 we raised the sum of £2,358. Our stallholders enjoy coming and are quite well supported. The Café continues to do well, and we are seeing quite a lot of new people coming. There is always a lovely atmosphere and a buzz of chatter at the market.

Web Page/Facebook

Our website, www.stpetersgrandborough.co.uk is updated bi-monthly when The Messenger is printed. **Facebook** is used to advertise our Church services, Farmers' Market and Messy Church.

Easyfundraising

We raised £292.26 through Easyfundraising this year, which is a slight increase from the previous year.

We are very grateful to all the volunteers who help with any of the above duties, and also to those who support us with their donations. On your behalf we would like to thank them all. We couldn't do it without them.

Dorothy Johnson

Electoral Roll Report

The Electoral Roll has been maintained throughout 2023 in line with Diocesan requirements. As at April 2024, a total of 16 individuals, noted below, were on the Parish Electoral Roll.

Kim and Philip Blundred (2)	Angela Brooke	Janet Clarke
Tom and Emma Crane (2)	Helen Ireland	Dorothy and Peter Johnson (2)
Alex Suffell	Pauline Stratton	Olivia Tasker
Jackie Westwood	Charmaine Williams	Barbara Whittaker
David Proctor		

Charmaine Williams

Electoral Roll Officer

Safeguarding Report

There were no safeguarding issues or concerns raised during the year.

Deanery Synod Report

Deanery Synod is a gathering of representatives from Churches around the Rugby area, both lay and clergy. It meets three times a year to discuss, debate and vote on matters relating to the Rugby Deanery. In the year 2023, it met on 07/06/23, 26/10/23. There would have been a meeting earlier in the year, at which time I wasn't the Representative.

Each Deanery Synod begins with a short act of worship led by the host Church, followed by presentations, discussion and debate on the following main topics:

07/06/23: the wording of the standing orders to the Deanery Synod, creation care, and the mission hub.

26/10/23: new worshipping communities, creation care, and the Christ Church Parish.

These topics are followed by standard business including reports from Diocesan Synod, Bishop's Council and the General Synod as appropriate, matters arising from previous minutes, notices and news, and any other business. The Deanery Synod finally closes in prayer.

Alex Suffell

Safeguarding Officer and Synod Representative