



ANNUAL REPORTS

FOR PRESENTATION AT THE AGM
2023

Our Mission within Thatcham

WELCOME TO OUR ANNUAL REPORTS FOR 2022

The Annual Reports for 2022 tell some of the story of the life of our church. Following 2 years of pandemic restrictions, this year has been one of recovery, and of new beginnings for our Sunday worship and various activities. The church was open again for the year with cautious progress and without face-masks from January. The vaccination programme had made a significant difference to our lives. However, in addition to an anxious and nervous start to the new year, came the invasion of Ukraine in February which shook the world with its threat to peace and the world economy.

In March it felt good that the Knit and Natter, Coffee Break, Toddlers Group and refreshments after the Sunday services restarted. Various other meetings regained normality as we moved away from zoom. Underlying our activities and worship there appeared to be a struggle with confidence, and some fear, as numbers attending increased slowly. Our mid-week services restarted in October.

This Book of Reports records the worship and business of the church as we pressed on as safely as we could in 2022. And so, the faithful commitment to worship God has continued to be this church's testimony. We thank the Elders who have served the church in 2022 for their commitment with a good heart and faithfulness to the responsibilities they have carried, knowing they serve God in serving others. Their support this year for our church family, the finances and our premises, in challenging times is hugely appreciated.

Again, in 2022, there have been many personal and known pastoral challenges and much new anxiety and change with the onset of the economic downturn and increases in the cost of living. It is also worth remembering the death of Queen Elizabeth in September, the lying in state and her epic and moving funeral. Most of us had only ever known having the Queen on the throne. Covid anxious days had changed into unsettled days. Therefore, as in previous years there should be a special gratitude for all those amongst our church family and friends who prayed for others they found in their care, who showed acts of kindness, thoughtfulness and comfort, often unseen, and who through faith trusted God for hope and strength to be salt and light to those around them. It is these things that will be remembered.

Thank you to all those who have contributed to this book of Annual Reports for 2022. Thanks are also due to Roy Tubb who has produced a report on last year entitled: '2022 – Covid Diminished'.

With our shared faith in Jesus Christ,

Revd John Lee

CHURCH SECRETARY

It was a relief to put lockdown behind us and start to get back to some normality by holding services in church, although we still have some members and friends who haven't felt able to come back to join in worship in person. For these people we have continued to deliver a printed copy of the service every Saturday, but the Elders feel they need to review this during the early part of 2023 due to the many calls on Elders' time. The full service is published on our Facebook page every week by Esther, a huge commitment.

Becoming social again took a bit longer, gradually introducing refreshments after the service and then re-starting Coffee Break. Team Iris, Tess and Sheila were not in a position to be involved, so Gill took on the challenge, with other help gratefully received. We endorsed our thanks to Iris, Tess and Sheila with flowers and engraved vases.

Towards the end of the year, Weekday Worship re-commenced after Coffee Break twice a month and has been well attended. We also re-introduced Elders serving Communion from November.

Sunday services continued to be filmed throughout the year, thanks to the dedication of Alan T, with occasional help from Alan M and David. Viewings seem to have dropped off a bit; although we will continue to film into 2023 it is another aspect to be reviewed. We would welcome any comments on whether people find this useful and if it should remain as a form of outreach.

The new website was launched in March and we thank Jackie T for the many hours she put in working with iChurch to pull it all together. But it didn't stop there, as a website needs continual updates and new posts added in order to remain useful for visitors to it. Have you spent time exploring it? Please pass on any comments that you have.

Church meetings resumed, following Sunday services and attendance has been good. It was with great pleasure that we passed resolutions to welcome new members during the course of the year: Ernest, Samantha, Nikki and Cath.

Several of our seniors have been to the Vintage Adventure at the Methodist Church and have enjoyed the varied activities on offer.

The situation in Ukraine has been very much on our minds and we have joined with churches all over the world in praying for peace, and safety for the displaced population.

The Ride+Stride event for Berkshire Churches Trust in September, was supported by keeping our church open for visitors, but we didn't have anyone to ride or stride. Please keep the date for 2023 – it's always on the 2nd Saturday in September.

We supported Foodbank and Commitment for Life with our Harvest celebration. We requested specific items for donation to Foodbank and monetary donations went to Commitment for Life. Gill made a lovely Harvest Sheaf as a centrepiece for the communion table.

A deeply meaningful Remembrance service was led by Revd David Witts, followed by the Civic Service at the War Memorial, which was very well attended.

Cafe Services were held on all the fifth Sundays and continue to be a lovely relaxed and different way of worshipping, enhanced by the enthusiastic music of the church band.

Rosemary King moved home and has settled well into her new surroundings in Woolton Hill and it was lovely to see her and daughter Jacquetta in church before Christmas. Likewise Margaret Gill decided it was time to move out of her bungalow and is comfortable in Winchcombe, having also had a couple of spells in hospital. Sadly our good friend Lillian Loveless passed away during the year and several folk from our church went to her funeral at West Berks Crematorium.

Happily we were able to have our full complement of Christmas services – all-age Nativity, Carols by Candlelight and Christmas Day celebration. And a Christmas Lunch following our Church Anniversary, which was led by one of our former ministers, Revd Daphne Preece (formerly Williams).

Thanks to Karen, we have a full duty rota again, and it is encouraging that many members have offered themselves for duties on a Sunday morning. The Elders have still been working tirelessly to enable church life to go smoothly and took time out for an Away Day at Aston Tirrold Centre of Reflection to talk about past, present and future, as well as spiritual refreshment for each other. Together with homemade soup from Esther, cakes from Jackie W and chocolates from Karen!

Thank you to everyone who has played a part in the life of our church throughout 2022. The Elders all have other commitments and challenges outside of church life yet still find the energy to ensure the church is moving forward, with David keeping us in order at our Elders' and Church meetings. We have all been saddened with Alan T's health issues and surround Alan, Jackie and their boys with our love and prayers. John and Rachel are amazing in all they do and we are so grateful for their commitment to us. Thank you.

Alan Mossman, Hon Secretary

TREASURER

Please see separate Financial Report

BABY AND TODDLER GROUP

Sadly, due to the pandemic, the Toddler Group closed on 13th March 2020. As some activities started to resume in early 2022, it was felt that there was a need to reopen the group to reach all those socially isolated by Covid. The previous leadership team had all moved on in the two years that we had been closed but with the need so great, John, Kevin and Linda agreed to join me to get everything up and running again.

We spent time sorting and cleaning all the toys and equipment ready to re-open on 4th March 2022.

At our first session we were joined by just 9 toddlers, all of whom had little experience of this type of activity. Within a few weeks our numbers were growing, welcoming many new faces but also some returning faces.

Through the year we averaged about 20 children each week, with a lovely assortment of parents,

grandparents, carers and childminders. We keep the group up to date using Facebook, sharing activities and appropriate photos, this has been invaluable in reaching out and attracting new members.

The sessions are led by the church team, with toys, activities, themed crafts and latterly parachute games and singing sessions. There is always a sense of fun and a very warm welcome to all joining us.

We are grateful for the additional support from other church members, particularly David, Rachel, Gill and Diane and look forward to their continued support along with Karen and Sam.

It has been a privilege to be in a position to support the group and represent the church in this way and to work with such a great, caring team, we look forward to continuing to support the children and their grown ups as we move forward.

Esther Lewis, Toddler Group Co-ordinator

BADMINTON CLUB (BURCS)

This year we have paid £427.00 into the Old British School fund up to December 2022. We still need more regular players but have just recently got 3 new regular players (thanks to the Edge family).

It is still a fun event that includes a lot of social interaction between church members and non-members (we call it chatting).

If anyone else wishes to come and play the prices are £4 for workers and £3 for students and pensioners. We meet Thursdays from 8 till 10pm, anyone and everyone is welcome, even if you want to come down and laugh at a bunch of geriatrics trying to pick up fallen shuttlecocks.

The new net is in full use but sad to say it hasn't improved our badminton skills.

A big thank you, to the dedicated group, who persevere every Thursday.

Kevin Roberts

BAPTISMS

After 2 years of Covid restrictions, we welcomed our first family back for Infant Baptism in February. The Moss family brought William before God and it was a real joy to welcome his older sisters back with his parents.

In November we were privileged to welcome Cath into our church family, witnessing both her Adult Baptism and Church Membership.

Esther Lewis, Baptism Secretary

THATCHAM CHRISTIAN AID COMMITTEE

Chair's Report, September 2022

This has been another stop-and-start year for fundraising, with the continuing effects of the pandemic, and the new effects of the Ukraine War and the cost-of-living crisis. On the downside, we had to cancel our Beetle Drive with Fish and Chip supper in March, due to lack of interest. People just did not want to come out to meet together under the circumstances. On the upside, we did have a very successful Lent Lunch at the Methodists and Good Friday Lunch at St Mary's (with thanks to the people from both Churches who helped arrange it).

We held another Collection Point (though no House-to-House) for Christian Aid week, and managed to raise a very credible £1,200 (plus £315 direct to Central Christian Aid via one supporters sponsored '30,000 steps in May'). We have also added another contactless card reader. Personally, I realised Mary Baker's amazing contribution to Christian Aid Week as Treasurer over the years. In her absence for a knee replacement I had to organise it, and saw the incredible amount of work it normally is for her. I would like to record my gratitude before she gets back to it next year!

We are incredibly grateful to all our supporters in Thatcham, not least those in the Churches who have given to us and prayed for us. You have been incredibly generous.

However, we were not able to organise any other events this year (such as carol singing or a Tesco collection), and giving is still down from pre-pandemic levels (of about £4,000pa). We have also yet to respond to the drought and famine in East Africa, or the DEC Appeal for the flooding in Pakistan. And Christian Aid's other projects of course go on as well.

So, if you can, please can I urge you to continue to give generously. If you can't give, please do pray for us.

We would also always welcome new members to the Committee. I would again like to thank the small band of Committee Members for their work over the past year. By helping us survive, they have helped Christian Aid provide 'food for the hungry and water for the thirsty' – practical help as an outpouring of God's love.

More recently, we'd also like to thank the Churches for their generous response to the Turkey / Syria earthquake appeal, whilst noting that ongoing work still needs funding. Sadly some giving streams (eg from the UK Government) have just been shifted to the earthquake response from continuing projects, leaving even more need there.

Sarah Bennet, Hon Chair, Thatcham Christian Aid Committee – Jackie Wood, URC Rep

CHURCH BAND

With the Covid restrictions now over, the church band is back in force. The band plays for third Sunday services and the 5th Sunday café services. Gill Mossman plays clarinet, Rachel Lee Johnson on cello, Jackie Tarry on violin and Tim Groves on guitar. The changes are rung with some members alternating the instruments they play, Helen Groves on clarinet and euphonium, Nikki Pizzey on

trumpet and keyboard and Karen Fakes on keyboard and violin. It has been a pleasure to welcome Laura Braithwaite as a flautist into the band.

Playing in the church band gives members the opportunity to play those instruments they played in their youth. As always we always welcome new members whether regular church goers or not so if you or anyone you know would like to join us please do so, no matter what level.

Karen Fakes

CHURCHES TOGETHER IN THATCHAM (CTIT)

Churches Together in Thatcham (CTIT) in 2022 comprised St Mary's and St Barnabas, the Baptist Church, Methodist Church, United Reformed Church and The Well (Glendale Church, Green Lane). Following 2 years of being impacted by the pandemic restrictions and the use of various other means of communication, the churches had resumed meeting face to face in the respective buildings at the beginning of the year.

The monthly CTIT Church Leaders meetings continued having just returned to face to face meetings at the various churches at the end of 2021. These meetings continued to provide fellowship, support and discussion regarding ministry challenges as well as prayer for the churches, the schools, the town and mission opportunities. The quarterly CTIT Executive Meetings, which last met just before the lockdown, were now planned to restart with a new format and remit for lay representative roles in Autumn 2022.

Revd David Taylor continued as Chair of CTIT. The Secretary and Lay Representatives Chair was Susan Deering-Punshon. The Treasurer was Elizabeth Oxbury. Jacqueline Wood continued to be the CTIT URC Lay Representative. Karen Frost, (Pastoral Development Worker) continued to join the Church Leaders meetings.

Activities throughout 2022:

With the churches in a recovery mode after 2 years of pandemic restrictions, and the general loss of confidence of some people feeling nervous concerning larger gatherings, some events for the year were affected.

Some limited schools work, assemblies and workshops were carried out by church leaders during the year when permitted. Joint Church Leaders and Headteachers Breakfasts were held each term after recommencing in Autumn 2021. These meetings were greatly valued by the headteachers.

In January the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity daily meetings for the Week were poorly attended, but the Pulpit Swap Sunday by church leaders was well received. It was agreed that the format of the WOPFCU daily meetings would be reviewed for next year. Prayer4Thatcham Meetings held on alternate months on a Sunday evening recommenced in May 2022.

Lent lunches normally held weekly were reduced to just one mid-Lent meeting at the Methodist Church, with a second meeting held at St Mary's on Good Friday. There was no joint Palm Sunday service held nor the joint Maundy Thursday reflective service with supper. Good Friday Easter Outreach held on the Broadway was cancelled, but some churches held their usual reflective

services. However, the Easter Sunday Sunrise Service at the Discovery Centre Lakes was held with a good number attending.

'Douai Abbey Day' in June for Thatcham Schools' Year 6s was not able to be held at Douai Abbey. An alternative venue for the Day was located at St Mary's and their grounds with a simplified programme. A particular benefit was that the schools could walk to the venue. The Day was a great success.

A Jubilee Big Lunch Event was held on Sunday 5th June at the Kennet School Field. Hundreds attended the activities and barbeques. Christian Youth Band 'The Sense' played to good sized audiences of young people during the afternoon in the hall.

The future make-up for the Executive Committee was discussed. It was proposed on a trial basis that the Executive Lay Representatives would hold some meetings separately, and would be responsible for organising certain events and projects, eg. WOPFCU, WDOP, Lent Lunches, joint services, etc. as well as the advertising and communications to the churches. Joint Church Leaders and Lay Reps meetings would still occur.

In 2022, although we had to cancel some of the events, or did them in different ways, it was also a case of getting on with what we could and keeping in touch with churches and schools. With the restrictions over, the CTIT Church Leaders look forward positively to 2023, and the opportunities it will bring to serve as the Church in Thatcham.

Other activities not individually mentioned:

The Foodbank reopened at the Baptist Church. Working with the Asylum Seekers. Preschool Group for Adoptive and foster parents. Bereavement Courses. Dementia Friends Courses and Vintage Adventure meetings. Remembrance Sunday Service held at the Memorial.

Revd John Lee

COFFEE BREAK

Coffee Break recommenced after the pandemic on 1st March. We are averaging about 15-20 attendees each week - not always the same people. As well as some of those who previously attended, we have also welcomed a number of new folk which is very encouraging. Monetary donations have been increasing and from March to January inclusive we have been able to pay over £800 into the church account. My thanks to John for helping to set up each week as well as those who step in when I'm not available or just lend a helping hand.

Gill Mossman

COMMITMENT FOR LIFE

Commitment for Life is the United Reformed Church's global justice programme, whose partners are Christian Aid and Global Justice Now. The four partner regions are Bangladesh, Zimbabwe,

Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories, and Central America (Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Guatemala).

Commitment for Life is a way in which local congregations are enabled to participate in actions for justice around the world. Commitment for Life belongs to every congregation. Many choose to support a region in the world through prayer, learning, advocacy, and action for justice.

Here in Thatcham URC, we have chosen to support Bangladesh through our monthly retiring collections and Harvest donations. Unfortunately we haven't managed to do any retiring collections in 2022, but are looking into receiving a supply of envelopes for all the congregation to use in 2023.

Alan Mossman

COPYRIGHT

I continue to monitor the use of copyrighted items such as hymns and music used in worship and submit the relevant annual returns. We have copyright licences with the UK's Christian Copyright Licence International (CCLI) scheme and One License (so that we can use hymns and songs by Bernadette Farrell and others who are not covered by CCLI). One License is an American copyright licencing organisation, hence the s instead of a c!) By keeping our average weekly attendance numbers in the lowest banding of both organisations we are able to remain on the lowest licence pricing brackets. For 2023, the licence fees for CCLI is £123.00 and for One License £65. Both licences enable us to use material in church, in print and on online streaming platforms.

Mike Payne, Copyright Controller

DISCUSSION GROUP

The Discussion Group continues, albeit with fewer members and fewer meetings than in pre-covid years. During 2022 we had either four or five in each session.

Topics discussed during the past year were:

The Ukraine-Russia war, taking into account an article in Reform and the history of the two countries.

Discussion arising from some readings in the prayer booklet Every Day with Jesus.

Articles from Reform, including some on race relations and the Black Lives Matter campaign.

John Bradbury's report on the future of the United Reformed Church

Watched a film on China and its relations with the USA.

Roy Tubb

FABRIC

A huge thank you to Alan T for all he has done during 2022 to enable the smooth running of the church buildings, often turning out at short notice to respond to an emergency situation. At other times quietly and efficiently working away in the background to get the jobs done that we should all be getting involved in. Alan – you're a star, thank you!

(The following is extracted from F+F Committee meeting minutes)

We continue to progress the refurbishment of the Sanctuary.

John Radice (architect) had produced a Feasibility Study in November 2021, but it proved far too costly to progress, although useful as a basis for a much reduced scheme which we have been trying to work through ourselves, so that a presentation could be made to the church.

Two quotes were received for the audio/visual system: CAVS and API, both of which were very comprehensive and detailed. However, with costs ranging from £21,000 to £25,000 and a possible grant from Synod of only £5,000, it was considered unlikely that we will be able to proceed yet. It is possible that a full grant may be available for a hearing loop, so in December a new set of quotes were requested from an alternative business that had been recommended by the Methodist Church. Permission for the sound loop has been granted by LBAC subject to the application being made, which John has begun.

Synod Officer Nicola Werro has sent numerous documents to help us move forward. These include the names of 2 more contractors to consider. She also suggested that we involve a fundraiser for the project that was solely focussed on it and had no other role.

Evacuation Policy map has been in preparation.

We had been in discussion with someone in Poland for removing the organ, but a combination of Brexit rules changing and covid regulations meant that he was no longer in a position to proceed.

The boilers had been serviced and a flue replaced at an additional cost of £60. Verdi Gas had offered an annual contract price of £420 to cover unlimited service call outs for both boilers, but all parts would be extra. The committee agreed to take out the contract.

FAIRTRADE CHURCH

"The fields of the poor may produce abundant food, but injustice sweeps it away." Proverbs 13

We started the year with some Covid restrictions still in place, this prevented us from holding our popular Fairtrade Fortnight Coffee Morning for the second year running.

We were however able to come together for worship and focused on the growing challenges that climate change brings to farmers and workers, in communities that the Fairtrade Foundation works with.

As regular church activities began to resume we continued to support Fairtrade by encouraging the use of Fairtrade products with all of our hall users and church groups.

Esther Lewis, Fairtrade Church Co-ordinator

THE FESTIVAL CHOIR

In 2022, after three years of imposed silence from the Choir and only muted singing in the congregation, the Festival Choir came together joyfully to sing in the Harvest service on October 9th. Our song was 'Creation Sings' by Stuart Townend. The words of the chorus were sung with heartfelt thanks:

*Hallelujah! Let all creation stand and sing:
'Hallelujah' - Fill the earth with songs of worship,
Tell the wonders of creation's king.*

Two months later the Festival Choir led the singing in the Carols by Candlelight service on Christmas Eve, with descants and two choral offerings: 'Tell Out the News' by Jan Holdstock and 'Angels' Carol' by John Rutter. The first is a carol divided into three sections, each telling the nativity story from the point of view of different characters; in the Finale, the choir is divided into three groups and all three melodies interweave together. Angels' Carol also tells of the good news given by the angels, is marked 'joyfully', has the refrain 'Gloria in excelsis deo', features the men leading before finishing with rejoicing on earth and in heaven. It is a challenging piece for a choir, and the Festival Choir sang with confidence and flair, ably accompanied by Nikki Pizzey.

There are between 10 and 15 people who sing regularly in the Choir, which is open to anyone who is connected with the URC and enjoys singing. Most music is in three voice-parts: Sopranos, Altos and Men. Rehearsals for a particular service or event are usually for about an hour following the morning service on a few preceding Sundays. It is hoped that the Choir will sing in the main service on Easter Sunday 2023, so do speak to me if interested in joining.

Thank you to all who sing in the Festival Choir and have been committed in giving of time and musical ability over the last few years in order to enhance worship in the festival services.

Rachel Lee-Johnson

GIFT AID

Thatcham URC claims Gift Aid rebate at the end of each calendar year which is also the end of the church accounting period. As the claim takes a while to process and a few weeks to be approved by the Inland Revenue, the rebate received forms part of the following year's accounts. Therefore the Gift Aid rebate forming part of the 2022 accounts is based on 2021 donations.

A total amount of £5588.25 was received in 2022. This was 14% higher than the previous year, but remained substantially down (by nearly £1700) compared with the rebate two years previously. COVID continued to severely restrict social events in 2021 and no Gift Day was held during the year, with an ongoing impact on donations and the resultant 2022 rebate.

Since April 2013, we have also been able to claim on other donations from individuals who are non-taxpayers and/or anonymous, under a scheme called Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme (GASDS), provided the donations are recorded and each is less than £30. For 2022, £4031.50 rebate was realised from the traditional Gift Aid claim and £1553.16 from GASDS. (Plus £3.59 in repayment interest).

Allan Crichton

HISTORIAN

COVID DIMINISHED

The first case of covid-19 was recorded in Wuhan, China, on 31st December 2019. The disease was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO) on 11th March 2020. It is the world's 5th documented pandemic since that of flu in 1918. Europe became the epicentre of the covid-19 pandemic in March 2020.

By September 2020 over one million deaths had occurred worldwide. In November of that year, the Biotech vaccine was shown to be 90% effective. Other vaccines followed and by April 2021 over one billion vaccine doses had been administered.

At the time of writing (February 2023), over 678 million cases have been recorded worldwide. Of those, about 246 million have been in Europe and about 105 million in USA.

The number of deaths recorded worldwide is 6.8 million. The deaths recorded for Europe and USA have been about 2 million and 1.1 million respectively. However, it appears that Peru may have been the country with the highest covid death rate in the world. The cumulative number of deaths in the UK currently stands at nearly 206,000.

The cumulative number of cases in West Berkshire is 56,000 but only 68 new cases were recorded in the second week of February 2023. At that time there were 20 covid patients being cared for in the Berkshire Healthcare Trust hospitals.

The wearing of face masks was declared non-mandatory from 28th January 2022 but some organizations, transport and medical for example, could legally insist on them being worn. So, have we seen the end of covid? Not quite. Public health officials may soon recommend an annual covid vaccination for most of us. A few members of our church were diagnosed with covid during the year but all had been vaccinated and none appears to have suffered too badly.

Foreign travel has become less troublesome. On 21st October last year Spain lifted all covid restrictions on entry to that country.

As for how our church fared in 2022, it may reasonably be claimed to have experienced a new beginning after two badly-covid-affected years. Our average attendance at church rose to 24.4 in 2022 from 17.4 the previous year. Services were held on 54 days, including the Christmas Eve carol service, when 48 attended (28 in 2021) and enjoyed mince pies and warm drinks in the British School afterward. For comparison, we had normal services on only 24 occasions in 2020 and 32 in 2021.

We were able to celebrate Easter in church on Sunday 17th April 2022, preceded by an Easter breakfast in the hall. Most church meetings during the year returned to the British School once again: five meetings (including the AGM) were held. Three elders, namely David Weller, Gill Mossman and Jackie Tarry were re-elected for a further three years.

Two baptisms were held during the year, namely those of William Sugden Moss and Cath Kennerson. One wedding was conducted by John, that of Trevor Ball and Michelle Hoyle on 23rd July

Tuesday coffee mornings were restarted on 1st March and coffee after Sunday morning service restarted on 6th March.

February 6th marked seventy years on the throne for Queen Elizabeth II. Her Diamond Jubilee was celebrated with a long weekend holiday, starting Thursday 2nd June. Sadly, the Queen died on 8th September at Balmoral. She lay in state for several days before her funeral at Westminster Abbey on 19th September. John and Rachel joined the long queues of mourners and paid their respects inside the abbey.

At the AGM on 13th March, for the first time since the ownership of the Old British School land been successfully rectified from its 2005 false registration in the name the URC (Wessex) Trust Ltd to Trustees of the Heirs of John Barfield, four trustees, namely Revd John Lee, David R Weller, Alan Mossman and Jackie Tarry, were confirmed as such trustees at the AGM on 13th March. Registration of the British School land, delayed in part by the covid pandemic, was backdated to 18th December 2019 (freehold land) and 12th October 2020 (leasehold land, mainly the car park).

Following the AGM on 13th March, we enjoyed our 'anniversary lunch', which had been postponed from December 2021 owing to our covid restrictions.

Our harvest service was very special in 2022. A heritage plaque in honour of our founder, John Barfield, his wife Sarah and their son Samuel, had been donated to the church. The elders agreed that it be secured to the outside wall of the British School and that a descendant of John Barfield be invited to unveil the plaque immediately after our harvest service on 9th October 2022. Lawrence Barfield, who attended our 200th anniversary service in 2004, had died in 2009. His son Sebastian Barfield (a great-great-great-grandson of our founder) was traced. Not only did he agree to unveil the plaque but also arranged for another eight members of the Barfield family to attend our harvest service and partake of lunch with us in the British School afterward. The occasion highlighted a truly memorable event, for September 2022 marked the 175th anniversary of the opening of the British School in 1847.

It was a great delight to have Revd Daphne Preece conduct our 118th Anniversary service and to share lunch with us on 4th December. Daphne was minister of our church during 1989-93.

Another noteworthy event that occurred during the year was the attendance at our church of several refugees from El Salvador. Johana and her mother Ana were first seen outside the church, looking somewhat disheartened, on a spring-cleaning day (21st February). They were welcomed into the hall for refreshments. Subsequently, together with their friends Naftali, Iceane and another Ana, they often attended our Sunday services until 29th May (when just two of them attended). They were no longer seen after that, most of them having transferred to Thatcham Baptist Church. One of them currently resides at Colchester and regularly receives copies of our newsletter. Most of the others are still resident at the Regency Park Hotel.

Roy Tubb

INSURANCE

We started using David Edwards Insurance Brokers in 2011. They now look after a high percentage of UR Churches nationwide and all Wessex Synod manse. The insurance is still with Ansva (a subsidiary of Ecclesiastical Insurance) although, should the need arise to make a claim, we deal through the Broker. We currently enjoy a No Claims Discount of 8 years.

The Church policy is in the second year of a Long Term Undertaking (LTU) five year contract. As I have said in previous years, we receive a discount for having this long term policy. The Insurance Premium Tax remains at 12%.

That said, the present sum insured is as follows:

		2022/23	2021/22
Value:	£1,993,977	Premium: £1,411.68	(£1,277.29) +10.52% (-10.29%)
	(£1,550,000)		

The policy is index linked and sums shown include buildings and contents (an overall increase of 28.643% over last year!) and IPT. Considering that last year we enjoyed a drop of -10.39%, the rise this year of 28.643% in property values probably reflects the general increase in cost of living etc though, fortunately, the increase in the premium is only 10.52%!

While The Manse is let, the insurance is paid by Synod.

One benefit we have gained this year is that we are now included in the Broker's Claims Equilibrium Club (CEC). Details below:

"Every year, homes and businesses are affected by the disruption caused from a wide range of events including major and complex claims linked to fires, flooding and unfortunately becoming increasingly common Cyber and liability related claims. If the worst should happen, your insurance company are likely to appoint their own Loss Adjuster or other specialists to act on their behalf. As your insurance broker and risk adviser we think you would benefit from additional support in this area and with this in mind we are including, at no additional cost to you, the services of a specialist Loss adjuster for your own requirements. CEC are our claims partner and we have included for you their Bronze level of service which provides 5 hours of support which we feel will reassure you if the worst were to happen."

We also now have cover for incursions into our cyber security.

Mike Payne, Insurance Officer

KNIT AND NATTER GROUP

It gives me great pleasure to report on the progress of the Knit And Knatter group.

We are going from strength to strength with our numbers, increasing of enthusiastic ladies.

Joan Moate's daughter Linda came for a belated visit after lockdown.

She collected bags of jumpers and cardigans which we had knitted before and through Covid. Unfortunately this will be her last collection as her outlet for them has dried up.

We are still producing blankets for the WBCH which are very much appreciated.

Also we provide baby items for the shop at the premature unit in Oxford.

We recently had to find another source for our wool, as unfortunately Shaws in Newbury have gone into liquidation, so we are now back to ordering online .

It is a lovely way to enjoy two Mondays in a month, to chat, laugh, eat, drink, and oh yes, knit, and produce items that will help others.

Any knitters who would like to join us would be made very welcome.

Pauline Gresswell

LETTINGS OFFICER

The Old British School receives regular groups during the year, these include 1st and 6th Thatcham Brownies, badminton and of course ballet.

Ballet are now meeting 5 times per week during school term which is back to their pre-covid rate.

Unfortunately the AA Fellowship has ceased hiring due to insufficient numbers.

The singing group is still meeting once a month but have moved into the parlour.

The Bell Ringers have stopped meeting in our hall. As have The Charlie Waller Trust.

We have also had meetings with the Toddlers Group who started up on the 4th March 2022 and is going very strong, their numbers tend to be around 21 – 23 children. Coffee break has started up on Tuesdays again and their numbers are up and down, depending on the outside temperature.

The Blind Club still meet every month.

We have gone in with other churches in Thatcham and started a Warm Hub, this is where people can meet in the warm for a warm drink or just a place to chat, although the start up has been low we hope the attendance will increase. This Warm Hub started at the end of November and is scheduled to continue until the end of February 2023 unless the demand for it increases.

I have just been approached by a table tennis group asking for use of the hall on Monday afternoons starting 6th February 2-4pm.

Last year we had a group called “Breaking Barriers” hire the hall for 2 days in October. This proved very satisfactory by the organisers and they have rebooked sessions for this year, mainly during school holidays.

The Brownies still meet Tuesdays and Thursdays but at greatly reduced numbers so we only charge them half rates in the hope that their attendance figures improve.

Kevin Roberts

MATTHEW HENRY TRUST

The Matthew Henry Trust Fund was established in 1927 at the bequest of Mr Matthew Henry who died on 31st January 1927. In his Will, Mr Henry bequeathed the sum of £1,000 to the Deacons for the time being of the Congregational Church of Thatcham in Berkshire who were directed to invest the same in such securities as Trustees were permitted to do so by law. He also instructed the

Deacons to distribute the income from the investment each Christmas to the poor, needy and deserving women and children in the Parish of Thatcham as the Deacons determine.

It is interesting to note that Mr Henry determined that the Deacons, in making their decision, are not to have regard or take into account the Church or the religion to which any of the recipients belong. On 26th February 1932 the Charity Commission confirmed that the endowment for the Matthew Henry Trust was £1145.19s.10d.

The Elders of this Church are now responsible for the administration of the Matthew Henry Trust and each year in late November or early December they allocate the income realised from the Trust Fund to widows, spinsters and single mothers resident in Thatcham. The Regulations require there to be an Honorary Secretary and two other named Trustees and they are myself, as Secretary, Alan and Gill Mossman. The allocation is made from a list of suitable candidates presented by the Trust's Honorary Secretary to whom others can be added or removed by the Elders.

The capital sum is only £1000.00 and the dividend received, on the Capital sum in 2022 amounted to £591.07 an increase of £20.21 when compared with the 2021 dividend of £575.86. The actual interest paid on the bank balance in 2022 was 0.11 which together with the balance of £4.89 carried forward from 2021 gives a total income of £596.07. At the Elders meeting on Tuesday 18th October 2022 it was agreed that nine recipients would receive a gift and this amounted to £65.00 (£585.00) each when the final bank balance was known on December 4th 2022. The gifts were distributed by the Secretary in time for Christmas, and as Secretary I have received letters or telephone calls from all the recipients expressing their thanks and appreciation for the gift. A copy of the Accounts is attached, and these were approved by Elders at their meeting on Tuesday 25th January 2023. The Charity Commissioners Annual Return, as required by the Regulations, has been completed and returned.

It is not possible, under the Charity Commission Regulations, to pay any additional monies into the Account, unless a gift is not delivered or returned.

If any Church Member becomes aware of a possible beneficiary during the year then would you please let myself, Alan or Gill know.

David R Weller, Honorary Secretary, Matthew Henry Trust

MESSY CHURCH

In April 2022 we had our first Messy Church for two years as we were not able to meet during lockdown. We were excited about being able to meet again but were concerned that parents and carers may not feel safe to come to Messy Church. Our fears were unfounded, however and about twenty children and their parents and carers were soon waiting to come into the British School for our first session.

In 2022 we had three Messy Church sessions. The first one was during the Easter holiday and the theme was New Life. Our second session was called Fishing for Men and took place at the beginning of the summer school holiday and the third one was during the autumn half term and the theme this time was Lost Sheep.

We are very fortunate to have so many leaders and helpers who are always very enthusiastic and give their time and expertise so willingly. Esther now leads our sessions and decides on the theme, supported by the other leaders. We are very grateful to Esther and the leaders and helpers for all they do to enable Messy church to take place. It is so good and a privilege for us to welcome the children and their parents and carers into our church family. There is always a great atmosphere and we really enjoy the time that we spend together.

We follow the same pattern for the morning that we had before lockdown; - everyone is welcomed as they arrive and the children are registered, then they enjoy the activities before snack time, and we finish with a time of celebration (worship) in the church. We always have a good variety of activities, linked to the theme, and talk to the children about what they are doing and encourage them to think about a spiritual aspect of the activity. The celebration is led by one of the leaders and is as interactive as possible to encourage the children's interest. It is lovely to have everyone join in with the singing and to finish Messy Church by saying the Blessing together. If you look at the Messy Church notice board in the church you can see some of the things that we have done during our Messy Church sessions.

It is so good to be able to meet for Messy Church again and we look forward to more sessions in 2023.

Diane Sandell

NEWSLETTER

We've had some very interesting holiday articles and a good range of photos of church life throughout the year. An enormous 'Thank you' to regular contributors Graeme, Roy, Sam and Esther. If anyone would like to be involved on a regular or occasional basis, please see Alan. All contributions of any length, with or without photos, are always very welcome, both by the editors and readers.

Alan Mossman

REGISTRAR GENERAL (AUTHORISED PERSONS)

Since The Civil Partnerships, Marriages and Deaths (Registration etc) Act 2019 came into effect in May 2021, where everything is now paperless, realistically I have very little to do. However, as far as weddings at the church are concerned I do still have some duties. I am pleased to report that we did, in fact, have one wedding this year, in July. My duties are to scrutinise the paperwork the couple have and ensure that all is in order before, during (listening to their oaths) and after the ceremony, including having the couple and their witnesses sign the paper the Register Office sent me. In the days following the ceremony I then take that piece of paper back to the Register Office, after which the couple may then go in to purchase their Marriage Certificate. Note that I no longer have a book of Certificates, nor do I now issue the Marriage Certificates!

Mike Payne, Responsible Authorised Person

SOCIAL AND FUND RAISING

The first year of near normality after the pandemic and we were able to start up fund raising and social events again. In March following the AGM we decided to hold a church lunch as our annual Christmas lunch had been cancelled. Thanks to Jane Staunton for providing this. Easter breakfast was held once again in April and was enjoyed by several members of the congregation. On a lovely sunny morning in July, Alan and I hosted our annual coffee morning with bacon rolls outside in our garden.

In September Esther and her friend Kate organised Mousefest - a hugely successful joint venture with St. Mary's with each church benefitting from 50% of the profits. We held a bring and share lunch after our Harvest celebrations at which several members of the Barfield family were present.

In November we held a skittles evening and the final event of the year was our annual Christmas Lunch after the church anniversary service.

A number of events have been planned for this year – watch the newsletters and notices for details.

Thanks to Esther and Jackie Wood, my fellow committee members and also everyone who has helped or supported this vital part of our church life.

Gill Mossman

WESSEX SYNOD

The interaction on communication with Synod has been forwarded for consideration on how effectively news can be shared and as discussed with the Minister that apart from financial/funding requests, how to enable interest.

The following issues may be of interest from General Assembly:

Children and Youth Work Committee.

- 2) Shares the concern of URC Youth Assembly tackles the stigma surrounding mental health, encourages participation in training and recommends at least one person in leadership has undertaken this training. (existing Elder for children's work).
- 4) To mark the launch of URC Children (2022) that all are constantly mindful of the voice of children and the impact of decisions.

Encouraged to review how able to hear and respond to children.

- 8) Finance Committee: Possible one-off payments to minister and lay staff (energy costs).

Mission Council

- 16) Reminder that joint or ecumenical members of LEPs have always been and remain members of the URC.

17) Environmental Policy

- a. Urgent action should be taken to reduce carbon emissions across the whole of church life. with the aim of reaching net zero of greenhouse gases by 2030.
- b. Adopts the Environmental Policy of the URC, see also Become a greener church and to adopt as a minimum the practice it sets out.

18) Korea Peace Accord -commends and urges individuals to sign in solidarity with ecumenical partners in Korea.

24) Safeguarding - additions to Structure and Rules of Procedure.

52) UK Asylum Policy - appalled at the cruel and unjust nature of the UK's current policies, including the plan to send asylum seekers to Rwanda. It believes that those fleeing war or persecution should be treated fairly and compassionately irrespective of the situation that has brought them to our country. It directs the Mission Committee to prepare briefing materials and make representations to Government and encourages all URCs and members to write to their MPs to support this call.

53) Finance Committe to reconsider the current policy of paying only the lower HMRC rate for travel costs.

Graeme Panting

WORSHIP GROUP

In order to distribute printed services on a Saturday to those following them at home, we are very grateful to all who have led services for their help in writing out the services in full and in time for distribution. I am very grateful to the Elders, Revd David Witts, Revd Keri Eynon, Nikki, Diane and Samantha for leading services in support of John and Rachel. If you would like to be involved in 2023, please have a word with Alan.

Alan Mossman

THE FOLLOWING PAGES LIST THE OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH AND OLD BRITISH SCHOOL ELECTED AT THE 2022 AGM

Chairman	2022–2023	David Weller
Vice-Chairman		Revd John Lee
Church Secretary		Alan Mossman, nomination by Elders Meeting
Church Treasurer		Jackie Tarry
Church Assistant Treasurer		David Weller
Church Meeting	Min. Secretary	Jackie Wood
Elders and Trustees of Old British School		
	2020–2023	Mrs K Fakes, Mrs J Wood
	2021–2024	Mrs E Lewis, Mr A Mossman, Mr A Tarry
	2022–2025	Mr D Weller, Mrs G Mossman, Mrs J Tarry
	Min. Secretary	Karen Fakes
	OBS Land Trustees	Revd John Lee, David Weller, Alan Mossman, Jackie Tarry.
Audio Systems	Technicians	Adrian Wood, Alan Tarry
Auditor		Pete Fuell
Authorised Persons – Weddings		Mike Payne, Diane Sandell, Revd John Lee
Baby & Toddler Group	Leader	Esther Lewis
	Team	Revd John Lee, Kevin and Linda Roberts
Badminton	Coordinator	Kevin Roberts
Baptism	Secretary	Esther Lewis
Charities Secretary		Alan Mossman
Child Friendly Church Award	Team:	Diane Sandell, Jackie Wood.
Christian Aid	Representative	Jackie Wood
	Publicity	Alan Mossman
Church Band:	Leader/Coordinator:	Karen Fakes
Cleaning	Coordinator	Gill Mossman
Coffee Break	Coordinator	Gill Mossman
Commitment for Life	Coordinator	Alan Mossman
	Collectors	Val Godson, Esther Lewis
Computer/projector	Operators	Alan Mossman, Alan Tarry, David Weller
Constitution Working Party	Convenor	Roy Tubb Tess Smith, Esther Lewis, Mike Payne
C.T.I.T	Representative	Jackie Wood
Discussion Group	Coordinator	Roy Tubb
Duty Rotas	Coordinator	Karen Fakes

Fabric	Coordinator	Alan Tarry
Fairtrade	Coordinator	Esther Lewis
Filming	Coordinator Helpers	Alan Tarry Alan Mossman, David Weller, Adrian Wood
Finance and Fabric inc Asset Register	Convenor Committee Advisors	Jackie Tarry Esther Lewis, Alan Mossman, Alan Tarry, David Weller, Roy Tubb, Revd John Lee (ex-officio) Allan Crichton, Mike Payne
Flowers	Coordinator	Gill Mossman plus volunteers
Gardeners		Samantha Coney, Jackie Wood
Gift Aid	Secretary	Allan Crichton
Historian		Roy Tubb
Insurance Cover/Copyright		Mike Payne
Knit & Natter Group	Coordinator	Viv Wilding
Matthew Henry Trust	Secretary Trustees	David Weller Alan Mossman, Gill Mossman, David Weller
Messy Church	Leaders	Diane Sandell, Esther Lewis, Karen Fakes, Jackie Wood, Jackie Tarry, plus group of helpers
Midweek service	Leaders	Revd John Lee, Diane Sandell
Newsletter	Editors	Alan Mossman, Gill Mossman
Notices	Editor	Gill Mossman
Pianists	Team	Rachel Lee-Johnson, Karen Fakes, Nikki Pizzey
Posters, Display and Notice Boards		Gill Mossman
Prayer Board		Gill Mossman, Revd John Lee, Esther Lewis
Premises	Lettings Officer	Kevin Roberts
Pulpit Supply Organiser		Alan Mossman
Reform	Distributor	Roy Tubb
Safeguarding	Coordinators	David Weller, Jackie Wood.
Social and Fundraising	Committee	Esther Lewis, Gill Mossman, Jackie Wood
Wessex Synod	Delegate	Graeme Panting
World Day of Prayer	Liason	Pauline Gresswell
Worship Group	Coordinator	Alan Mossman

CHURCH GENERAL FUND					
	RECEIPTS FOR THE YEAR 2022		RECEIPTS FOR THE YEAR 2021		
Loose Cash	£816.64			£877.90	
Envelopes	£3,154.29			£6,139.00	
Standing Orders	£13,450.00			£11,295.00	
		£17,420.93			£18,311.90
Donations (Members and Groups)	£39.20			£511.57	
Expense Refund	£16.00				
Inland Revenue (Gift Aid)	£5,588.25			£8,844.82	
Rent from Letting	£1,010.10				
Rent from Donations	£377.00				
Coffee Break	£929.91				
Coffee After Church	£218.34				
Newsletter	£547.00			£571.00	
Christmas Collections	£60.00			£564.75	
Recovered from OBS re Electricity and Gas	£3,177.71			£263.48	
Fairtrade				£230.00	
Funeral / Wedding	£150.00				
Commitment for Life	£143.50			£135.00	
Messy Church	£39.35				
Miscellaneous	£243.24				
Photocopying Income	£1.00			£5.00	
Reform	£118.00			£147.50	
Fundraising	£1,415.90			£40.00	
Unpresented cheques 2020	£207.73				
		£14,282.23			£11,313.12
TOTAL RECEIPTS	£31,703.16	£31,703.16		£29,625.02	£29,625.02
	PAYMENTS FOR YEAR 2022		PAYMENTS FOR YEAR 2021		
Ministry and Mission	£16,750.00			£20,100.00	
		£16,750.00			£20,100.00
Bank Charges	£93.64				
Commitment for Life	£143.50			£135.00	
Churches Together	£350.00			£350.00	
Coffee	£62.87				
Gas and Electricity	£2,951.52			£3,833.91	
Water Rates	£117.52			£94.88	
Insurance	£1,411.68			£1,277.29	
Gift Aid to building fund					
Officer Expenses	£415.20			£102.99	
Preaching Fees	£30.00			£90.00	
Printing and Photocopying	£769.07			£282.29	
Telephone / Broadband	£405.36			£534.25	
Licences	£173.50			£134.17	
Maintenance	£399.00			£1,546.80	
Literature	£224.00			£44.50	
Messy Church					
Miscellaneous	£132.99			£25.00	
Organ					
Charities	£284.74			£400.00	
Gift Aid repayment (overpaid)				£3,945.99	
Mousefest St Mary's	£459.25				
Mousefest Building fund	£770.13				
Reform	£118.00			£147.50	
		£9,311.97			£12,944.57
TOTAL PAYMENTS	£26,061.97	£26,061.97		£33,044.57	£33,044.57
EXCESS RECEIPTS OVER PAYMENTS FOR PERIOD	£5,641.19	£5,641.19		-£3,419.55	-£3,419.55
BUILDING PROJECT FUND					
	RECEIPTS FOR THE YEAR 2022		RECEIPTS FOR THE YEAR 2021		
Standing Orders	£420.00			£420.00	
Fundraising: Meals	£30.00			£130.00	
Fundraising: Other	£1,122.13			£111.00	

Gift Day	£2,362.57		
Grant	£2,000.00		
Funeral / legacy	£200.00		£2,575.00
Funds paid in error	£253.24		
TOTAL RECEIPTS	£6,387.94		£3,236.00
	PAYMENTS FOR THE YEAR 2022		PAYMENTS FOR THE YEAR 2021
Feasibility Study			£4,750.00
Refurbishment			
Error funds refunded	£243.24		
Bank Charges	£57.98		
Payments from wrong account	£2,388.60		
TOTAL PAYMENTS	£2,689.82		£4,750.00
Excess Receipts over Payments for this period	£3,698.12		-£1,464.00
OLD BRITISH SCHOOL			
	RECEIPTS FOR THE YEAR 2022		RECEIPTS FOR THE YEAR 2021
Rent	£11,068.71		£6,611.65
Donation	£594.00		£115.00
TOTAL RECEIPTS	£11,662.71		£6,726.65
Unpresented debit from last year	PAYMENTS FOR THE YEAR 2022		PAYMENTS FOR THE YEAR 2021
Electric / Gas	£3,380.84		£263.48
Manintenance: Boiler	£522.59		£831.43
Maintenance: Cleaning			
Maintenance: Fire Alarm	£252.00		£348.00
Maintenance: Other	£59.99		
Maintenance: Security Alarm	£481.87		£429.15
Rent Refund	£17.00		
Rent Paid in Error	£652.05		
Bank Charges	£53.00		
TOTAL PAYMENTS	£5,419.34		£1,872.06
ACCUMULATED FUNDS 2022			
GENERAL CHURCH FUND	2022		2021
Opening Balance	£3,310.21		£7,063.42
Total Receipts	£17,420.93		£29,625.02
Sub Total	£20,731.14		£36,688.44
Less Expenditure	£14,282.23		£33,044.57
Balance	£6,448.91		£3,643.87
Unpresented Debits from end 2021	£285.92		£207.73
Sub Total	£6,162.99		£3,436.14
Unpresented credits from end 2021	£411.74		
Sub total	£6,574.73		
Unpresented Debits			£285.92
Sub total			£3,722.06
Less Unpresented Credits			£411.74
Final Balance	£9,077.22		£3,310.32
BUILDING PROJECT FUND	2022		2021
Opening Balance	£26,845.28		£28,309.28
Receipts	£6,387.94		£3,286.00
Sub Total	£33,233.22		£31,595.28
Less Expenditure	£2,689.82		£4,750.00
Final Balance	£30,543.40		£26,845.28
PASTORAL FUND	2022		2021
Opening Balance	£428.31		£473.71
Receipts (2021 accounted in 2022)	£50.94		£56.71
Receipts (2022 accounted in 2022)	£25.00		£56.71
Payments	£0.00		£100.00
Unpresented Credits			£1.71
Final Balance	£504.25		£428.31

British School

Rental income has been healthy this year, and the decision has been made to pay for the gas and electricity wholly from this account for the time being, as there is more than enough income to support this, and the majority of usage comes from lettings.

Looking Back and Moving forward

After a lot of to-ing and fro-ing, the bank accounts have now moved to Metro Bank. This has the advantages of being free accounts, while we have the benefits afforded by Internet Banking and Debit cards for easier and swifter payments.

Income from Standing Order is now the norm, and this has been a vital part of maintaining a steady income over the year.

A review of our scoping from Synod was requested, but a problem with their email systems has meant that contacting the relevant people was not possible. At the time of writing at the beginning of February, our offer for 2023 has not been acknowledged or confirmed, and no payment has been taken for January 2023. The Treasurer is actively investigating this.

At the end of 2022 the Church is happily in a much more stable position, and reserves have been rebuilt.

We hope to push on with the refurbishment during 2023 and look forward to using this new stable financial position to support this work.

Jackie Tarry, Treasurer

**THATCHAM UNITED REFORMED CHURCH
BABY AND TODDLER GROUP**
Income and Expenditure Account for the period 1 January to 31st December 2022

Reconciliation 2022

	£
Opening Balance 1 st January 2022	673.19
Income	
Entrance Fees	450.40
Donation	2.50
Interest (Newbury Building Society)	3.18
Sub Total	1129.27
Expenditure	
Refreshments	21.83
Donation to URC	100.00
Equipment	126.46
Donation Red Nose Day	14.00
Donation Children in Need	20.00
Closing Balance (C/F to 2023) 31 st December 2022	<u>846.98</u>
**Closing Balance Represented By:	Newbury Building Society £846.98

Treasurers Confirmation

I confirm that the financial information provided above is a true reflection of the 2022 income and expenditure for the Thatcham United Reformed Church – Baby and Toddler Group

Signed: *David R Weller*
David R Weller
Honorary Treasurer

Date: 24th January 2023

THATCHAM UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

MATTHEW HENRY TRUST
CHARITY NUMBER 263905

Statement of Income and Expenditure Account for the period 1st January to 31st December 2022

Income	£	Expenditure	£
Opening Balance at 1 st January 2022	4.89	Cash Distributed for Christmas 2022	585.00
Charities Dividend 2022	591.07		
Interest Paid	0.11	Balance Carried Forward to 2023	11.07
Total	<u>596.07</u>	Total	<u>596.07</u>

David R Weller
Honorary Secretary
Matthew Henry Trust
2nd January 2022

*Reported to and approved by the Elders of the Thatcham United Reformed Church
on Wednesday 25th January 2023*

Signed **David R Weller**
Honorary Secretary

Alan Mossman
Trustee and Church Secretary

Gill Mossman
Gill Mossman (Mrs)
Trustee and Church
Elder

Date 25th January 2023

1ST THATCHAM BROWNIES (THURSDAY)

Our Brownie Unit has enjoyed a busy year, with our programme covering a wide range of activities.

During the Spring term, Brownies attended the District Thinking Day which was held at Spurcroft School. They really enjoyed it, with making bracelets being one of their favourites. During the term, we had a science night, starting off by making camera obscuras, then turning our hand to mixing Harry Potter-style potions. We also made cards for Mothers' Day, decorating them with origami dresses.

We took advantage of the longer, warmer days of the Summer Term by including more outdoor activities in our programme. We did a Thatcham Quiz Night which involved a walk around Thatcham looking for answers to various questions about the town. The Brownies really enjoyed this. They also enjoyed their visit to Thirtover where they took part in water games (although the weather was not very kind to us!), and their evening at the Adventure Golf Course in Newbury where we celebrated end of term with a round or two of mini-golf. We did various activities associated with the 'once in a lifetime' Platinum Jubilee – including making and sending cards to the Queen, (and, yes, we did get a reply!), making deeley-bopper headbands for jubilee parties, and baking jubilee cupcakes. We joined in with the Girl Guiding stall at the Thatcham Fun Day, and also had our own District Fun Day for Brownies at Thirtover.

In the Autumn Term we focussed on the Performing badge. We did activities such as circus skills, creating puppet shows, learning some Scottish dancing and having a go with the bell-plates. We performed all of these in a show for parents at the end of term. This was followed by a surprise visit from Santa which was enjoyed by all. We had an enjoyable evening at the Thatcham Christmas Light Switch-on where we ran a chocolate tombola!

Although we are now through the COVID pandemic, our Unit is still struggling with numbers. We have fluctuated between 10 and 12 Brownies, significantly less than our pre-pandemic numbers, and we would be happy to welcome new members. We meet on Thursday evenings during term time, from 6.00pm to 7.30pm.

We have one leader-in-charge, three regular leaders and one young leader.

Helen Madden

NOTES

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148 Kings Road, Newbury, RG14 5RG 01635 523240 mail@TheAlphaX.co.uk