



Progressive Christianity Network Britain

Registered Charity No: 1102164

ANNUAL REPORT & FINANCIAL REPORT

1ST JANUARY - 31ST DECEMBER 2023



In 2023, PCN Britain celebrated its 20th anniversary. Pictured is Jill Sandham presenting at the event held at Reading Minster on 4th November.

Registered address

26 High Street, Newnham, Gloucestershire, GL14 1BB

The Progressive Christianity Network Britain

Registered Charity No: 1102164

Governing Document Constitution adopted 22nd September 2003, and amended 19th January 2004, 12th November 2005, 24th October 2009 and 20th April 2013

Object of the Charity The advancement of the Christian Religion in such exclusively charitable ways as the trustees in their absolute discretion see fit.

Main activities

- i. Promoting a way of living consistent with the 8 points and with a progressive, inclusive, open approach to religion.
- ii. Supporting groups of PCN members and non-members to explore a progressive understanding of Christianity.
- iii. Supporting and encouraging members of the Progressive Christianity Network, both those whose faith is lived out within the community of church as expressed in mainstream denominational Christianity and those outside of any such organised institutional Christian framework.
- iv. Networking, conferencing and providing forums for open debate about all aspects of Christianity, including interaction with people of other faiths.
- v. Engaging in discussion and negotiation with members of different Christian denominations, promoting agendas and understandings that are both liberating and radical.
- vi. Developing and encouraging progressive Christian congregations and communities.
- vii. Promoting membership of PCN Britain

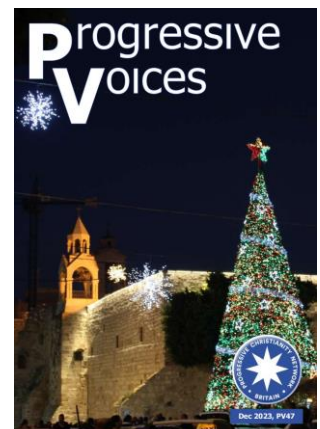
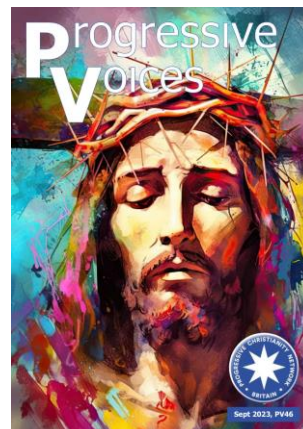
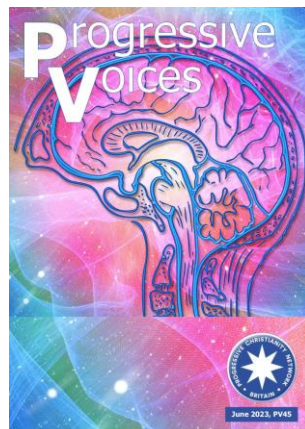
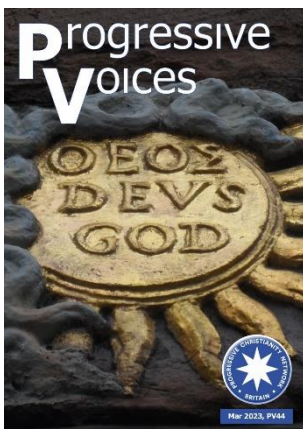
Address: 26 High Street, Newnham, Gloucestershire, GL14 1BB

Bankers: The Co-operative Bank

Independent Examiner Rachel Witham

Trustees for the period of this report:

Chair	Simon Cross	
Vice chair:	Jackie Wiegman	
Secretary:	Sandra Griffiths	
Treasurer:	Peter Stribblehill	
	Adrian Alker (until April)	Martin Bassant (until September)
	Dave Coaker	Sue Hobley
	Jenny Jacobs	Naomi Nixon
	Paul Onslow	Tony Sanchez
	Kevin Skippon (from April)	Gwen Wills



Chair's Report on the Network in 2023

by Simon Cross

PCN Britain celebrated its 20th anniversary in 2023, which means that here in the UK, the network is now old enough to drive a lorry or a bus. In these days of industrial disputes, some of which remain unresolved at the time of writing, the ability to drive a bus feels all the more useful. We continue, after all, to live in difficult and challenging times.

Difficulties and challenges are all the more real, of course, in other parts of the world. Places that are more directly impacted by issues arising from climate change for example; states and regions that are subject to severe political and economic instability; and of course, those parts of the world that are suffering the appalling cost of armed conflict. For all our difficulties, we remain part of a privileged enclave.

PCN Britain is a network of people with a diverse range of views about almost everything. We are not, I think, subject to group think. I am sure, though, that we all have the same sort of reaction to the events unfolding around our world – a mixture, perhaps, of shock, horror and grief.

George Santayana, an atheist who was fascinated by the Church (some of us may sympathise!) wrote that 'the family is one of nature's masterpieces,' there's something special about what happens when people are bonded together, despite their differences. In togetherness we can find strength to carry on working for a better world in the face of all the troubles and difficulties we see and hear about, day in day out. A strength of a network, perhaps, is in its ability to provide the resources we need to sustain ourselves when things are difficult.



In 2023 we heard, at our AGM, from Joe Forde who spoke with passion and insight about the welfare state. His was a particular stance, one which many, perhaps most, but certainly not all of us will have shared. Once you look at a problem from multiple perspectives, after all, you begin to see multiple potential solutions. This is another strength of a network, that there is a range of perspectives.

Those who were able to come to our anniversary events, one in Reading and another in York, were able to hear a presentation from former and current trustees, people who remember well the challenges of getting the network started – "what," they asked twenty years ago, "should we call ourselves?" Various options were considered before The Progressive Christianity Network (Britain) was chosen. As I listened (twice) to this presentation, I wondered whether I might ever have joined something called the 'Liberal Christianity Network' or any of the other names that were mooted. On seemingly small decisions all kinds of things hang. The thanks of the present trustees, and I'm sure the wider membership too, go to all those folk who spent so much time on that fascinating and thought-provoking presentation.

We were also delighted to be joined, at the Reading event, by Victoria Turner, author of the provocatively titled 'Young, Woke and Christian: Words from a missing generation', while at the York event we were able to hear from one of the founders of Anti Racist Cumbria, who featured in one of our 'Made of Stories' films. Both shared new perspectives on age old issues.

It is now three years since the last of the Covid lockdowns, and it seems clear that as a network we're now operating in a different paradigm to that which we inhabited 'before'. Getting groups of people together, particularly bringing folk from different parts of the country together, continues to prove difficult. We need to continue to reflect on why that is, and what it means for us as a network. Since the lockdowns some of our groups have gone back to 'life as normal' while others have maintained remote or hybrid meetings, what is true to say is that the '*new normal*' that was promised still doesn't feel altogether normal.

As we seek to navigate the twists and turns of social changes and challenges, I'm extremely grateful that we have managed, between us, to gather together a group of talented and dedicated trustees. The role of a trustee is to support and guide the charity in its choices and decisions – this year some of our trustees come to the end of their term and will step down from the role – might you have some time, expertise, or experience to offer to the team? We need new voices and different perspectives on age old problems. If you would like to volunteer, or want to nominate someone, then please let us know.

It would be easy for me to rhapsodise about any and all of the good folk who have served as trustees, but that would go on for too long. I do want to acknowledge, though, the role played by Peter Stribblehill on the trustee board over the last several years. Peter has been our treasurer for a long time now, and, like all the best athletes, has decided to retire while he is still scoring goals and winning races. Our huge and sincere thanks go to Peter – our meetings will not be the same without him. Not leaving us this year, but still putting in a huge amount of work, is Dave Coaker who continues in the Sisyphean task of editing Progressive Voices. Unlike me, David is one of the quieter members of the team, but (also unlike me) when he speaks it's always worth listening. We are grateful to him for the many hours he gifts us in his work, perhaps he will get a reward in heaven – but I'm hedging my bets by thanking him publicly here too.

Besides the trustees, our network relies on the hard work of a lot of other volunteers. Perhaps you've heard of the 'volunteer crisis' that now threatens various institutions across our country, we are not immune from it. That fact makes me doubly grateful for the folk who continue to volunteer for us, among them the very dedicated Jess Lee, our DVD librarian, our thanks very much go to Jess for her hard work and dedication. We are also reliant on a host of others: the group leaders, the convenors, the folk who make cups of tea, the people who write things for PV, the people who take time to email me with thoughts and ideas. Your names are legion, for you are many, we could not do without you.

We are, of course, most heavily reliant on the work of Sarah Guilfoyle, who seems to rival the divine in her apparent omniscience. I think the thing Sarah says to me most regularly is: "Have you remembered..." To which the answer is invariably: "Errr, no..." Whether it's fending off cyber criminals (alongside Peter Gamston), dealing with banks, booking venues, sending out packages or finding obscure pieces of information, we as a network don't know the half of what Sarah does – I know you appreciate her efforts as much as I do. As well as Sarah, we're also supported by the work of Janis Knox, our social media person, as someone who has largely foresworn social media, I'm grateful that someone else is able to 'do the dirty work' promoting what we do and navigating online exchanges.

In 2023 Adrian Alker and Martin Bassant both stepped down as Trustees. Adrian was one of the founding Trustees of PCN Britain and had served as chair for 7 years prior to his retirement. The Trustees, on behalf of the whole membership, thank them both for their service.

Ultimately, I'm hugely grateful for not just the work, but the company of all those mentioned above, as well as all those who haven't been mentioned – together we make up a network. Santayana may have been right that a family is one of nature's great masterpieces, at times this network feels like a family to me, and I'm grateful for it.

In 2024 look out for: more events (online and in person) and, we hope... the eventual launch of our podcast project.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'SC' or similar initials.

Simon Cross, PCN Britain Chair, April 2024

Financial Report for the Year Ending 31 December 2023

1 Summary

The accounts for 2023 have been prepared on the receipts and payments basis.

The accounts are prepared on the basis that the trustees are confident that PCNB is a going concern, able to meet its financial obligations for the next 12 months.

The accounts comprise the receipts and payments for the year and a balance sheet.

The accounts show a surplus of £413 for the year with a balance on the general fund £28,614 at the end of the year.

2 Events

Donations were received from attendees at our AGM, 20th anniversary celebrations and webinars.

3 Publications

PV costs include the cost of postage.

4 Website

The website expenditure reflected maintenance costs during the year.

5 Development

The Social Media Editor continues to work about 4 hours a week maintaining our media presence.

6 The general rise in interest rates was reflected in the return on our *Churches, Charities and Local Authorities (CCLA)* deposit which was much more than in recent years.

7 Operating costs

The year reflects a return to `live` events with our 20th anniversary gatherings.

Trustees were mindful of costs of their meetings so that there was a mixture of zoom and one day meetings. The opportunity of residential meetings was missed so that they are likely to have just one such meeting in 2024.

8 Deficit

The overall surplus of £413 reflects a successful outcome to the request for members to consider their level of subscription rather than imposing a general increase.



Peter Stribblehill, Treasurer, February 2024

Section A**Independent Examiner's Report**

Report to the trustees	Progressive Christianity Network Britain		
On accounts for the year ended	31 st December 2023	Charity no (if any)	1102164
	Set out on pages Seven and Eight		

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended **31/12/2023**.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed: **Date:**

Name:

Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any):

Address:

Section B**Disclosure**

No disclosures or qualifications.

Progressive Christianity Network Britain
Receipts and Payments for the Year Ending 31 December 2023

	2023			2022		
	Income	Expenditure	Net	Income	Expenditure	Net
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Membership and Donations						
Subscriptions	20,208		20,208	20,539	-	20,539
Donations - general	205		205	488	-	488
Gift Aid	4,185		4,185	3,769	-	3,769
	24,598	0	24,598	24,796	-	24,796
Events						
AGM	10	(50)	(40)	150	(467)	(317)
Webinar / Anniversary	1,010	(1,133)	(123)	260	(87)	173
Greenbelt		(800)	(800)	0	(1,413)	(1,413)
	1,020	(1,983)	(963)	410	(1,967)	(1,557)
Publications						
Sales	347		347	596		596
Publication costs		(215)	(215)		(339)	(339)
Newsletter costs		(5,228)	(5,228)		(4,057)	(4,057)
Website		(1,498)	(1,498)		(1,874)	(1,874)
	347	(6,941)	(6,594)	596	(6,270)	(5,674)
Development Projects						
Media Editor		(2,068)	(2,068)		(1,733)	(1,733)
Production Expenditure			0		(4,680)	(4,680)
	0	(2,068)	(2,068)	0	(6,413)	(6,413)
Interest Received						
CCLA	894		894	197	-	197
	894		894	197	-	197
Operating Costs						
Admin salaries		(13,450)	(13,450)	0	(13,305)	(13,305)
Insurance		(528)	(528)		(452)	(452)
Management Committee expenses		(874)	(874)		(3,410)	(3,410)
Other costs		(442)	(442)		(759)	(759)
Bank Charges		(160)	(160)		(269)	(269)
	0	(15,454)	(15,454)	0	(18,195)	(18,195)
Cash Surplus for Year	26,859	(26,446)	413	25,999	(32,845)	(6,846)

**Progressive Christianity Network Britain
Statement of Assets 31 December 20223**

Funds	31/12/2023	31/12/2022
	General Fund £	General Fund £
Balance at 1 January	28,201	35,047
Net receipts for Year	413	(6,846)
<u>Balance at 31 December</u>	<u>28,614</u>	<u>28,201</u>

Balance Sheet	31/12/2023	31/12/2022
	£	£
<u>Assets</u>		
Co-operative Bank	7,314	7,795
CCLA	21,300	20,406
<u>Total</u>	<u>28,614</u>	<u>28,201</u>



Simon Cross, Chair



Peter Stribblehill, Treasurer