

Holy Trinity Church

Potten End

Annual Report and Financial Statements

of the Parochial Church Council

for the year ended 31 December 2023

2023 Annual Report and Financial Statements for the Parochial Church Council of Holy Trinity Church, Potten End

Aim and purposes

Holy Trinity's Parochial Church Council (the PCC) has the responsibility of promoting, sustaining and developing the ecclesiastical parish, and the whole ministry and mission of the church (pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical) in our village community. In fixing its aim, purpose and mission the parish has drawn on its Christian beliefs, faith and heritage but is also conscious of the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the specific guidance given to charities for the advancement of religion.

In line with its Mission Action Plan (MAP), Holy Trinity has a vision to be a welcoming, inclusive and growing church for all, where everyone is encouraged, inspired and nurtured on their journey of faith and Christian living. To offer loving care and support for each other, the wider community and the world, by sharing in the Good News of God's love.

During the year the Parish has:

- Sought to enable all those in Potten End (and beyond) to discover and live out their faith through regular worship, prayer, preaching, study, support and fellowship.
- Tried to demonstrate Christian love, care and concern for others by our pastoral care, social interaction, mission and outreach.
- Used and maintained the structure and fabrics of Holy Trinity Church, Church Room and Churchyard for the benefit of our wider community.
- Sustained a strong pattern of worship, mission, fellowship and community engagement, especially coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Worked towards becoming a silver Eco Church in recognition of our commitment to care for creation and to reduce our impact on the planet whilst encouraging others to do so.

Objectives and activities

The PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to engage and worship at our church and to become part of our parish community. The PCC maintains an overview of worship, mission, evangelism, pastoral care and outreach throughout the parish. The various sub-committees of the PCC make suggestions on how all our 'actions' can involve the many groups that live within our parish, mindful of our MAP priorities to provide and promote various ways for people of all ages and backgrounds to connect with God and Holy Trinity; to ensure sustainability in our endeavours, promoting responsible stewardship (in its various facets), generous hearts and spirit-led service; and to develop our communication and engagement with the needs, aspirations, and concerns of our church family and (importantly) of the wider community.

When planning our activities for the year, we have considered the Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the supplementary guidance on charities for the advancement of religion. In particular, we try to enable people to live out their faith as part of our parish community through:

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

To facilitate this work, it is important that we maintain the fabric of the Church of Holy Trinity and the Church Rooms.

Structure, Governance and Management

The method of appointment of the Wardens and PCC members are laid down in the Church Representation Rules. The PCC members are elected by a vote of those Church members included on the Church's electoral role and normally serve for fixed term periods, retiring by rotation. The PCC are responsible for making decisions on all matters of general concern and importance to the Parish, including all decisions on how the Church's funds are spent and used.

3 formal meetings of the PCC were held during the year and, in accordance with the Church Representation Rules, certain PCC business was conducted via email. The existing PCC structure, which has a number of sub-committees to deal with particular aspects of parish life, has been retained. Regular reports are given at PCC meetings of the Standing Committee, Worship, Social, Mission and Evangelism and Pastoral committees and by the representative members of the Deanery Synod and the Team Council. In addition, reports are provided at each PCC meeting on safeguarding, church fabric, churchyard, church room matters, financial matters and the Potten End Church of England Primary School (of which the church has three Foundation Governors).

During the year the PCC maintained and reviewed its policies to comply with the relevant Safeguarding, Child Protection, Vulnerable Adults, Race Equality, Health & Safety and applicable Fire Regulations.

During 2023 there were 8 baptisms, 3 funerals, 6 burial of ashes, 3 memorial services and 1 wedding. The electoral roll membership is currently 110. The regular worshipping community at the end of 2023 (both online, in person, from Wild Church, Rooted, Sunday services and the daily offices) stands at 64 adults and 21 worshippers under the age of 18.

Financial review

Total incoming resources from unrestricted funds were £94,197 (2022 £90,011), of which £45,522 (2022 £48,172) were giving and associated gift aid, £3,975 (2022 £6,873) were PCC fees received, £13,325 (2022 £12,728) related to income received from letting the Church Room and Newsletter adverts and donations, and £30,099 (2022 £17,102) related to legacies received. Use of the Church Room continued to increase in 2023 contributing a surplus of revenue over cost of £5,898 (2022 £3,349).

Total planned giving through the Parish Giving Scheme (PGS), envelopes and standing orders was £26,445 which was a decrease of 7% from the previous year (£28,513). In addition to this, we also saw a reduction in plate collections and gift aid envelopes of 28% to £6,487 (2022 £9,033).

£78,322 (2022 £79,259) was spent from unrestricted funds, this is an overall reduction of 1%. In 2023 the PCC agreed to return its level of giving to our Outreach aim of 10% from 9%. This was a result of the improved financial position during the year. Our Parish Share contribution, which we continue to pay in full, remains to be a significant cost for Holy Trinity and this year accounted for 65% (2022 64%) of the total expenses relating to the work of the Church.

The net movement in unrestricted funds was an increase of £15,875 (2022 £10,752 increase).

Total incoming resources from designated funds in 2023 was £5,797 (2022 £152,658), which relates to income earned on our investments. We continue to depreciate assets capitalised in 2022 and 2023 that have been funded through our designated funds. Total depreciation in relation to these assets was £7,461 (2022 £5,231).

Overall, the net movement in total funds for the Holy Trinity was an increase of £25,681 (2022 £145,222 increase).

During the year we invested £50,000 from the legacy income received in 2022 into our CBF Investment Funds. Our investments performed well in 2023 and we recognised an unrealised gain of £11,490 (2022 £10,435 unrealised loss).

Reserves policy

The PCC aim to maintain a balance on free reserves (net current assets), which equates to at least three months' unrestricted payments. This is equivalent to around £19,500. It is held to smooth out fluctuations in cash flow and to meet emergencies. The balance of the free reserves at the year-end was £105,936 (2022 £145,861) which is well in excess of this target.

It is our policy to invest our fund balances with the CCLA Church of England Investments and Savings accounts.

The PCC also holds reserves against the potential risk of losing a major donor of the church, a regular church room letting or newsletter advertiser.