

The Parish of Bracknell: Holy Trinity with Mosaic

Called together to make Christ known

Annual Report for 2024



March 2025

Notes from Revd Robin Sharples

It is always good to be able to say that what we planned has happened; for last year I picked out three:

- welcoming Beth Quainton as Curate following her ordination on June 29th;
- actively seeking recognition as EcoChurch at both Holy Trinity and Mosaic;
- arranging a fundraising event for Mission Aviation Fellowship at The Parks.

We all know what a blessing Beth's arrival has been. I am grateful for all the energy and expertise that Beth has brought to the parish and equally grateful to everyone for the warm way in which Beth has been welcomed. We now look forward to Beth's priesting at the end of June this year – and her first communion with us.

EcoChurch is moving forward under the careful eye of Hannah Barclay. Hannah has worked hard to bring us closer to matching the requirements for the Bronze Award – there is still a little way to go particularly in the areas of 'Lifestyle' and 'Community and Global Engagement'.

And the MAF event? Well, we are hosting a Family event at The Parks on the weekend of July 5/6, thanks particularly to Paul Copping, and MAF are intending to bring their aeroplane to Harmans Water, Crown Wood, and Holly Spring schools in the week before. We also welcomed MAF to the Holy Trinity Battle of Britain Service in November.

Regular assemblies continue at Harmans Water, Crown Wood, and Holly Spring schools; feedback indicates that these are appreciated by staff and children alike.

We continue our relationship with Ranelagh school; Holy Trinity plays host to school services at Christmas and Ash Wednesday. I also sit on the steering committee for the Ranelagh Chaplaincy.

There are several home communion visits which take place approximately once a month. Beth and I take Communion regularly to Bickerton House, make pastoral 'room visits' and lead a monthly prayer service at Clement House. Pastoral visits are undertaken across the parish by clergy and a few dedicated parishioners.

2024 was a year of consolidation of our approach to inclusion. Having discussed this at the APCM in May, PCC have discussed the matter and we have applied to become an Inclusive Church (visit <https://www.inclusive-church.org/> for more). Building on this, our series of Small Group gathering around Living in Love and Faith reinforced our intention to form an Open Table meeting to create a safe place for Fellowship and worship for anyone who feels challenged by church. (Visit <https://opentable.lgbt/our-faith-belief> for more)

There is much to look forward to in 2025.

- Confirmations are expected later in the year for some adults and younger people, if you wish to seek confirmation, please let me know asap.
- Achieving the Bronze award for EcoChurch at Holy Trinity and Mosaic
- Further development of lay leadership and participation in church life

I am particularly grateful for the support of Clergy colleagues Nicola and Beth, the PCC, Mosaic Leadership and especially the Churchwardens throughout what has been an exciting year.

Holy Trinity

The pattern of worship at Holy Trinity includes services in a range of styles and formats at 8am and 9.30 on Sunday, and 10am on Thursdays (in Langley Hall). Since July there has also been a short service of Morning Prayer at 8.30 on Tuesdays. We seek to broaden participation in our services – there have been some outstanding contributions during the year.

Music at Holy Trinity is a collaborative effort involving Fabio, Robin, the Worship Team, and the Choir, playing a vital role in the church's worship and spiritual life, particularly at the 9.30 service. Over the past year, we have sought to broaden the diversity of music within services, embracing a range of styles and genres to enhance the worship experience. The organ at Holy Trinity, after many years of service, is showing some serious signs of wear and is becoming unreliable. Fabio and the PCC have begun to explore the possibility of replacing it.

There were special services on Ash Wednesday, Ascension Day, Battle of Britain Sunday, and our Memorial Service at All Souls, plus extra services in Holy Week and over Christmas. We hosted the town's Civic Remembrance Service in November, welcoming key members of the local community, members of the British Legion and uniformed organisations.

Ranelagh School came to Holy Trinity for several services during the year and Holly Spring Primary School also came to Holy Trinity for their Christmas service.

Many people were welcomed to Holy Trinity on 8th September (Heritage Day), to learn more about the stories illustrated in our stained-glass windows, with an excellent self-guided tour. As in previous years Heritage Day was coupled with Ride and Stride – raising funds for Berkshire churches.

Holy Trinity also celebrated important life events. Fourteen children and two adults were baptised; there were also two weddings and a renewal of wedding vows. There were two funerals in church, and two interments of ashes and our clergy also took three funerals at the local crematorium.

Holy Trinity congregations support local projects in practical ways, including Foodbank and Clothes Bank and we have also collected candles, used to make emergency heaters to send to Ukraine. There have also been events to support charities, such as the coffee morning to support Christian Aid in May and Children's Society.

Holy Trinity not only serves its regular congregations but also connects with the local community with a variety of services and events, supported by the gifts of time and talents of many people.

Thank you to all who contribute to worship and are involved in the life of Holy Trinity. Thank you, too to our service leaders, musicians and singers, readers, intercessors, sacristans and servers, activity leaders, welcomers, the flower team, and the refreshment team. We are also grateful to the often-unseen helpers, including the Holy Dusters, the Bin team, the Maintenance team and all who do practical jobs in and around Holy Trinity.

Angela Evans and Russell Goodburn: Churchwardens

Mosaic

Mosaic has seen a substantial number of people join during the year, including several families which has boosted children's work and added to Mosaic's diversity. A good number are from The Parks and many have already picked up responsibilities which we hope will contribute to further growth.

In 2024 service themes included 'The role of the Holy Spirit', 'Stewardship' and an inclusivity focused theme - 'Everyone is invited'. In 2025 we are planning a series on 'flawed heroes' through which we will take a deeper look into characters from the Bible who are far from perfect but still part of God's plan. The year also included the Baptism of Madoc Parry in November.

The Mosaic children's group 'Sparklers' continued to grow during 2024. We increased the sessions to two a month as more children were welcomed into the group, and recruited another leader and helper. Looking forward to 2025, it is hoped that a group for older children can be set up to run at the same time as the Sparklers group.

We continue to have a strong team of worship leaders. In the last quarter of 2024, we began to develop new musicians and singers to broaden participation in leading our weekly worship.

We have two successful small groups that are regularly attended on a weekly basis. Topics covered have included a meander through the Gospel of Mark and the Book of Acts. There is potentially a third group starting and, as are all our groups, will be open to all.

Mosaic continues to play a lead role in Share Bracknell, a cross-parish initiative with Warfield. One of our leaders is a Trustee and a key player at the St Andrews Priestwood Friday event, and another leads the stall at Holly Spring School for parents of children there. Many others help by collecting, sorting and making the food available to around 200 households each week.

A big thank you to everyone who contributes to the life of Mosaic from setting out chairs to making refreshments, leading services and Sparklers, preaching, making music and managing the sound all the way round to putting the chairs and tables away again, and a special thanks to the leaders and hosts of Small Groups.

The Mosaic Leadership Team

Fabric

The Churchwardens have continued to carry out their legal responsibilities to maintain the inventory, terrier and logbook of the parish. During this year no items were added to the inventory. One item was removed – an electric piano which was surplus to requirements. This was taken by a member of the congregation and a generous donation was made to the church. Details of the repairs carried out continue to be recorded in the logbook. More details of works carried out can be found in the Buildings Committee report.

The vestments, frontals, altar cloths and communion linen continue to be maintained in reasonably good condition. Thanks to our Sacristans, Shirley Taylor & Lydia Pugh for their diligent work in this area.

Work has gone into caring for the buildings at Holy Trinity and Langley Hall. The Maintenance Morning ongoing tasks are now managed by Alan Batup. We are grateful to him and all the people that attend to work in the grounds of the church and hall, both on a Saturday morning and midweek. Finally, thanks to the Holy Dusters and volunteers who clean Holy Trinity, polish and wax woodwork, and tend to our brassware; your contributions are greatly appreciated.

The Quinquennial Inspection was completed in July 2024 and the report received in November 2024. PCC and the buildings committee are reviewing its recommendations

Russell Goodburn

Summary of Building works - 2024

Holy Trinity Church.

- All testing and servicing have been carried out – font-lid winch, PAT testing, boiler service, heating, lighting conductor, fire extinguishers and exit signs, Langley Hall security alarm. All have passed.
- Slipped and broken tiles on the Lychgate have been replaced or restored to position.
- Water ingress to the vestry continues, despite repairs and investigations. More substantial work is anticipated.
- The Quinquennial Inspection took place on July 3rd 2024.
- The broken hinge on the metal gate to the boiler house has been repaired.
- The Sanctuary candle lamp has been replaced by an electric lamp. This will reduce costs as we no longer need to buy the 7–9-day candles.

Langley Hall

- Car-park barrier bolt was replaced during the year. This enables the barrier to be locked in the open position. The barrier is beyond its expected lifespan and needs to be locked when it is down.

- The twin doors at the end of the corridor have been replaced and sealed.

The buildings committee continues to monitor all maintenance issues and maintain a priorities checklist which is regularly updated.

Buildings Committee

Safeguarding

Formal Obligation. The PCC 'has a responsibility to have due regard to House of Bishops guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.' It carries out this duty by receiving reports, approving policies and appointing people to key roles. The Safeguarding Officers also met to discuss safeguarding issues and have attended safeguarding meetings organised by the Diocesan Safeguarding Team.

Safeguarding Roles. Angela Evans is the Parish Safeguarding Officer, and Sam Leach is Assistant Safeguarding Officer. Linda Edwards is Safeguarding Administrator, supporting the recruitment of workers, and keeps records of DBS checks and safeguarding training. Lesley Johnson and Christine Bowes act as verifiers at Holy Trinity to administer on-line DBS checks; Debbie Copping has this role at Mosaic.

Policy, Guidance, and Information. The PCC reviews the Parish Safeguarding Policy annually, most recently in September 2024. A Parish Reporting Procedure for Safeguarding Concerns was also agreed in September 2024, and an Action Plan for Safeguarding was approved by the PCC in October 2024. Our Parish Lone Working Policy was reviewed in December 2024.

Safeguarding in our parish draws on policies and guidance from the Church of England.

We use the Parish Dashboard to monitor policies and procedures, and the Safeguarding Hub to track training and DBS information about volunteers and employees. These systems generate reminders about safeguarding procedures, and renewal of training and DBS checks.

Learning and Development. There are 27 volunteers in the parish who are required to complete safeguarding training at various levels (up to 7), depending on their role(s). Most training must be renewed every three years. At the end of 2024 there were only four overdue training sessions.

Most safeguarding training can be completed on-line. Currently nine volunteers and employees in the parish are required to complete leadership training: all are up to date with this.

Safer Recruitment and People Management. At the end of 2024, all DBS checks were up to date for volunteers and paid employees. Work continues on role descriptors.

Concerns Raised. During the year the Safeguarding Officers informed the PCC that concerns had been raised on several occasions; details are confidential. These are discussed by the Safeguarding Officers and appropriate action is taken.

Additional Information. In a year when historic safeguarding failures with the Church of England were clear, we must recognise that safeguarding is much more than policies – everyone has a part to play in keeping our churches safe. Safeguarding was highlighted in the Parish Bulletin for 17th November, Safeguarding Sunday, and this was the theme for our worship at Holy Trinity where we were all reminded of the importance of talking about safeguarding concerns – “Let’s talk about it”.

Next Steps. Robin and the Safeguarding Officers plan to organise a session to raise awareness of safeguarding within our parish to help develop a culture in which everyone is aware of safeguarding issues and how they can contribute to a safer church.

Thank you to everyone who has supported safeguarding in our parish during the year. Please contact one of the Safeguarding Officers if you have any concerns – safeguarding depends on everyone being alert to possible safeguarding issues.

Angela Evans: Parish Safeguarding Officer

Bracknell Deanery Synod

Bracknell Deanery comprises of eight parishes in the area and is one of 29 Deaneries that make up the Oxford Dioceses. The purpose of Deanery is to provide a level above our parish PCC to discuss topics of the church’s ministry and mission. We consider how we might pool resources to help each other, for example there is a Deanery Environment Lead. The challenge is to be humble enough to ask and generous enough to share.

All licensed clergy are members of Deanery Synod. Lay members are elected to represent the parishes, their term of office is three years, a ‘triennium’. The number of elected lay members is based on the size of the electoral roll. The Parish of Bracknell has two elected members at Deanery (Lesley Johnson, Simon Sellick) out of our allocation of five – which means we have three casual vacancies, if anyone would like to be involved. The current triennium started in June 2023, and the Deanery have chosen to focus on youth, children and school work for this period.

During 2024 there were the usual three Synod meetings and a Deanery Day conference.

The March meeting welcomed Kathryn Aboud, Discipleship Enabler and Youth Ministry Specialist in the Diocese to share her experience to help on our Deanery topic.

April was the joint Deanery Day conference with Maidenhead & Windsor Deaneries, a day for all members of the Deanery to focus on Children and Young People which was attended by Bishop Olivia.

June’s meeting built on the January presentation and the Deanery Day; Kathryn rejoined us with small group discussions on our action plan. The Deanery Lay Chair shared results of a Deanery survey on Children, Youth, Families and Schools ministry, following his visit

to all parishes. Nominations for Diocesan House of Clergy and Laity representatives were elected.

In November we heard from a speaker from Berkshire Historical Churches Trust. This is something Bracknell Parish benefit from through our participation in Ride and Stride in September.

If you have any interest to come and see what happens at Deanery and for a broader church perspective, do get in touch.

Lesley Johnson: Deanery Synod Representative

Town Centre Mission

Recently, the Town Centre Mission (TCM) has been a visible presence in the centre of Bracknell, bringing spiritual and practical encouragement into the shops and amongst the people who come into the centre, including Lexicon and other staff.

The team was diminished at the beginning of June when Beth moved to her (then new) post of Curate. This left only one paid Chaplain, Lynn Davidson and volunteer Sue, to carry on.

Lynn and Sue bravely continued through the Summer, both as volunteers. Grant support was sought and we were able to re-establish paid posts in October. At the same time, Sue decided that it was time for her to step aside. A second paid Chaplain was sought and we were all very pleased to be able to appoint Steph Littlejohn as a partner for Lynn in January 2025.

The Chaplains now have a regular pattern of working in town, if you see them, please say 'hello'.

The TCM has been and will continue to be instrumental in organising 'Carols round the Tree' in the Lexicon, and the Good Friday 'Walk of Witness'.

There are opportunities for further volunteers to join TCM in their exciting work. It is hoped that TCM will be able to build up other activities such as meetings for parents and young children in the coming months, but more help will be needed to make this a reality.

We are still seeking funding for this initiative. We currently have 50% of the funding for two years from October 2024. This means that we are still seeking £15,500 to make up the difference.

Together in the Parish

Over the last year, the congregations of Holy Trinity and Mosaic have joined together for various events. This began with a joint Christingle service at Candlemas.

Throughout the year, the youth of the parish join together for a monthly youth meeting. Also, once a month is the opportunity to join together at Holy Trinity for a maintenance

Saturday, led by Alan Batup. This is a great time to work together and get to know each other.

There were two joint services in 2024 and the first, held in the Spring, was hosted by Holy Trinity and was followed by the APCM. It was a lively occasion, and we are all grateful to the impromptu cast who started us off with an entertaining playlet. The second, very well attended, service in the Autumn was hosted by Mosaic and was an opportunity to celebrate the great time that children enjoyed at the October Holiday Club. This included songs and a strong ecological message. Thank you to all who worked so hard to make the Holiday Club and the service such a success.

The Holiday Club itself met for three mornings in October half-term at Ranelagh School (thank you to Tim Griffith, Headteacher). A startlingly wide range of activities led by members of Holy Trinity and Mosaic congregations attracted children from both churches plus other children from The Parks.

There was Parish Small Group, held at Langley Hall, which tackled the topics of Living in Love and Faith, Climate Change, and the Problem of Evil.

We were also able to coordinate the special events at Christmas so that each congregation was able to join with the other for events like The Nativity, Christmas Tree Festival, Crib Service and various Carol events.

There are more opportunities to be together next year, hopefully renewing and building friendships, as we worship and work together, serving Jesus.

The Parish Youth Group meets monthly and made these comments:

- We enjoy participation in services, including the music. 'I can play the Cajon on Sundays' was one comment.
- All the children's/young people's activities are appreciated.
- More and more singing would be a good thing - according to at least one member!
- A favourite moment is The Peace in services - where you get to communicate with other people
- It would be good to encourage the whole community to be involved in lively parts of services, including a range of people reading prayers and Bible passages, plays and witty sermons
- Services that include games or quizzes make church fun for everyone
- Refreshments are a good part of church, more hot chocolate please...

Youth Group & Steph Littlejohn (PCC Member)

Electoral Roll

At the time of last year's APCM there were 254 names on the electoral roll. Minor changes were made up to the end of 2024, when there were 259 names on the roll. In January the process of compiling a new roll began; the new roll, to be published on 9th

March, contains 140 names. After the APCM on March 23rd 2025 anyone who is eligible may apply to be added to the new roll.

Alan Batup: Electoral Roll Officer

PCC

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) consists of the Incumbent, Curate, Churchwardens, Deanery Synod representatives, and members elected by people in the congregations (Mosaic and Holy Trinity) who are on the electoral roll. The PCC is responsible for making decisions on all matters of concern and importance to the parish, including the maintenance and care of our church premises and deciding how the funds of the parish are used.

Every one of the ten PCC meetings during the year included discussion, information and/or decisions relating to safeguarding matters. Safeguarding is a vital part of the work of the PCC, as it is for the wider church.

The PCC continued to give donations to our three chosen charities: Thames Hospice, Refuge, and Mission Aviation Fellowship. PCC also gave a one-off donation to the Red Cross Gaza appeal.

The 2024 APCM gave its support to our becoming an Inclusive Church. Later in the year, the PCC resolved to support the Inclusive Church statement, which begins “We believe in an inclusive Church – a church which celebrates and affirms every person and does not discriminate.”

There are regular considerations of the budget which is set and approved by the PCC. PCC was very pleased to be able to appoint Adelle Greenwood as Treasurer during 2024.

There are two committees of the PCC: ‘Finance and Administration’ and ‘Buildings’.

There are currently six vacancies for members, so we invite and encourage people to join the PCC.

The PCC employs a part-time Parish Administrator (Linda Edwards), and Finance Administrator (Sally Evans). The Town Centre Mission Chaplains, Lynn Davidson and Steph Littlejohn, are also employed by the PCC.

Parish of Bracknell Parochial Church Council Members
Following the APCM – May 2024

Clergy				Meetings Attended*
Rev. Robin Sharples (Vicar)	Clerk in Holy Orders	Ex officio	From September 2022	PCC / SC / F&A Buildings
Rev. Beth Quainton (Curate)	Clerk in Holy Orders	Ex officio	From June 2024	
Parish Wardens				
Angela Evans	Churchwarden	Ex officio	2 nd term 2022-2025	PCC / SC / F&A
Russell Goodburn	Churchwarden	Ex officio	1 st term 2022-2025	PCC / SC / Buildings
Deanery Synod				
Lesley Johnson	Deanery Synod Rep	Ex officio	2023-2026	PCC
Simon Sellick	Deanery Synod Rep	Ex officio	2023-2026	PCC / SC
There are three casual vacancies for Deanery Synod Representatives.				

*Meetings

BC: Buildings Committee

PCC: Parochial Church Council

F&A: Finance and Administration Committee

SC: Standing Committee

Parish of Bracknell Parochial Church Council Members
Following the APCM – May 2024 (Continued)

Elected Lay PCC Members	Elected	Re-elect in	Meetings Attended
Les Allen (Holy Trinity)	2022	2025	PCC/Buildings
Paul Byron (Holy Trinity)	2022	2025	PCC
David Roper (Mosaic)	2023 (Resigned September 2024)		
Fabio Marques (Holy Trinity)	2023	2026	PCC
Sally Roper (Mosaic)	2023	2026	PCC
Sam Leach (Mosaic)	2023	2026	PCC
Shirley Taylor (Holy Trinity)	2024	2027	PCC/ F&A / SC
Neil Arden (Holy Trinity)	2024	2027	PCC / Buildings
Lydia Pugh (Holy Trinity)	2024	2027	PCC
Walter Mennie (Mosaic)	Co-opted October 2024	2025	PCC
Steph Littlejohn (Mosaic)	Co-opted October 2024	2025	PCC
There are five casual vacancies for Lay PCC Members			
<u>Parish Officers</u>			
Treasurer, Adelle Greenwood	Appointed July 2024		PCC / F&A
Secretary, Simon Sellick	Appointed 2019		PCC / SC
Electoral Roll Officer Alan Batup	Appointed 2024		
Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) Angela Evans	Appointed 2014		
Assistant PSO Sam Leach	Appointed 2023		