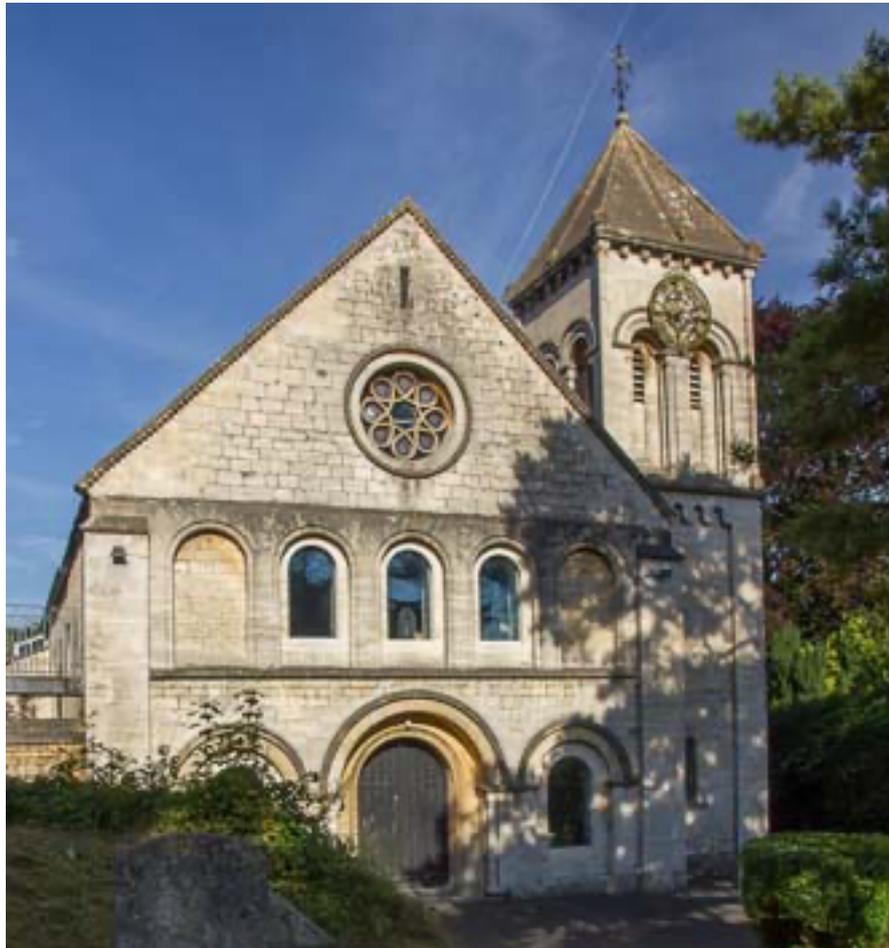


The Parochial Church Council of
Holy Trinity Brimscombe



Annual Report and Accounts
Year ended 31 December 2023



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

DIOCESE OF GLOUCESTER

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION 2023

Administrative Information

Holy Trinity Brimscombe Church is situated in Brimscombe It is part of the Diocese of Gloucester within the Church of England. The correspondence address is Revd Peter Francis, *The Rectory, Walkley Hill, Rodborough GL5 3TX*

The website address is <https://brimscombechurch.org.uk/>

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is a charity excepted from registration with the Charity Commission.

PCC

Rev P Francis – Vicar. Ex-officio

Mrs V Robson – Reader. Ex-officio

Mr Peter Gee – Reader. Ex-Officio

Mr C Short – Warden. Ex-Officio

Mrs S Bennie – Treasurer. Elected with 0 years to stand

Mrs J Hancock – Elected with until Sept 2024

Ms D Sennick – Elected with 2 years to stand.

Ms J Wilson – Elected with 2 years to stand.

Mr R Kerr – Secretary. Warden. Ex-Officio.

Mrs H Kerr – Elected with 2 years to stand.

Mrs Maggie Adams - Elected with 2 years to stand.

Deanery Synod Reps:

Permitted 1 rep and there is currently a vacancy

Structure, governance and management

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. All Church attendees are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC.

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER: Mr. Ian Townsend, Merlin Tax and Accountancy,

18 Merlin Close, Brockworth, Gloucester GL3 4GA

BANKERS: National Westminster Bank plc., George Street, Stroud, Gloucestershire.

AIMS AND ORGANISATION

The main purpose of the PCC is defined in the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956 as “to co-operate with the Minister in promoting in the parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelical, social and ecumenical”

There have been 6 full PCC meetings since the last APCM on 14th May 2023. PCC membership after that APCM numbered 11 including ex-officio members.

Numbers on the Electoral Roll in March 2023 totalled 37 with 17 resident members and 20 non-residents.

MINISTRY TEAM: organises all aspects of ministry and worship

PCC STANDING COMMITTEE: meets at short notice on behalf of the full PCC and looks after fabric and grounds.

PCC ANNUAL REPORT FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2023

The Annual Parish Church Meeting took place on Sunday 14th May 2023 after the service of Morning Prayer at Holy Trinity Brimscombe with Rev Peter Francis in the chair.

Review of the Year 2023

Mission and worship

The sermons have been following a pattern of Benefice wide sermon series , (often utilising the lectionary readings) including ‘These are the days of Elijah’ and ‘Who is Jesus?’. Services are on Sunday at 11am, with Joint services typically happening on the 5th Sunday of The month. These Joint services had been focused around St Mary’s Woodchester, but have started alternating between St Mary’s and Brimscombe School.

People were invited to services and events throughout the year via the Common Ground emails. The Common Ground magazine was relaunched after a period without an editor and we would like to extend our deep thanks to Alyson Rogers.

A lunchtime bible study group Soul Food occurs on alternating Thursdays from 1pm to 2.30pm in the Upper Room – we share lunch together and then turn our attention to a book

in the bible and finish up with praying for each other and for others. In 2023 we studied the book of Daniel and have begun Hebrews.

As Peter Gee discusses below, on Tuesday evenings we have been meeting via zoom to study the bible together. It is an informal time and everyone enjoys contributing. There are some very wonderful conversations.

On Wednesdays during Lent we studied 24-7 prayers “The Lectio Course” – looking at how we can listen to God through scripture

In 2023 there has been 1 baptism and 2 funerals in the church as well as services at local crematoria.

Peter Gee: Benefice Bible Study Group on Zoom – Tuesday Evenings at 7.30pm

After I had completed my training as a Reader in October 2019, I felt that God wanted me to put some basic foundations in place at Holy Trinity, Brimscombe. The first thing on my heart was to start a prayer group, and Helen and Richard Kerr had already come to me with their vision to start a prayer group. After all, nothing happens without prayer. It is the foundation of everything, and all renewal and revival always starts with prayer. And so on 6th March 2023 we started a prayer group in the Upper Room every Monday night during term times at 7.30pm for an hour or so.

The second thing on my heart was to start a Benefice Bible Study Group, which I decided to start online on Zoom, so that it could potentially include people from all three churches within the benefice, and also those who were housebound or sick. It is also nice during the cold winter months to meet from the comfort of your own living room. We started meeting in early 2023, on Tuesday nights during term time, from 7.30pm to 8.45pm.

Whilst this has not yet become the benefice group that I had first pictured (as Andrew Pemberton runs an online Bible Study Group on Zoom on Thursday nights that Woodchester people tend to attend, and there is also an in person Bible Study Group called Soul Food that meets every two weeks on Thursday lunchtimes in the Upper Room), yet we normally have up to half a dozen of us or so who attend regularly.

For most of 2023, over 40 sessions, we went through the whole of the Gospel of Luke, which I personally found very exciting, as I had always wanted to study a whole gospel from start to finish. I had considered my favourite gospel, John, the shortest, Mark, and also the great teaching and Jewishness of Matthew. But in the end, I chose Luke, because it focuses on the poor, needy, and outcasts, and it is a gospel of care and the love of Jesus, as well as being very rich in detail. We had also just done a sermon series on the book of Acts before that, and so it made sense to study Luke, who had written both books.

We then did a short Advent series of studies on some of the main characters in the birth of Jesus, such as Elizabeth, John the Baptist, Mary and Joseph, and looking at some of the famous Old Testament prophecies about the birth of the Messiah.

At the start of 2024 we have started studying the Epistle to the Romans, after Peter Francis told me that Simon Ponsonby (St Aldates in Oxford) had preached on the whole of the book of Romans. Whilst there is a lot of content within the 16 Chapters, yet it is also so rich, like a proper three course meal spiritually, so that you always go away feeling fed and refreshed. At present, we are about one third of the way through Romans and will be resuming on Tuesday nights following the Easter holiday.

During Lent, Peter Francis led a mission focused course called "Fruitfulness on the Frontline," which we then broke from Romans and joined in with. There was both an in-person group at Woodchester School, and an online group on Zoom on Thursday evenings. I found it to be a very good and practical Lent course, encouraging us in small acts of love and kindness, and telling our own story of faith when appropriate.

Peter Gee

Helen Kerr: Prayer Group at Brimscombe Upper Room - Monday Evenings at 7.30pm

The Monday night prayer group is open to everyone, whether you have belonged to a prayer group before or would like to join for the first time it is a relaxed environment. We begin with a bible passage and then see where God wants to take us. It usually includes music from an artist, and prayers often are for the community, the world, for healing, for friends, for Church, and for salvation and revival. It is a wonderful opportunity to be with God in prayer, psalms and worship music and there is often a palpable spirit of gratitude for all that He has done and is doing. Everyone is welcome to join us. We try to meet every Monday save for bank holidays and PCC meetings.

Helen Kerr

Jayne Hancock: Initiatives to increase attendance/community engagement activities

The church building was kept open every day of the year, providing a place of prayer and reflection for the community.

Outreach into the community included:

Weekly Open the Book and Clergy Worship at Brimscombe Primary School.

A monthly coffee and chat morning at the Long Table, everyone is welcome. This included a Carol singing morning before Christmas led by Peter Gee.

Occasional special All Age services at the school including Mothering Sunday 2023, joint benefice services and Christingle

A curry and jazz evening in April '23 in aid of Tearfund, with thanks to Liz and Ian Davies.

A church cake sale at 'Party in the Playing Field' July '23 which made over £230 for church funds. A follow up event for July '24 is currently being planned.

Interaction with Nelson Trust, in person and via email to provide updates and information about church events, such as spring cleaning and cake making. Nelson Trust held their Christmas show in the church with some church members attending. Nelson Trust reached out to the church when they had issues with heating in the Old School. The church could offer the upper room for their Tuesday meetings and the group continues to make use of this.

River baptisms for residents of Nelson Trust. These were held with the Grace Network outside Brimscombe Mill.

Brimscombe Roving Nativity with the school ending at the Ship Inn.

The whole school came to church for a wonderful Christmas celebration in December 2023.

Since then in March '24 the church held a cake sale outside the school. £200 was raised to share between school and church. Lovely to meet pupils, carers, parents and all involved with our school.

Jayne Hancock

Church Warden's comments

The Church building has been open during the day on the timed lock for the whole year, 8-4 during the winter months and 8-6 over the summer.

The church had a spring clean in April, including all those high rise cobwebs, and later in the year a major works party got stuck in to clear the external corridor outside the vestry, and to cut back trees overhanging that area. Thank you all for adapting to make the functioning of the church as inclusive as possible by cleaning, preparing, helping and keeping in contact with each other. We are particularly grateful to Rob Amor who has helped on several projects, and would also like to thank all the 'spring and autumn clean' teams, including the huge support from friends at the Nelson Trust. The church yard is closed, and is managed by the Parish and District Council. This year a meeting was held with Mike Wardell the Tree Warden regarding an Ash tree that had succumbed to Ash Dieback. A faculty was applied for from the Diocese and the tree cut down in March 2024. The cutting of the grass was discussed and it was agreed that there will be a later cut in August to allow the wild flowers, including some orchids, to flower.

The church organ was given consideration in 2023, and the wardens met with the Diocese specialist to discuss options. The specialist confirmed it was unusable currently with a number of issues, and in effect beyond economic repair. Nonetheless the Diocese would prefer us to keep the organ. The Diocese specialist suggested one potential option may be to replace the keyboard area with an electric organ whilst keeping the pipes for display. It is not a priority decision item however, so long as there is an adequate keyboard for people to play organ style music, for instance at funerals.

We await the 2024 quinquennial report from David Newton, and anticipate there will be work to be done. The main external issue being some cracks in the lead near the tower and related crumbling of the stonework, keeping the guttering and drains clear. Internally we are keen to do some running repairs on the parts of the interior walls which are flaking, including replacing current plasterboard with one less prone to damp, per David Newton's recommendation. A leak in the downstairs toilet resulted in the floor needing to be replaced in early April 2024. The heating system has also been inconsistent, resulting in the church being cold during some services, largely due to old rusty pipes which blocked the system and burst. These have been replaced and a magnet fitting to collect them. This will be emptied when the boiler is serviced annually. The boiler should now function well for a few more years now but the wardens are investigating alternative options including infra-red, convection heating, pew heaters, wall heaters and air source heat pumps. Replacing the current system with a like for like is not thought to be an option.

We will be exploring some grants in the coming year to help make the place more homely and less damp and cold. If anyone wants to help with this do get in touch.

Chris Short and Richard Kerr, Churchwardens

School Governors Reports

Peter Gee, Ex-Officio Governor - Brimscombe C. Of E, School Report for APCM 2024

Brimscombe Church of England Primary School is a Voluntary Aided School, which means that the Gloucester Diocese owns the school buildings. The original church school was founded in 1840 and the new school building was created in 1997, a bit lower down Brimscombe Hill.

There are currently 10 Governors on the board of Brimscombe Church of England School, including Holy Trinity congregation members Graham Ayre (Chair of Finance Committee), Catherine Crampton (Chair of Education Standards and Ethos Committee), Theresa Yates-Round, and Rod Harris (Chair of Governors, who worships at Woodchester). Graham Ayre, Catherine Crampton and Rod Harris have all renewed their terms of office for an additional 4 years over the past few months.

Reverend Peter Francis felt that he could not give adequate time to both the Woodchester and Brimscombe governor boards and so nominated Peter Gee as Reader to hold the Ex-officio position in his place at Brimscombe for a 4 year term from 15th January, which was then ratified by the Governors board on the 18th January. The Governors would like to offer their special thanks to Fiona Short who retired as a Governor in March 2024, after serving for 12 years as the lead on SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) in the school.

The school's vision is based upon 1 Corinthians 16:13-14 - "Stay alert and hold firmly to all you believe. Be mighty and full of courage. Let love and kindness be the motivation behind all that you do". This verse also underlines the School's five key values of (1) Kindness (2) Respect (3) Courage (4) Friendship (5) Responsibility; and the School's mantra of "Doing my best for myself and for others". The School also has a PTA (Parent Teacher Association) called FOBS (Friends of Brimscombe School) who meet together regularly in the village.

The school received its latest Ofsted inspection (Office for Standards in Education) on 28th and 29th June 2022 and received the rating of "Good" in all areas.

There are currently 97 pupils in the School, and 26 of the children also receive additional support; plus the Bumblebees baby and toddler group on Friday mornings, which then feeds the Pre-School. From September 2022 the classes were restructured into the following year groups: Pre-School and also the EYFS (Early Years and Foundation Stage), Reception and Year 1 in the Robins class, Years 2 and 3 in the Dragonfly class, Years 4 and 5 in the Kingfisher class, and Mrs Brown leads Year 6 in the Otter class. Year 6 were changed into a single year group in order to give them the best possible preparation for their 11 Plus exam and for secondary school.

Religious Education is taught weekly and is one of the 12 core Key Stage 1 and 2 National Curriculum subjects, together with English (Reading and Writing), Maths, Science, Design and Technology (DT), History, Geography, Art (and Design), Music, Physical Education, Computing, and Foreign Languages.

Brimscombe School holds Worship for the whole school, three times a week in the hall, and on the remaining two days, all of the classes participate in their own class Collective Worship. The main Worship times in the hall are led by Reverend Peter Francis, Rod Harris, Nicki Brown or the Head Teacher. Every Friday there is an open house Celebration Worship which is open to all members of the school community. There is an Open The Book team from Holy Trinity who led the main Worship in the hall once a week, comprising of congregation members led by Helen Kerr.

The children's Collective Worship times in their class sessions focus on prayer, reflection and Bible stories, and pupils are able to convey their thoughts through prayers, poems, writing and artwork. The children learn about all of the major religious faiths of the world and are taught to be tolerant and respectful of others and their beliefs and behaviours.

Our special thanks go to Jayne Hancock and her team of cake makers ran a successful cake stall in March 2024 to raise funds for both school and church and raised around £200.00.

The biggest news of this year came in Term 3 when Head Teacher Joe Roberts confirmed that he had been offered the post of Head Teacher at Callowell School and so would be leaving Brimscombe School in July 2024. Joe had already been sharing the Head Teacher role with Nicki Brown since September 2024, who had been stepping up for 2 days per week whilst Joe looked after Bisley and Oakridge schools, whilst they awaited for their own new head teachers. The Governors would like to thank Joe Roberts for his hard work, vision, drive, hard work, and faithful service to the Brimscombe School during his time with us. Do please pray for Joe and his family as he takes on this new role, and please do also pray for the Governors as they seek to appoint the person of God's choosing as the new Head Teacher. This role is pivotal in order to continue the Christian vision and leadership within the school.

Finally, let us continue to pray for our village School, the parents and carers, for all of the hard work of the teachers and all of the volunteers, and for all those who help to lead the worship there, and our Open The Book team. Please do let Helen Kerr know if you would be interested in joining the Open The Book team. And please do continue to pray for peace over all of the children, parents, and staff and for harmony in all areas of the school over the coming year, and that we would see new people come to faith.

“Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these” (Matthew 19:14)

Peter Gee, Governor

Theresa Yates-Round, Foundation Governor Report, Brimscombe CofE March 2023 – April 2024

Foundation Governors are: Rod Harris (Chair), Peter Gee (ex-officio), Catherine Crampton, Fiona Short (leaving April 2024), Graham Ayre, Theresa Yates-Round

The school revised and reviewed its vision statement at the beginning of 2023 and is rooted in the bible verse, 1 Corinthians 16: 13-14:

‘Stay alert and hold firmly to all you believe. Be mighty and full of courage. Let love and kindness be the motivation behind all that you do.’

This is visible everywhere, in every classroom throughout the school. The staff are all on board and there is every desire to enforce ‘love and kindness’ as the motivation for everything that each adult and child does in every aspect of their interaction throughout the school day. This is ongoing and revisited as often as it can be in inset days and talked about with the children in class.

In March 2023 the school was visited by the team from the Statutory inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) and their report was overwhelmingly good. They recognised the teaching of RE is good and as governors we will be focussing on elevating the

extent of in-depth RE teaching that is age appropriate through assessment and monitoring progress. In addition, the children benefit from good teaching of the national curriculum with a dedicated and enthusiastic staff together with a varied after school club programme. The children receive weekly worship with from either Rev Peter Francis or Rod Harris leading. All children have an area in their classrooms for them to express either through written or drawing pictures, a prayer or thought and the older children regularly write and say their prayers to parents at the weekly assemblies of celebration on Fridays. In addition, the amazing Open the Book team visit the school each week.

The link with the church family is healthy and having done the Diocesan programme for Experience Easter with the Open the Book team, we are looking forward to continue the Experience programme this academic year and beyond. It was good to welcome the children back to the church and they were able to celebrate their Christmas end of term service. They have been absent from the church building following the Covid years. The school is thriving and currently full with again maximum numbers for the next academic year and possible wait list being instigated.

As I write this the Governing Body are actively seeking a new Headteacher and Joe Roberts will be moving on to head Callowell school. The importance of appointing an incredibly hardworking, inspirational and faith based leader, such as Joe has proven to be exceptional in continuing the excellent education for the children at Brimscombe School.

Theresa Yates-Round, Governor

Brimscombe School - Open the Book

The children enjoy the weekly dramatic presentation of a Bible story by the 'Open the Book' team. The School have always been very eager for us to offer this service to them as part of their Religious Education curriculum. We currently have a small team of three so rely on children, teachers and anyone else to join in. We make our own costumes and props, it's great fun. The children absolutely love it and can't wait to volunteer.

In 2023 Open the book was very successful, it had a short pause as the School re-jigged the curriculum and we didn't have anyone for the new days. However, the children and staff, really missed the Open the Book team and realised that having us visit every Monday morning had a very positive effect on the whole school wellbeing for the week, so the school are looking forward to them returning from the 15th April 2024. The School are very excited and we look forward to getting involved again.

Helen Kerr

A copy of the Lion Storyteller Bible, used by the team, was presented to each reception class child on joining the school.

Safeguarding has been kept on the agenda, with each PCC member and others in leadership required to complete on-line training every 3 years, and the required DBS checks have been carried out.

Church Giving

Our income is tithed, and we support our missionaries and certain local organisations financially and in prayer including Nelson Trust, The Grace Network, The Door Youth Project, Amigos Worldwide, Arocha UK.

Financial Review

Total receipts on ordinary unrestricted funds were **£31055** and are detailed in the financial statements.

Total payments in the year were **£31849** The largest item of expenditure was **£23,188** on the Parish Share which is a payment to the Gloucester Diocesan Board of Finance to enable it to provide the parish with clergy and support services.

The net result for the year was a deficit of receipts over payments of **£15** which was paid from reserves.

A number of payments, such as Mission Giving, were carried over to January 2024.

Full financial reports are published on the Church website.

<https://brimscombechurch.org.uk>

Sarah Bennie, Treasurer

Approved by the PCC on 10 April 2024 and signed on their behalf by

..... **Chairman**