

Annual Report

2023



St Mary's Eaton Socon

THE CHURCH ON THE GREEN

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Vicar's Welcome

Welcome to St Mary's Eaton Socon 2023 Annual Report.

Inside you'll find reviews of the various activities, ministries and events that St Mary's is engaged in – you may need two or three cups of coffee or tea to get through it all! All these things reflect the vibrant and growing life of St Mary's, which we give thanks for.

In last year's Annual Report, I quoted the Theologian Dr Julie Robb saying *The church family can only be the community God desires if every member and every gift are valued*. Whilst this continues to be my vision for the church, 2023 has been a challenging year in which it needs to be recognised that some people have struggled to live as this community.

In one of my recent sermons (17 March) we reflected on what it means to live as God's chosen people. This means learning to be intentional about how we choose to live as a community of faith. This is a way of life that requires each of us to get rid of those destructive things in our lives and to clothe ourselves with Godly things.

Things we need to rid ourselves of, as the Apostle Paul reminds us of in Colossians 3:8-9 include *anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. Do not lie to each other...* Again, as Paul reminds us in Ephesians 4:25 *Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbour, for we are all members of one body*.

Having put off these things, we are then called to clothe ourselves, as Paul reminds us in Colossians 3:12-14 *with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity*.

This is how the Christian Church is called to live – this is how we are all called to live as God's community here in Eaton Socon.

As we continue to journey through 2024, it is my prayer that all of us will take these words of Scripture into our lives and let the Holy Spirit continually embed them within each of us as we are transformed into Christ's likeness, so that we may be a community where every member and every gift is valued. What will your response be?

With every blessing for the year ahead.

Tim



PCC Report

The PCC continue to meet most months, although the format of the meeting changed slightly this year. To encourage more people to be on the PCC, meetings were changed to alternate Tuesdays and Thursdays. This new format has worked well. During the year 1 person resigned.

FINANCE

The Treasurer, Roy Notley, presents a full review of the accounts at each meeting for general, designated and restricted funds. Constant reviews of likely finance outcome for the year were discussed, especially towards the later months as it became clear that financing of general funds was going to need extreme monitoring.

During the year the PCC sanctioned an upgrade of the vestry to make it more suitable for groups to use for meetings. The work for this was commissioned midway through the year. However, due to the failure of obtaining any start date for the work, a new contract with a different supplier was approved in February 2024. This project is funded from restricted funds.

In order to accommodate the growing cashless society, application for a heavily discounted donation station has been submitted. This is a prominent tabletop giving station which would potentially increase card/phone giving in church.

The 2024 budget was discussed and revised many times again due to the uncertainties of what 2024 would bring, particularly concerning the large gap between income against expenditure.

MINISTRY

As no Churchwarden places were filled in 2023, the PCC agreed to increase the number of Assistant Churchwardens to compensate. This has worked well throughout the year.

It was agreed to restore the offer of wafer and shared cup, dipped wafer and disposable set post covid at all the services and also bring back sharing the Peace.

The Pilot Eldership Group (PEG) completed its term as a working group and the Eldership was established as a permanent group. Initially comprising four members, it is envisaged that the membership of this group will grow in time. The Eldership will present a quarterly status report to the PCC.

It was agreed, as part of the development of the Mission Action Plan, to develop the concept of a 3:16 service and its practicalities. It was agreed to start an Alpha and Youth Alpha course in the Autumn term.

YOUTH

The PCC were pleased that the start of the Youth Café and other youth activities were drawing interest from outside the church family and that we should all be keen to encourage this growth as much as we possibly can.

ADMIN

Modelling God's love to everyone is what we are working on: The goals that St Mary's has to develop Church life in all its aspects has been defined in a completion time scale schedule.

Windows 10 support terminates in October 2025 rendering six Church laptops unsupported. Options to replace/update some or all of them are being explored by the PCC.

The PCC approved the extended study leave in 2024 for the Vicar.

PCC Report Continued

PCC minutes are written up and, once ratified, are displayed with the Treasurer's Report in the South Porch.

My thanks go to the Trustees of the Eaton Socon PCC for all their hard work during the year, to all the Assistant Churchwardens, to Ed Jarvis for taking the minutes, to all the staff and especially to Rev'd Timothy Robb for everything he does.

Brenda Notley



Safeguarding Report

St Mary's Church, Eaton Socon is committed to being a safe place for all and we are working with the Diocesan guidelines to ensure this is maintained. The St Mary's '*Safeguarding for All Policy*' was updated in January 2023 to reflect ongoing changes within the church. It is based upon the Diocesan Safeguarding policies '*Protecting All God's Children*' and '*Promoting A Safe Church*' (which covers vulnerable adults). St Mary's Church has adopted the principles and practices of safer recruitment and work is being carried out to update all documents involved in the process.

As the church activities involving children continue to expand, new volunteers have come forward and the necessary safer recruitment and checks have been carried out so that this could be done safely. As the Church of England has recommended all DBS checks are renewed every three years.

All Safeguarding Training is delivered online. Records are kept of those who have undergone Safeguarding training so that, in line with Diocesan recommendations, renewal every three years can be prompted.

There is a regular Safeguarding item on PCC agendas allowing for the PCC to be kept informed on Safeguarding matters and to discuss initiatives as they arise. St Mary's Church is now on the Parish Dashboard, a system for ensuring that all necessary Safeguarding requirements have been completed. Work is in hand to review the National Safeguarding Standards statements

Names and contact details of the vicar, the Safeguarding Officer and the Children's Advocate are displayed within the church along with advice helpline numbers. This information is also clearly signposted on the parish website. If there are any Safeguarding matters that need to be brought to our attention, please contact any of these people in confidence.

Jane Gogarty

The Life of St Mary's in 2023/24

Often with the passing of time, one doesn't take in all that happens in the life of the church. The following is a snapshot of some of what's happened over the last 14 months. If you want to find out more about any aspect, please ask.

January – June 2023

Area of Church Life	What's happened
Pastoral Care	Redeveloped Team to offer Ministry in Care Homes post Covid
HIVE	Started in 2022, this continues to build and reach families with additional needs children in our community and further afield
Lunch Club	Started monthly weekday café ministry in January 2023
Youth Café	Term Time Weekly Café for Secondary School aged Youth started February 2023
Fusion (Friday Youth)	Redeveloped Fusion to reach Youth Café Youth
Church Rotas	New person appointed to sort Church Service rotas

July – December 2023

Area of Church Life	What's happened
Church & Holiday Club BBQ	Held a great BBQ for Holiday Club & Church people
Harvest Lunch	Lots of people sat down to a superb 2 course Church Harvest Lunch
Eldership	Eldership formed in July 2023 out of Pilot Eldership Group, to help oversee the Spiritual life of the church. Eldership reports to PCC.
Assistant Churchwardens	Rebuilt Assistant Churchwardens Team – still a few more people required!
High Level Church Clean	3 PCC members and the Caretaker undertook a High Level Clean of the Pillar Archways etc
Reactors	Ran Youth Alpha in the Autumn Term
Life Groups	Compiling a database of available Study Material
Prayer Life of Church	Prayer Area in Church revamped
Alpha	Restarted Alpha in October
Café on the Green	Larger Team in place to help run this initiative
Sunday School	Revamped post covid
Finance Leaflet	Production of Yearly Finance Leaflet
Church Publicity	Started to revamp Church Publicity and info in Church Hall and Porch
Christmas Decoration	Team to decorate the Church for Christmas

January 2024+

Area of Church Life	What's happened
Church Policies	Revamping Church Policies and responsible people to update them
Low Level Church Clean	½ Day to clean the Church!
Mission Action Plan	Completed new Mission Action Plan for the Diocese, focusing on 316 service
316 Service	Launched a new service initiative called 316, aiming to attract families we don't see on Sunday mornings
Lay Leaders of Worship Course	5 people from St Mary's attending the Diocesan Lay Leaders of Worship course to enable them to be licensed to lead in different capacities

These are but some of the things that have been happening – what would you like to learn more about?



Last Thursday of the month 12noon – 2pm

Fellowship and Food

Two course meal - £4 per person

To book contact office@eatonsocon.org



Treasurer's Report

This was yet another challenging year with income unable to keep pace with ever rising expenditure costs.



Overall income was £149249 and expenditure £153703 within the General ministry and maintenance fund resulting in a deficit of £4454.

Planned giving income fell by £4102, cash collections and sundry donations were up by £4564, lump sum pledges including gift aid were £9013, including £5006 deferred from 2022 and other income was down by £2040. Deposit account interest though was up by £1322. Overall, total income for the year was up by £3837.

Expenditure too was up by £8421. Parish Share £2449, energy costs £3962 and building related costs by £2259. Staff costs were up by £2799. All other expenditure lines were down by £3048. Mission giving was 5.27% of planned giving. This is well below our minimum target of 10% but without sufficient income we are unable to meet that goal.

I would strongly recommend you read the Planned Giving Report for 2023. The number of regular givers is falling, and the average amount being given, especially at the top end of the scale, is also falling. Can you afford to give more? Are your contributions gift aided? Are you new to St Mary's and have not yet got around to a regular tythe?

Do please pray about a regular tythe to support St Mary's Eaton Socon.

DESIGNATED FUND

Fundraising events in 2023 raised £3496 and a legacy of £1000 was received. There was no major expenditure on buildings or equipment in 2023. Funds were £3317 at end of 2022 so now stand at £7813.

Other designated funds are held for Catering, Children events and Youth.

Funds at start of year were £1672 including reallocations from restricted. Catering events raised £275, Childrens events raised £205 and Youth activities net costs were £265 giving a net surplus of £215. Funds at end of year were £1887. Total designated funds were in surplus by £4711 in year and now stand at £9700.

UNRESTRICTED FUNDS

General account and designated accounts all relate to unrestricted funds. Although the General Account was in deficit by £4454, the designated fund was in surplus by £4711 so overall the net surplus of unrestricted funds rose by £257. The cumulative unrestricted fund reserves are £22746. There was no major expenditure on buildings or equipment in 2023.

RESTRICTED FUNDS

There was little movement in restricted funds during the year. Cumulative restricted funds for future developments now stand at £20344.

In addition, there are restricted funds for Outreach, Worship and Church Groups.

These funds at start of year were £3443 after transfers to Designated and, after all activity in the year, were £3858 at close.



Treasurer's Report Continued

LOOKING FORWARD TO 2024

This has again been a challenging budget to prepare. Income from giving can only be based upon what is happening right now. We think planned giving will fall by £2000, as will sundry donations. Lettings and occasional fees are also predicted to fall also by £2000. Expenditure is expected to be around the same as 2023 so the budget shows an expected deficit of £10250.

My thanks to all who have assisted in the preparation of these Accounts, with particular thanks to Gavin and Tim for their solid support and assistance. As you are aware, I am ready to pass on the role of Treasurer. I do pray that there is someone out there who will come forward to take it on. I will always be available to guide you through all that is involved.

Roy B Notley

Planned Giving Report

Around 92% of St Mary's income needed to come from giving/donations to resource its rising costs for ministry/upkeep of buildings. In 2023 regular giving was down by £4102 from 2022. Giving of all kinds was £462 up on 2022, excluding Gift Days. All giving amounted to 89% of expenditure. It is evident from the statistics that the numbers giving on a regular basis are falling and not being replaced by new givers. Also, the number giving at the higher end of the scale is also falling. This is resulting in ever falling income from regular planned giving but being compensated in part by sundry donations and gift days.

There was only one new regular giver in 2023. Do you consider yourself a regular member at St Mary's? If so, do give some prayerful thought to commencing planned regular giving.

Giving was via the following streams:	2021	2022	2023	
Direct Debits (Parish Giving Scheme)	29195	30848	28492	20.82%
Bank Standing Orders	59993	56706	59292	43.34%
On-line Debit/Credit Cards (Stripe)	690	720	566	0.41%
Dedicated Numbered Envelopes	3277	2938	21	0.02%
Gift Aid Reclaim from HMRC	20563	20925	19664	14.37%
PLANNED GIVING	113718	112137	108035	78.96%
Gift Aid envelopes	293	1107	1144	0.84%
Cash Offertories	2816	6067	6225	4.55%
Casual donations	5805	5618	9503	6.95%
Gift Aid Reclaim from HMRC	1324	2417	2901	2.12%
Gift Day	0	4719	9013	6.59%
ADHOC GIVING	10238	19928	28786	21.04%
TOTAL GIVING	123956	132065	136821	

Planned Giving Report Continued

<u>Monthly giving spread.</u>				
	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>	
Up to £25	17	16	14	
£26 and £50	32	27	22	
£51 and £100	21	19	17	
£101 and £200	10	14	13	
£201 and £300	10	7	6	
Over £300	2	4	3	
	92	87	75	



At the start of the year there were 87 regular givers: 21 increased their regular amount and 2 decreased.

1 started regular giving but 13 stopped, leaving 75 regular givers at the end of 2023.

On behalf of the PCC of St Mary's, Eaton Socon we give our sincere thanks for your sustained regular giving.

The 2024 budget is again challenging and will need your extra support to protect the services provided.

For regular donation via the Parish Giving Scheme (PGS) go to eatonsocon.org, click on **DONATIONS** then tab down and click on **Parish Giving Scheme Website**. Click on **Regular Giving** then follow the instructions.

Remember, apart from regular giving by Direct Debit through the PGS you can give by Bank Standing Order through your own bank.

There are many other ways of donating available to the occasional giver:

PARISH GIVING SINGLE DONATION www.parishgiving.org.uk (parishcode 320632297)

ONLINE BANKING direct bank transfer to Eaton Socon PCC – 20.74.81 60347043

CREDIT/DEBIT CARD by sum-up card reader

CHURCH WEBSITE by various donate buttons on www.eatonsocon.org

TEXT GIVING by text message SMES to 70085 Default is £10

EASY FUNDRAISING using St Mary's as nominated charity

GIFT AID ENVELOPES on finance table or back of seat (folding money only please)

MONEY by cash or cheques in offertory baskets in church when open

Please note giving by means of options 3,4 or 5 above will incur a commission charge deducted at source from your contribution.

We encourage you to continue to review the support you can afford, which is so vital to St Mary's.

Our charity registration number is 1130537 and we greatly value your financial support.

Roy B Notley

Eldership Report

Some years after its original concept by the Vicar and the Bishop of St Albans and a year and a half of active planning by a working group, an eldership was established and approved by the PCC to start from July 2023. The sharing of leadership at a senior level is recognised as a healthy and robust format, helping in balanced decision-making and critically allowing more time for consultations with those actively involved in church ministry and activities.

The areas we especially consider and oversee together are: pastoral and prayer; life groups; children and youth ministry; training and courses and church services. We wish to appoint and support more people to serve in all these areas to help our church to grow in numbers and maturity on a solid foundation. Our role complements that of the PCC and churchwardens and we look forward to those working relationships developing and taking shape as we move forward.

Another challenging aspect of our work is having to deal with problems and difficult situations which inevitably occur from time to time in the work of God's Kingdom. The lay elders have been glad to be able to support Tim at these times and to share in sorrows as well as joys. It has reminded us how much our leaders need our prayers.

We meet monthly or more often when required and consider each of the above areas in turn as well as specific issues of concern to the Vicar. We don't want to be an exclusive "holy huddle" so please get to know us, share your ideas and concerns about church life with us, and bear with us as we feel our way in this new role.

Chris Harris, Edward Jarvis, Tim Robb, Ali Wood.

Church Administrator's Report

Well, in October of this year, I will be celebrating having worked for Tim and St Mary's for eight years. This makes me the longest serving member of office staff ever! Where has the time gone?

The office remains an extremely busy and productive environment with lots of people needing lots of things, but I enjoy supporting them, behind the scenes, in their endeavours for the Church. It wouldn't work without them. We support vulnerable groups here too and this, in all honesty, gives me the greatest pleasure. Their gratitude is, indeed, humbling.

My main duties include taking all bookings and ensuring that our management system (ChurchSuite) is as up to date as possible. If I have any spare time, it is always spent in getting ahead with the planning going forward. There are always emails and enquiries to answer, filing and invoicing to be done and often copious amounts of printing to be tackled. I also make sure that the hall is nice and warm for our users – very important. These are just a few of the many tasks required to ensure the smooth running of this side of Church life.

The people I worked with previously joked many a time with me before I left that I would be going to an easy job and drinking tea all day. If only! I certainly do drink tea, often cold, made for me by the lovely people of St Mary's – for that I thank you most kindly. Sometimes I wish that it was a G&T but you can't have everything, can you?

Karen Mackenzie

Vicar's PA Report

I can't believe I've been in post for two years already!

I continue to undertake a wide variety of activities, with much of my time devoted to administration of Life events, such as Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals. I continue to produce the monthly newsletter, liaising with many members of the church to ensure inclusion of up-to-date articles, news and forthcoming events.

Please let me know if there is anything you would like included!

I have been allowed to be creative when producing PowerPoint displays for services and the website, along with various posters, leaflets, booklets and cards.

The last few weeks have seen me drowning in reports while formatting and producing the APCM Reports booklet. Thank you everyone for your prompt contributions. The job is always varied, interesting, busy and fulfilling.

Thank you to Tim for not being an overbearing boss and to Karen for being the perfect colleague.

I love it when members of the church pop into the office, and a huge THANK YOU to those who keep me supplied with coffee!! Please continue to pop in and say hello.
Jane Gill

Pre-Marriage Course Report

In the spring of 2023 Barbara and I hosted the pre marriage course for 5 couples who were married in our church during the year. The course material is produced by Alpha International and is presented by Nicky and Sila Lee who are on the staff of HTB London. Three of the couples attended the 5 week course at church and the other 2 completed the course remotely.

It is always a pleasure to host this course as we know the couples benefit from it. We have received a lot of positive feedback and it is always gratifying to see the couples engage with the course as it progresses over the weeks.

The couples received good learning experiences and enjoyed a few 'light bulb' moments, we know that they will be better equipped for their marriage journey as a consequence. Barbara and I have also been reminded of a few points and we continue to learn!

Edward and Barbara Jarvis



Wildlife Walk Report

The Wildlife Walks resumed on Sunday 11th February following our break over the Christmas period and the floods. We follow the same walk each month as it is very informative seeing how the flora and fauna change through the seasons. We have information booklets on what we can expect to see during each season. We also do an eye spy and scavenger hunt, which were developed for children, but adults also enjoy them. I've tried to organise different activities for the group to do either on route or when we return to the Dragonfly, such as foraging, making fat balls for birds, making seed bombs, and live willow weaving. These have been very enjoyable, and so has the tea and cakes, and updates on the otters and kingfisher that can be viewed from the boat.

Audrey Hedges

Creation Care Team Report

The Creation Care Group was set up four years ago to help St Mary's enjoy and protect the environment around us. We want to show that we love creation because we love its Creator. We've made changes in our Church life, and encourage Church members to make changes in their own lifestyles too. Our efforts were recognised by an Eco Church silver award in January 2023, and we plan to maintain and improve on that standard. This requires action in five areas:

Worship and Teaching – our worship and prayers often reflect our love and concern for creation. We had a special focus on two Sundays in September, when we used the theme suggested by the global Season of Creation movement: we are called to be at peace with creation, and to justly share its beauty and fruits with others.



Let Justice and Peace Flow
Season of Creation 2023
A Mighty River
Amos 5: 24

Buildings – by far the biggest part of our 'carbon footprint' is the gas we burn to heat the Church and Hall, which has gone down by a third over the last two years! That's because we kept a much closer eye on the thermostats, while trying to keep giving visitors a warm welcome.



Land – we try to make the Churchyard a good place for wildlife, as well as its many human visitors. The meadow areas have enabled wild plants and creatures to thrive there. But sadly it has proved impossible to continue mowing large areas of long grass, and collecting the cuttings, so we've had to reduce those areas, and will be reducing again this year. We've introduced a small area of sown, native wild flowers alongside the main path – it produced a colourful display during the summer months, and we plan to add a second area nearby. We've also tamed the scrubby grass area beside the Hall, and are starting work to improve the fenced-off area under the Church tower, including a small pond.

The Town Council expect to start some tree maintenance shortly. The main task will be a heavy pruning of the ageing horse chestnut trees around the perimeter.

We're very grateful to the Town Council for their work and cooperation in the Churchyard. We're also grateful to all the people who've adopted beds in the Churchyard, or helped at the monthly Monday morning working parties. You're welcome to join us!

Community and Global Engagement and Lifestyle – we try to make sure that everyone has a copy of our home-grown leaflet of practical ways in which we can each enjoy more the world around us and do less damage to it. We're a Fairtrade Church. We've continued monthly walks on Sunday afternoons, weather permitting, to help people to enjoy our lovely local area, and we clear litter from over 3 miles of nearby paths and pavements a couple of times a year. Last year we introduced occasional Saturday-morning repair-and-alter sessions to help people extend the life of their clothes.



There's more information about us in our Green Shoots newsletter, which comes out once or twice a year. Also on the Church website at www.eatonsocon.org/creation-care, and about the Churchyard at www.eatonsocon.org/churchyard.

If you are interested, want to join in or know more, or have ideas, please contact one of us.

Anthony Harris, Audrey Hedges, Roger Peppiatt, Margaret Tabone.



Children and Families Ministry Report

Little Stars

Little Stars is a toddler group which runs on a Wednesday morning (term time). We welcome children from 0 to 4 years old alongside their grown up. We have free play, sensory play, craft, refreshments and always finish with a song time at the end.

Little Stars is well supported by our local community, with us seeing many come back with their 2nd or even 3rd child. We see an average of 25 children per week, which alongside parents means we regularly have a group of 40-50 on site.

In December we had our annual Christmas party where the children helped us retell the nativity story (which is always cute and chaos in equal measure), sang some Christmas songs, had some party food, and wished everyone a merry Christmas. This has been the same format for several years now and families love coming to it.

We have seen families from Little Stars attending other family events we have run across the year.

Creche and Sunday School



Creche runs for children under the age of 4yrs old and Sunday School takes children from 4+. Both groups run during the 10.30am Sunday Service. These groups have been a work in progress, with us still seeing numbers fluctuating as families have busy lives.

The creche is held in the church hall and is parent led (with a volunteer organising toys every week). Here the children can play, do crafts and the church service is live streamed for the parents.

Sunday School is held in the vestry and has 2 leaders per week guiding children through our Bible teaching, games, crafts and lots of fun. Sunday School is continuing to use a series of teaching called "Heartshapers", which teaches Biblical stories and how they can speak to our lives today.

HIVE

HIVE is a monthly group which is for children with additional needs / SEND and their siblings and families. This group has been running for 2yrs now and runs on a Sunday afternoon and is set up so that children can choose what activities to participate in. We have sensory items, a blackout tent, messy play, books, games, Lego, marble run, magna tiles, arts and crafts, and loads more! We then have refreshments and to finish we turn off the lights and have our projectors and light up items on.

The aim of HIVE is to support local families and provide them with a safe environment for all the children to meet and the parents to feel that they can relax for the time they're there.

In July 2023 ESCA very generously donated some money so that HIVE could book Eat N Play (soft play) hire for 2hrs. This meant that our HIVE families had exclusive use of the soft play and was very popular with all our families, especially those who feel that their child's needs mean they can't usually attend a public soft play session.

We have had contact with many families via HIVE and have begun to see some the HIVE families attending other events we have run. This is encouraging that families feel that St Mary's is welcoming to everyone and can be inclusive for their child.

Children and Families Ministry (Continued)

One off events

Throughout the year we hold one off events for children and families both in church and in the local community. At these events we get to meet new families as well as catch up with families who we haven't seen since the last event. This year we had –

Easter Eggstravaganza: our annual Easter family event held on the Saturday before Easter and is always well attended by families. This year we saw over 90 people attending for fun doing bunny crafts, sunflower planting, a scavenger hunt and fun and games.

Summer holiday club: 2023 was the first time we ran all 5 mornings (before this it had been 3 mornings). This was a step of faith and the church stepped up magnificently! We had 92 children booked in for a science themed holiday club – which went down a storm with plenty of fun experiments, making lava lamps, volcanoes and learning all about how God and science can go hand in hand. We also had some fantastic help from the local community, with some parents coming to help and 2 sixth form students from Longsands Academy joining us for some volunteering experience.



Light Night: our alternative Halloween which is usually held on the Sunday before Halloween. It provides families with a non-scary, fun alternative to all that is dark and frightening about Halloween and gives us the opportunity to talk about Jesus being the light of the world. This year we saw almost 100 people come and make lanterns, bracelets, crafts, play games and go on a night walk round the churchyard. We were also joined by 3 companies from the local community who provided the children with glitter designs, face painting and a chance to meet the character Rapunzel. These were all very generously provided free of charge.

Christingle: this is always a popular event with families and this year we saw almost 100 people attending. We had Christmas crafts and then we all made Christingles together. This was followed by the lighting of the Christingle and us all singing "Away in a Manger", which is always commented on by parents as to how lovely it is to have such a calm moment in a busy day. Again, we were joined by a local company who brought with them someone dressed up as a giant polar bear so children could come and take photos. This was very generously provided free of charge.

School's Work: This past year we have begun to get back into schools and provide assemblies to support the RE curriculum. Myself and Tim share assembly responsibility and have been into Bushmead and Crosshall Juniors as well as leading Bushmead, Crosshall Infant and Crosshall Junior Christmas services at church. The hope is to have opportunities to get back into Crosshall Infant School as we haven't been in there to do assemblies since before Covid.

I want to take this opportunity to give a massive thank you to everyone who has helped with our regular groups, one off events, holiday club and any other aspects of the children and families ministry over the past year. Your commitment to supporting this ministry is what enables us to connect to our church families and our local community and I certainly couldn't run them without everyone's support.



Liz Faulkner - Church, Community, Families & Children's Worker

Youth Ministry Report

REACTORS:

Reactors is our Sunday Youth Church where we have a lively session with good humoured banter, hot chocolate and healthy bible study. Jesus is at the centre of our sessions which are always opened in prayer followed by recording our prayer requests for the week which is then posted on our WhatsApp group chat. Eight regularly attend but this year we said goodbye to Sarah and Holly as they left for University. Whilst it is lovely to see them again when they come home, it is encouraging to know that they have both settled down into local churches where they now live.

At the start of 2023 we continued our series 'engage', a study book helping young people to discover who God is and what He's like; seeing what God's done for us through Jesus; and exploring practical ways of living for Him. We looked at John's gospel asking and exploring the question 'Who does John say Jesus is?'. We looked in Matthew to help us talk about spiritual growth and delved into Colossians to look at the characteristics of maturing Christians and how we can grow as Christians.

In June we started a course run by Ministry to Youth entitled Summer Survival Guide in which we looked at issues such as the state of one's mental health and how the decisions you make today can shape who you will become tomorrow.

After the summer break we started a series on The Armour of God and had fun playing Kahoot, an online quiz, about the different parts of the armour and what they stand for.

At the start of 2024 we started an exciting new course from Ministry to Youth focusing on relationships, both healthy and unhealthy, and how to recognise these in dating relationships, putting God in the centre of these relationships and acknowledging that God created us to live in love and harmony with each other.

The Youth Team and I are seeing young people in our church growing in their knowledge and faith and are excited at seeing an emergence of new young youth leaders, eager and willing. Thank you Jesus for your goodness and allowing us the privilege of discipling our wonderful young people.

Julia Chapman

FUSION:

Fusion continues to be a great time for the youth to get together weekly on a Friday and enjoy an evening filled with games, team challenges and sports. Along with the chance to chill and catch up with each other's news, it has been lovely to see friendships blossom and support networks grow. Excitingly we have seen the number of youth attending grow and we consistently have around 20-25 young people each week.

We have enjoyed trips to the Bowling Alley and of course the golden arches aka Mc Donalds, participated in a "band night", joined up with other local churches to hold end of term Youth nights/ parties and have even enjoyed ringing the church bells with the bell ringing team.



Youth Ministry Report (Continued)

In February, Anita White from Global Care came and gave a fantastic talk about the charity. Actually seeing the incredible positive impact they have on children and young people's lives who have so little, sometimes not even a home, was an extremely humbling experience.

In the Summer, many of us headed to Norwich for the Newday Festival where we had a total ball and spent a whole week learning more about God. We hope to continue welcoming new members.



Autumn brought our first music gig since Covid, where we enjoyed an evening with Soulbox and St Neots church Youth.

As Winter drew in and the nights became longer, we enjoyed S'mores around a campfire, enjoyed decorating the church for Christmas and helping out in the Nativity Play. To help promote our Youth groups, we splashed out on a very big big flag, maybe a little bit bigger than expected, and have continued updating our flyers. A big thank you to Holly Arnold for her artistic skills and time.

As we head into 2024, we look forward to our trips out, end of term parties, taskmaster challenges and games, continued fellowship with local churches and attending Newday with our friends Open Door and River Church.

We pray the youth continue to grow, make new friendships, cement old ones and, with the success of the Youth Café, we hope to continue welcoming new members.

Heather Arnold



Youth Ministry Report (Continued)

NEWDAY 2023:

With bags packed and goodbyes said, 16 of us headed off with our Open Door, River Church and other friends to Norwich Showground. Along with 8000 other young people and their leaders, we had a great week connecting and learning more about our amazing God through meetings in the morning and in the evening.

Many prayers were answered and the presence of the Holy Spirit felt among us as four of our youth connected and started their journey with God.

The big top was bigger than ever before and being able to worship with so many people was amazing especially when a church paraded all dressed up carrying a golden tabernacle to celebrate the "Gold" themed night!

New friendships were made as we spent time competing in games, physical and non-physical and sliding down a tarpaulin water slide, seeing how far we could slide off the end. Hanging out in the Cowsheds, taking part in the open mic challenge and completing the photo challenge on the last day were only a few of the things we got up to.

Newday 2024 is now open for booking and we look forward to heading that way again in the summer.



Thank you to everyone who supported our cake sales and car wash and helped us raise the money we needed to fund our trip.

We would like to take this opportunity to remember and say a big thank you to Simon De-Simone who kindly kitted us out for the car wash but sadly passed away after our first one.



Heather Arnold

YOUTH CAFÉ:

2023 saw the launch of the Youth Cafe at St Mary's which opened back in February. After a slow start the word got out and more young people from Ernulf Academy started turning up and enjoying a milkshake, toasted sandwich and fun with our volunteers.

We provide board and card games, table football, table tennis (very popular), a Wii machine and a craft table where we knit, make bracelets with bands and make models with grown up Playdough! We have hosted a Karaoke afternoon during one of our cafes and played Bingo.

We are now in the position of expecting between 20 -25 youngsters through the door, many of whom are becoming regulars. Whilst the numbers seem modest it is giving us the chance to really get to know these teenagers and many open up about family and school life. There are some sad stories and it is humbling to see how these young people cope with some of the situations they are faced with.

Youth Ministry Report (Continued)

Our vision was that a core number of teenagers would start to form at the cafe, a core that we could then encourage into our Friday night youth club, and then have the opportunity to learn more about why we want to help and be there for them, which is of course because we love Jesus and want to follow His example. I'm happy to report that many of the youth who attend the cafe are now coming along to Fusion, our Friday night club, and Reactors, our Sunday morning Youth Church.

During August we were able to take three unchurched children to the New Day Camp with us which is held on the Norwich Show Ground. They now attend Fusion and Reactors regularly. This summer we hope to take more teenagers from the Youth Cafe to New Day and have three boys who have already signed up!

I have to mention the 'Team'. The commitment of all the volunteers to honour their place on the rota and turn up each week shows consistency and stability to the youth attending the cafe and is a major contributor to it's success. We are always looking for more helpers who are able to come along once or twice a month during term times. Jobs vary from sitting on the front desk signing people in to making milkshakes, playing games, taking food orders or just talking to the youngsters and getting to know them.

We were blessed to have a member of the CoOp on our team, Davinia Milton, at the start of this venture. She managed to secure for us a £20.00 voucher each week to spend on food from the CoOp. Davinia has now moved on but we still get the food donation each week so we would like to thank her for her part in this. The manager of the local store has been down to see us and was most impressed. We'd like to thank the CoOp for their provision and God for putting in place the person on our team who could lead us to that provision. We also have a contact now at the Tesco Express across the road from church. They are happy to provide us with one off food parcels for things like end of term parties.

One of the highlights for me has been seeing a bunch of teenagers, normally glued to their phones, coming in, sitting round a table which sits about 10 people, and playing Uno, laughing and joking and having real fun. I don't interfere at this point as I feel this is what it's all about!

Another major highlight was in November when we took three of our youth, Nicholas Barrett, Alfie Fox and Chaniece Bayliss, down to London to be awarded a Youth Hero Award from Youth for Christ. This is a once a year event and this year it took place in the OXO Tower on the river Thames. We were treated to a three course lunch and wonderful views of the London skyline. Families came as well to watch as Nick and Alfie were awarded the Young Leaders Award and Chaniece was awarded the Youth Heroes Award. They each had to talk about their Christian journey and why they had been given the awards. After the event some went home whilst others then went into London to look at the Christmas lights and make the most of an amazing day.



We, the team, would value your continued prayers as we minister to our youth from Eaton Socon. We need strength and wisdom as we try to show them the love of Jesus and the wonderful life there is ahead of them if they are willing to open their hearts to Him. If you feel it on your heart to be a part of the Youth Cafe please contact Julia Chapman.

Julia Chapman, Angela Hoile, Barbara Jarvis, Gill Uings, Jane Gill, Mina Khaksari, Delphine Coe, Margaret and David Lygoe, Nick Barrett, Molly Ansell.



Music Group Report

The music group has continued to lead sung worship at the 10.30 services and occasional events throughout the year. Our numbers remain small, so we were delighted to be joined by Phil Gwilt on cello. We would love more people to join us - if you can play an instrument or are a reasonably confident singer, please consider if you would like to give it a try and speak to Phil Barrett or the Vicar to offer your talents!

Phil Barrett

Prayer Ministry Report

First of all thank you to everyone on the prayer mail for praying through all the prayer requests I send you. For those who are unaware of what this is. I receive prayer requests either by email or verbally, I then send these requests to a large group of folk who pray. If anyone is interested in being included in this please see me. May 23 saw our chancel turned into prayer zones where folk could come and pray either using the material available or praying for certain subjects as part of the Archbishop of Canterbury initiative Thy Kingdom come. Many came and spent an hour or so coming apart from the hustle and bustle. Had a lot of positive feedback.



This year I am away during Thy Kingdom Come but watch this space. We have reintroduced prayer after the morning services and thanks to Roger and Frances, David and Jane Gill and Edward for joining me in this ministry. There is also a prayer request board outside the chapel. Every prayer is prayed for. Prayer requests cards were given out at both Christmas Carol services and both sides of one of the blue boards were covered plus a lot more with these cards. I divided these up. Thank you to all who prayed for these requests. Inevitably there were a few silly ones but people were given the opportunity. This year we met together on Shrove Tuesday for a simple lunch of soup and roll and to spend a time in prayer to prepare ourselves for lent. Prayer is our life's breath and we need to pray corporately as did the early Christians as well as on our own. Please use the chapel for prayer, the prayer requests cards and prayer team. There is nothing too big or too small for God. None of this precludes praying with friends within the church.

Thank you to all who are involved in this vital ministry.

Barbara Jarvis

Alpha Course Report

This course began on Tuesday 7 November last year, and finished on Tuesday 6 February this year, meeting in the church hall each Tuesday apart from a short break over the Christmas and New Year period. The course included an 'away day', also in the church hall, on Saturday 6 January. Each meeting included an excellent cooked meal, provided by our wonderful catering team, with particular thanks to Christine Harris, Miriam Robertson, and Frances Peppiatt, who between them provided the majority of the meals, aided on occasions by one or two others. Sixteen individuals started the course, and twelve completed the course. Aside from the meal, each session would include watching a 25 minute video presentation on the subject for that session, followed by an hour of discussion and questions. This particular group participated really well in these discussions, and it was rewarding to see real spiritual growth within the members of the group. Those who completed the course were genuinely sorry that the course had finished - and it wasn't just because they now have to provide their own Tuesday evening meal!

George Cobb

Catering Team Report

The kitchen has seen an increasing amount of use over the last year for both church and community events. Some of the highlights have been:

Youth Cafe, Lunch Club, catering for the recent 12 week Alpha course and the Harvest lunch. The Brownies enjoyed making pizzas and an afternoon tea was prepared for a 100th birthday celebration. The washing up team worked hard at the May Day celebrations (and many other occasions) enabling us to use the Church crockery instead of takeaway packaging.

Gill, Chris, Frances, Miriam. Roger and Anthony (washing up team)

Café on the Green Report

The Monday Café continues to meet on Monday mornings between 10am—12noon during school term time.

A hot drink and often homemade cheese scones, along with sharing, laughter and support are enjoyed by 10-20 folk each session.

People of all ages come along, including: church folk, people living nearby, from care homes and some come with their carers.

Our vicar, Tim, is often in attendance too (occasionally he makes coffee and scones!) A team of six working in pairs provide this facility, but we would welcome more help.

Frances Peppiatt and Teresa Ansell



Craft Group Report

Tuesday mornings, the craft group are busy with their needles and their voices, as they chat, laugh, and enjoy a cup of coffee or tea and a biscuit.

We have knitted, sewn and crocheted items for The May Day Celebrations, Easter themed craft, hats and scarves for the Samaritans Purse boxes and the Christmas Fayre, where tables were laden with our numerous contributions.

From our sales during the year, we were able to contribute £100 to the Church's general fund.

Other members of the congregation joined us to make Christmas cards for the prisoners at Littlehey, to send to family and friends, and to help Tim pack Christmas Hampers for local families.

Our numbers have continued to grow, but we have lost some very special people. You don't need to be crafty to be part of our group, you are more than welcome just to come along on a Tuesday morning at 10am for a cup of tea or coffee and of course a biscuit, and if you wish we would be more than happy to share our skills. Creating something, however small or simple is an achievement and is very uplifting.

Sue Hazzard

Pastoral Care Team Report

This was the second full year after the ending of Covid pandemic lockdowns. Reflecting that the church continued its post-pandemic regrowth, the team was 39% busier than in 2022, particularly visiting people at home and conducting care home worship. These increases reflected the freedom to socialise after the withdrawal of Covid restrictions.

The **statistics** speak for themselves (these do not include contacts from the vicar and from some of the retired clergy):

Activity	2023	2022
Visits to provide Holy Communion, including to Care Homes	24	11
Provision of Transport	14	9
Visits for other reasons	14	5
Care Home Worship (non HC services)	12	4
Texts, emails, letters	11	10
Phone calls	10	8
Meal provision at home	5	11
Visits to provide respite	1	6
Bereavement Tea	1	1
Hospital Visit	0	1
Total	92	66

The team lost one person, leaving ten people: Rev'd Tim Robb – leader
 Roger & Frances Peppiatt – coordinators Rev'd George & Mrs Marilyn Cobb
 Pam Branch David Ferris Brenda & Ian Ashford Sue Crook

Team meetings took place on 9th March and 2nd November.

The second **Bereavement Tea** took place in the church hall on Sunday 4th June. Invitations had been sent out to families whose loved one's funerals had been taken by either Tim or George and also to the wider church family. Due to the disappointing attendance, it was decided that our efforts for 2024 will be focussed on the provision of a light supper after the service of Memories, which is always well attended (the date for 2024 is Sunday 3rd November) and not hold a separate bereavement tea.

Care Home Services –David Ferris & Pam Branch continued to lead a small team conducting services (including 10 HC services) at The Hillings (15) and at Nelson Lodge (7). At these 22 services, these were the approximate total attendance numbers: Residents 129 Staff 24 Team 75

We believe this ministry is an important outreach of our church into the local community.

Roger is most grateful to Tim for his leadership and to the team members for their willingness to respond to need.

Our next team meeting is at 2:15pm Thursday 18th April 2024. We are considering ways in which the team can be involved in welcoming new members of the church and also how we can expand our work visiting people who are housebound.

Roger Peppiatt

World Mission Report

2023 was a good year for the World Mission Team and for the church as we had one of our mission partners return to England and visit St Mary's. We also had visits from our home mission partners as well.

In March the McClymont family, who live in London, joined us and Allen gave a very informative talk on OMF and what is currently happening in Asia. In July Jennifer from ACTIOS came and gave us a demonstration of one of her school assemblies. Mano was back from Sri Lanka and came to stay for a weekend in August giving a summary of what had been happening in Sri Lanka, both politically and in her Theological College. In 2024 we look forward to welcoming Teresha from Triumph Heart in Uganda and a return visit from Mano during the summer.

Due to the constraint on church finances we were unable to increase our giving again in 2023. Our partners have been very gracious and understanding and we trust the Lord will see them through.

Our current partners are:

Allen and Litsa McClymont at OMF International

Teresha and Israel Karahukayo at 'Triumph Heart' in Uganda

Jennifer Musson at ACTIOS

Dr Mano Emmanuel at Colombo Theological Seminary in Sri Lanka

Food.Gives was the charity we supported as a church for our Harvest Festival. We filled 11 boxes with non-perishable goods to send to persecuted Christians around the world. We also took part again in Operation Christmas Child and generously filled over 50 shoeboxes. The boxes from St Mary's were destined for Central Asia.

News letters continued to be received from our partners and can be found on the Mission Board in church. Please take time to read these and keep up to date with what our partners are doing.

At Christmas we sent Christmas wishes via email to our missionaries abroad and Christmas cards to our partners in the UK all signed by church members with words of encouragement and best wishes.

We are always looking for new members on our team. If you feel you would like to be part of the World Mission Team please contact Julia Chapman.

Thank you all for your continuing support and prayers. Julia Chapman, Gavin Chapman, Teresa Bryant, Stephen Bailey, David Ferris



Buildings and Fabric Team Report

The Church and Hall buildings continue to require attention and with limited financial resources, this can be a challenge.

The Vicar's vestry was due for a make-over during 2023 to make it more welcoming for use by the Sunday School but unfortunately this has been delayed but we are hoping this will happen in 2024.

This year the Electrical test and inspection of the church was required, resulting in remedial work to the Choir Vestry, Boiler Room and Vicar's Vestry. The work in the Vicar's Vestry is still outstanding as it is intended to be carried out when the decorating is done.

The M-Team (Maintenance) have once again had a busy year undertaking regular maintenance tasks around the church and hall buildings, keeping the church safe, secure and in reasonable condition. We also have responsibility for coordinating the annual inspections and servicing of equipment such as fire extinguishers, boiler servicing and electrical safety checks.

A big thank you to all who have volunteered and helped each month, and with a willing attitude have made the morning a more enjoyable experience. We are always keen to welcome anyone who would like to join in and help using their practical skills. Don't worry, we have tasks to suit all abilities!

Although these activities are important and serious, the morning can be a time of good fellowship and getting to know one another. And of course, there is always time for tea or coffee and a scone, thanks to the Cafe on The Green team.

Gavin Chapman



Audio Visual Report

The Audio Visual team has consisted of three members who provide the visual displays for the church services. We use a dedicated laptop with a program called Easy Worship which is configured for each service.

The 10:30 morning service is usually live streamed to YouTube with the loyal help of two cameramen who ensure the right picture is broadcast.

Sometimes technical issues don't quite go as planned and require some prompt action at the last minute! Anyway, matters are often resolved just in time.

A big thank you to all the team for your loyal service.

We are very keen to welcome newcomers, so if you would like to get involved with serving on the AV team do get in touch with one of us. We'll happily explain everything and support you until you are comfortable to run a service on your own.

Gavin Chapman

Life Group Report

The LIFE groups provide us with the opportunity to share fellowship and Christian teaching throughout the week, and they perform a very important function within the life of St Mary's.

Our church has 8 LIFE groups which meet locally, 2 groups meet during the day and 6 groups meet in the evening. During the last 12 months we have had the pleasure of welcoming some new group members and saying goodbye to some people who have moved on. Overall membership numbers are consistent year on year.

I would like to thank everyone who has taken part in the groups over the last year and trust that they have benefited from it. Also many thanks to all of the LIFE group leaders:

George Cobb	Yvonne Bradbury-White
Ray Porter	Julia and Gavin Chapman
Barbara Jarvis	Jane Gogarty
Julie Robb	Brian and Gylan Harrison

All of whom have given so generously of their time in support of this ministry. Thanks also to the group members who have deputised as and when needed.

Going forward we pray for an increase in LIFE group membership, to the glory of God.

Edward Jarvis

Living In Faith Encounters

Wednesday Welcome Report

This is a very friendly, relaxed group with 30 members providing an enjoyable break at 3pm on a Wednesday afternoon in the church hall.

We had four excursions this year, The Raptor Foundation, for a flying display and cream tea, The Stables with lunch, afternoon tea, plus walk around the grounds and meals at Roxton garden centre and the Christmas lunch at the Barley Mow.

There is a wealth of talent within the church family and this year Karen McKenzie read some of her poetry, Jane Gill introduced the St Neots handbell ringers, the Evergreens containing members of the congregation, sang for us twice and Leah Falzarono now takes the chair exercise sessions. Please see the photograph.

As always the U3A ukulele group entertained us to a sing along session, and we have had a number of speakers including St Neots museum and Healthwatch.

Next year we plan a similar format, however we are finding funding more difficult (Thank you this year to ESCA and Eaton Socon Charities for supporting us) and transport, as members give up their driving licences, for excursions.

A big thank you to Linda Mosser, Shirley Chappell, Clive and Marion Gisborne for their continued support each week.

Should you or anyone you know wish to come along please feel free to join us, you are very welcome.

Mike Gilham 07899 856636.



Foodbank Report

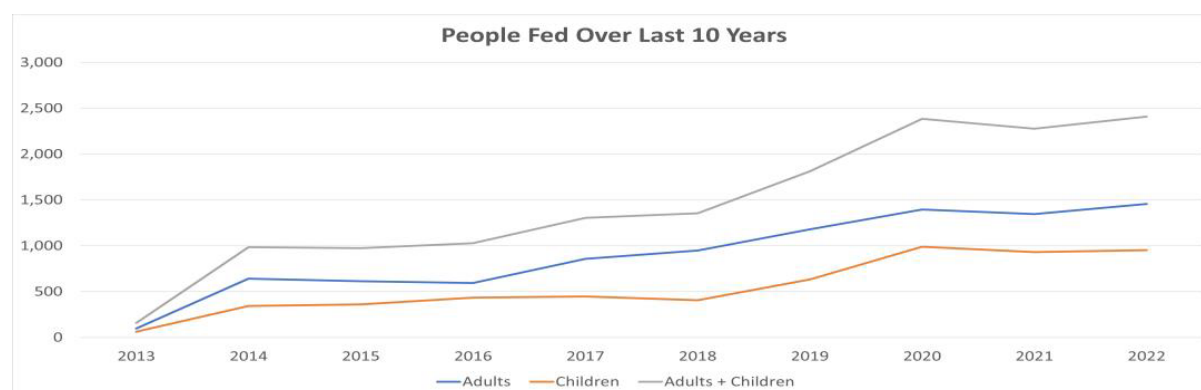
In 2023 overall St Neots Foodbank received 29.4 tonnes of food donation and distributed 32.4 tonnes, feeding 2686 people. As well as dried food the Foodbank distributes Waitrose vouchers that can be used for the purchase of fresh fruit and vegetables and eggs.

408 hampers were distributed at Christmas and £5,000 of Waitrose vouchers were distributed with the hampers.

Through MAST the community money advice service over £130,000 of debt has been managed.

The Foodbank is currently seeking larger, affordable premises as the current warehouse is not large enough to deal with the amount of food now coming in.

In October 2023 the Foodbank marked the 10th anniversary since opening in St Neots the graphs below show how the service has grown:



Adrienne Dunn has been the Project Manager for a number of years and is planning to stand down this year, so the Foodbank is looking for a new Project Manager or to share the work among two or three people. If anyone is interested, please speak to me.

David Gill

St Mary's Church Foodbank Distribution Centre

2023 was the first full year of operation of the centre since the pandemic. It was probably one of the busiest years we have experienced. We open every Friday (except bank holidays) between 10am – 12 noon. The team comprised 17 volunteers, 9 of whom are members of the St Mary's congregations. Roy Driver, the church caretaker, lives up to his name by collecting food every week from the nearby Foodbank warehouse and delivering it before each session starts.

During the year we gave out the following food parcels, benefitting about 400 people:

82 for single people and couples

34 for families of 3-4 people

27 for families of 5 or more people

Our "visitors" were also offered a hot drink and biscuits, "extras", hygiene products, pet food and Waitrose vouchers for fruit, vegetables and eggs. Importantly, they also had the opportunity to talk to a debt advisor (from Love's Farm Community Money Advice) who was present at nearly every session.

Each visitor requires a voucher from one of the Foodbank's professional partners in the community. We have now just about switched over to digital vouchers, which have many advantages over the old paper ones.

The Foodbank could not function without its hard-working volunteers. We are also grateful to St Mary's for the free use of the church on Friday mornings and permanent storage space for food.

Roger Peppiatt

Bellringing Report

The major nationwide ringing event of the year was the Coronation of King Charles the third and Queen Camilla. We were able to ring on the morning of the Coronation.

Unfortunately matters have not really improved since my last annual report. On a positive note we have usually been able to ring six for the 10.30 service most Sunday mornings. Cancellation of Sunday service ringing has been the exception.

Our previous long serving Tower Captain Wendy Piercey passed away during the year, we marked this event by ringing a quarter peal (45 minutes ringing) in her memory. Some of our long standing parishioners may remember Eric Lane who rang with us for 20 years and then moved away to Devon also sadly passed away, we were able to ring a quarter peal in his memory.

On a positive note we have had one new recruit who is progressing well and is able to ring with us on Sunday mornings. I'm pleased to say I was able to attend the Association of Ringing Teachers(ART) course in January 2023 and this has enhanced my teaching skills.

I'm also pleased to say the bells and fittings remain in good condition. This was confirmed following the recent inspection by Taylors of Loughborough. They congratulated us on how well our bells are maintained too.

To sum up I feel the future of bell ringing in Eaton Socon is uncertain. I believe that if ringing at Eaton Socon is to survive and thrive we need a whole band approach to recruitment and training and support from the Church and local community in helping us to find new recruits.

Finally I would like to thank Tim for being so supportive and also those who regularly support Sunday service ringing.

Michael Matthews (Tower Captain)



Repair and Alteration Shop Report

The first Repair and Alteration Shop was held in September 2023 and it was a busy and productive day. About 10 items of clothing were repaired or altered on the day, with three that I completed later at home as they needed replacement zips. We have our second one booked for Saturday 20th April, which I am looking forward to.

Audrey Hedges

Book Club Report

The Tea and Biscuits Book Club continues to meet regularly, about every five weeks, on Mondays 1.00pm to 2.00pm in the Church hall. We have had a wide variety of subjects to read this last year, some we loved, others not so much. It is an informal meeting where we have tea/coffee and biscuits and chat about the latest read giving our opinion. It's surprising how one person can love a book and another not. This is what makes it interesting. It also gives you a chance to read something you wouldn't normally choose. The library supplies the books and we give them a choice of what we'd like to read. There is a very small cost that we pay annually and works out about £5 per person per year. If you feel you'd like to join us and give it a go you'll be very welcome.

If you're interested please speak to Carole Robson or Sue Hazzard.

Churches Together in St Neots (CTSN)

This will be my final report as SMES representative for CTSN. I took over from Rosemary Pullinger in 2017 but now feel it is time to step back and allow, perhaps a younger person, to continue our church involvement. I gave notice of this in October 2023 to take effect from March 2024. I have been Secretary to CTSN since September 2019 and will also be relinquishing this role at the next CTSN AGM in October.

I have very much enjoyed my involvement and will continue without specific responsibility. I feel the organisation continues to fulfil a positive role as an umbrella for combined church activities and acting as a collective church presence within the town.

A new Chair, Sue Baker-Maher, Minister at Berkley Street Methodist Church, was elected to the group at the AGM on 12th October 2023 taking over from Ray Porter, who had served as Chair for three years.

The Working Group, from various churches within the town, met in May and September and the AGM took place in October. A Chair and Secretary meeting took place in November followed by a Working Group meeting in January 2024 where the group thanked Ray for his work as Chair and welcomed Sue.

Church Christmas Service dates and times once again appeared in Think Local in December. The Christian Performing Arts (CPA) held a Reflection Service on the Market Square on Good Friday which was well attended and also represented local churches with a choir at the Christmas Lights Switch On.

The warm clothing collection continued at our church supporting the work of the 'Three Pillars' charity.

Black Cat Radio continues to support Christian worship time led by ministers at 6a.m on Sunday mornings.

St Neots Directory is now available in printed form and includes details of our church under the heading 'Faith Communities'. www.stneotsdirectory.com

The CTSN website is www.churchestogetherinstneots.org.uk

CTSN continues to be the umbrella organisation for Thursday Food, the Bereavement Friendship group, Men's Forum and the Thursday café at the URC. Funds for a new cooker at Berkley Street to support Thursday Food were received from various churches and through a generous community grant from St Neots Town Council.

CTSN remains a vehicle to be used to support existing projects and new ones as they evolve.

Pam Branch

**CHURCHES
TOGETHER
in St Neots**

Deanery Synod Report



There were three Deanery Synod meetings during 2023 in March, July and October.

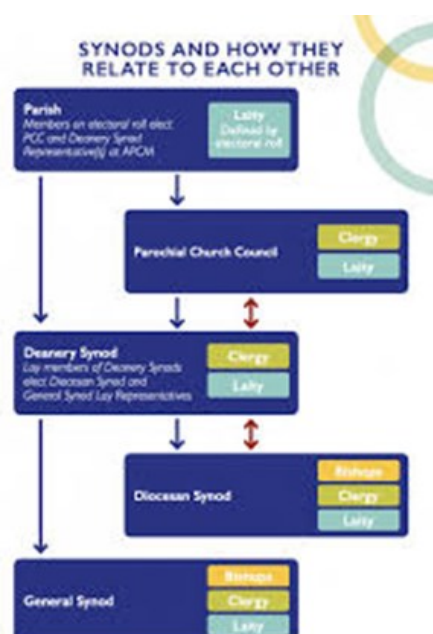
The March Synod was held at Dunton and commenced with the Eucharist and was followed by a report on the last meeting of the General Synod. This centred around the discussion on the Blessing of same sex marriages and reported on the very strong divisions in the Synod about this. The Finance Report showed that the Deanery finances are in a good position. 90% of the Parish share for the Deanery had been collected in 2022. The Deanery Mission Action Plan (MAP) was last updated four years ago and therefore needs to be revised. As the end of this triennium approaches, members were asked to encourage people to stand so that all Deanery Synod places should be filled.

The July Synod was held at Pottton and began with a talk from Rev'd Paul Davies, the Church Growth Officer. He spoke about the importance of MAP's as they helped parishes to see where they are now and to have a vision of where they are going in the future. Without a vision, things can stagnate. These are living documents and will necessarily change over time as some things are achieved and others change according to circumstances. Rosemary Bentley was re-elected as Lay Chair, Graham Daniels as Secretary and Ken Ebbage as Treasurer. The Deanery Project to support CHUMS was voted on to be extended for another year and members were asked to bring ideas for an overseas project for 2025.

The October Synod was held at Biggleswade and opened with a talk from Gillian Kern, Church of England Chaplain at Mount Prison who spoke about the Welcome Project. She explained her work as a prison Chaplain and how prisoners become Christians and about the support they need on leaving prison to maintain and grow their faith. The Welcome Directory was set up to help with the transition from prison to a church in their locality. Each church is encouraged to appoint a link person to enable this transition. There is a very good website to support this.

A report was given on the last meeting of the General Synod which centred around the Prayers of Love and Faith. The new deanery website is up and functioning at Biggleswadedeanery.org.uk.

Jane Gogarty



Diocesan Synod Report

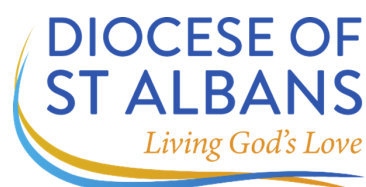
There were three meetings of the Diocesan Synod in 2023 in March, June and October.

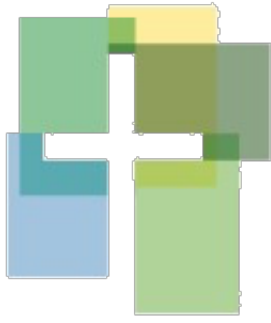
At the March Synod Bishop Alan welcomed Bishop Jane, the new Bishop of Hertford. His address centred around the work of the General Synod on Living in Love and Faith and the next steps towards preparing the Prayers of Love and Faith and the deep divisions that this process still reveals. He also spoke about the upcoming coronation and the opportunities this gave to bring communities together. The Synod was then given the opportunity to discuss the progress of the General Synod's Living in Love and Faith work. Jacob Kurien gave a report on the work of the Racial and Justice Action Group which is on track with its three-year Action Plan and is developing its policy. David White spoke about four grants that were available from the dioceses explaining what they were and how to apply for them. Tim Lomax and Dan Drew gave a talk on the Growing Younger and More Diverse project explaining the areas it covered and the initiatives it is promoting.

I was not present at the June Synod so can only give an outline report. There was an address from the Bishop of Belize, the Rt Reverend Philip Wright who was visiting for 'Windrush 75'. The annual report for the Diocesan Board of Finance was given. There was a brief update on Living in Love and Faith. The very Reverend J Kelly-Moore gave a presentation 'Pentecost to Advent: Revising our Cathedral's Ministry and Mission. Mrs Jillian Thomson gave a presentation on the Mother's Union. Updates were provided on the Growing Younger and More Diverse project and on Net Zero implementation.

At the October Synod in his opening address Bishop Alan urged everyone to pray for the situation between the Palestinians and the Israelis and for an end to the war. He also called for prayer about the work on the Prayers of Love and Faith and urged everyone to listen to each other whatever view we may hold. He also talked about the Net Zero Action Plan and that it was important for everyone to do their part. An update was given by Bishop Jane on the Growing Younger and More Diverse project. The Budget for 2024 was presented and accepted. This was the last that the Chair Colin Bird would present before his retirement. A presentation was made by Tom Abraham, the Net Zero Carbon Officer, on his work to identify the position of parishes and urged parishes too use the Energy Footprint tool. He highlighted the way some churches had addressed their heating need to reach net zero carbon. David White gave an update about the Parish Grant Scheme. Jacob Kurien gave a further update on the Racial and Justice Action Group.

Jane Gogarty





St Mary's Eaton Socon

THE CHURCH ON THE GREEN

MEETING OF PARISHIONERS

and

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

with ACCOUNTS

Date 21st April 2024

12noon

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APCM AGENDA – Sunday 21st April 2024

In accordance with the Notices fixed to the Notice Boards, the Meeting of Parishioners for the purpose of appointing Churchwardens, and the Annual Parochial Church Meeting will be held for St Mary's Church, Eaton Socon on Sunday 21st April 2024.

To be preceded by two Morning Services at 9am & 10.30am, at which the Vicar's report will be presented.

Meeting of Parishioners AGENDA

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of Meeting of Parishioners held on 12 March 2023
3. Appointment of Churchwardens
4. Appointment of Assistant Churchwardens (page 4)
5. Any other business concerning the Meeting of Parishioners

ASSISTANT CHURCHWARDENS FOR 2024/25

Stephen Bailey

Teresa Bryant

David Ferris

David Gill

Jane Gogarty

Peter Hedges

Edward Humphrey

Edward Jarvis

Jeannie Minchinton

Carole Robson

Yvonne Bradbury-White

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF PARISHIONERS HELD ON SUNDAY 12th March 2023

The meeting was opened at 12:02 by Rev'd Timothy Robb. Mr Edward Jarvis took minutes.

1. Apologies for absence.

Apologies from: Mr Stephen Bailey; Mrs Maggie Bailey; Mr Gavin Chapman; Mrs Julia Chapman; Mr Roger Brittain; Mrs Pauline Brittain; Mr Tom Salkield; Dr Kate Salkield; Mr Richard de Fraine; Mrs Sue Crook; Mrs Pam Wilkes; Mrs Joy Martin; Mrs Jessica Mephram; Mr Peter Mephram; Mrs Pat Lawrence; Mrs Miriam Robertson; Mrs Frances Peppiatt; Mrs Jenny Barrett; Mrs Jane Gill; Mrs Sheila Wren; Mrs Gill Uings; Mr Scott Grace; Mrs Shannen Grace; Mr James Faulkner; Mr Peter Salkield; Mr Michael Matthews; Mrs Sue Matthews.

2. Minutes of the last Annual Meeting of Parishioners

The minutes of the last meeting held on 13th March 2022 had been circulated prior to the event.

There were no amendments.

The meeting agreed the minutes to be correct; **proposal to accept the minutes** Dr Julie Robb, **seconded by** Mrs Brenda Notley. **The motion was carried unanimously, with no abstentions.**

3. Appointment of Churchwardens

Timothy Robb gave the following statement: Due to ongoing discussions with the current Churchwardens over various issues, we will not be electing any Churchwardens today. Like last year, we will be calling another meeting of the Parishioners in due course at which we will elect Churchwardens.

4. Appointment of Assistant Churchwardens

The following names were put forward:

Mr David Ferris
Mrs Jane Gogarty
Mrs Teresa Bryant
Mrs Jeannie Minchinton

Proposed by Mrs Liz Faulkner and seconded by Mr Roy Notley. Carried unanimously with no abstentions.

5. Any other business

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 12:09

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

AGENDA

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of last Annual Parochial Church Meeting
3. Matters arising from Minutes (not covered in agenda)
4. Notification of any other business
5. To receive a copy of the revised Electoral Roll (page 10)
6. To consider a report of the Parochial Church Council (see Annual Report)
7. To accept the following 'Safeguarding of all' Statement:

St Mary's Church Eaton Socon affirms its commitment to safeguarding all God's people. We also confirm that the Trustees have complied with the duty to have 'due regard to House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. The PCC are committed to being responsible for the wellbeing of everyone who comes through our doors.

8. To consider a report of the Treasurer and the independently examined accounts of the Parochial Church Council for 2023
9. Election of an Independent Examiner for the current financial year
10. Election of up to **5 (five)** lay representatives to the Parochial Church Council
11. Election of **1 (one)** lay representative to the Deanery Synod
12. To consider Reports of the Fabric, Goods and Ornaments of the Church, the Deanery Synod, various Committees and Activities of the Church
13. Results of elections to the Parochial Church Council
14. Commissioning of Lay Leaders of Worship
15. Consideration of any other business of Parochial or general church interest

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING HELD ON SUNDAY 12th March 2023

The meeting was opened at 12:09 by Rev'd Tim Robb.

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were accepted as those recorded for the Annual Meeting of Parishioners.

2. Minutes of last Annual Parochial Church Meeting

The minutes of the last meeting held on 13th March 2022 had been circulated prior to the event. There were no corrections.

It was proposed to accept minutes by Dr Roger Peppiatt and seconded by Mrs Carole Robson. Carried unanimously with 1 abstention.

3. Matters arising from Minutes

There were none

4. Notification of other business

None

5. To receive a copy of the revised Electoral Roll

Mrs Brenda Notley summarised additions and amendments to the Electoral Roll for 2023, which can be seen on page 10 of this report.

Proposed by Dr Roger Peppiatt, seconded by Mrs Carole Robson. Carried unanimously.

6. To consider a report of the Parochial Church Council

Rev'd Timothy Robb thanked Mrs Brenda Notley for writing the report which is to be found on pages 4&5 in the booklet, "2022 Annual Report" which has been circulated.

7. To accept the 'Safeguarding of all Statement'

"St Mary's Church Eaton Socon affirms its commitment to safeguarding all God's people. We also confirm that the trustees have complied with the duty to have "due regard to House of Bishops" guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. The PCC are committed to being responsible for the wellbeing of everyone who comes through our doors."

Rev'd Timothy Robb thanked Mrs Jane Gogarty for her substantial contribution in this demanding role.

Acceptance of this statement was proposed by Mr Brian Elliott seconded by Mrs Liz Faulkner and carried unanimously, with no abstentions.

8. To consider a report of the Treasurer and the independently examined accounts of the Parochial Church Council for 2022

Mr Roy Notley presented the accounts and stated that the year-end balance for 2022 was +£130, staff hours and giving to missions had been maintained at a lower level to protect the finances. Mr Roy Notley stated that if we as a church increased our giving by a small amount in the coming year then both staff hours and giving to missions could be restored to their former levels.

Mrs Sarah Rimmer expressed her concern that mission giving had been reduced. Rev'd Timothy Robb agreed that it is a shame but that it was an unanimous PCC decision to protect the church's financial position given the size of deficit expected during the year.

Mrs Nanette Hesketh questioned why local mission giving was shown as zero in the 2022 accounts. Rev'd Timothy Robb stated that it was slightly misleading, as the church does in fact give to local missions but it is included in other areas of the accounts. In future this will be made clearer.

Mr Jim Biles asked if we had access to any government donations which may be used to support local missions. Rev'd Timothy Robb stated currently this is not the case but that in the future this could be pursued.

The report was proposed by Dr Phil Barrett seconded by Mrs Carole Robson and carried unanimously.

Rev'd Timothy Robb thanked Mr Roy Notley for his hard work and diligence during the year

9. Election of an Independent Examiner for the current financial year

Mr Roger Brittain acted as Independent Examiner for our accounts and has agreed to carry out this role for another year. Rev'd Timothy Robb thanked Mr Roger Brittain for his work.

Proposed by Mrs Brenda Notley, seconded by Dr Julie Robb, and carried unanimously with no abstentions.

10. Election of up to 5 lay representatives to the Parochial Church Council

Nomination forms were received from: Mrs Jessica Mepham, Mr Gavin Chapman, Mr Anthony Harris, Mr Peter Salkield and Mrs Julia Chapman.

These nominations were proposed by Mrs Liz Faulkner and seconded by Mrs Teresa Bryant, and carried unanimously with no abstentions.

11. To consider reports of the Fabric, Goods and Ornaments of the Church, Deanery Synod, various committees and activities of the Church

Mrs Jane Gogarty and Mr Edward Jarvis agreed to represent the church at the Deanery Synod

Proposed by Prof John Wood, **seconded by** Mr Brian Harrison, and carried unanimously with no abstentions.

12. Results of elections to the Parochial Church Council

Elections were not required.

Mr D Rimmer asked why there was no mention in the report of the Pilot Eldership Group. Rev'd Timothy Robb advised that the conclusions of the group would be reported to the PCC and would be included in future APCM's.

13. Consideration of any other business of Parochial or general Church Interest

Rev'd Timothy Robb thanked God for the past year which had been one of much change. He thanked everyone for attending and especially thanked those who were supporting the resourcing needs of the church, in particular thanking Mrs Carole Robson for her commitment to heading up the Mayday event and he requested that she receive support from the church in general with this task going forward. Rev'd Timothy Robb also thanked the team led by Jane Gogarty for their hard work in making the Christmas Fayre a success. He thanked Mrs Margaret Lygoe who stepped down from the PCC for her many years of support and contribution. He thanked the staff team, along with Christopher, Den and Corrie for their work. He thanked all those who are part of the various teams and ministries in the life of St Mary's. He thanked his wife Julie and daughter Sarah (and Millie) for their personal support. He also thanked Mr Edward Jarvis for taking the minutes.

The meeting closed at 12:49 with the saying of the Grace.

MEMBERS OF THE PCC – 2023/24

Members of the PCC are either ex officio, or elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) in accordance with the Church Representation Rules, or may be co-opted.

Incumbent	The Rev'd Timothy Robb	Chairman
Assistant Curate	The Rev'd Christopher Scott	(until 6 August 2023)
Churchwardens	vacant	
Treasurer	Mr Roy Notley	
PCC Secretary	Mrs Brenda Notley	
PCC Minute Taker	Mr Edward Jarvis	
Diocesan Synod	Mrs Jane Gogarty	
Deanery Synod	Mrs Jane Gogarty Mr Edward Jarvis	(until 2026) (until 2026)
Elected Members	Mrs Teresa Bryant Mr Gavin Chapman Mrs Julia Chapman Mr Anthony Harris Mrs Jessica Mephram Mr Denis Rimmer Mr Peter Salkield Mr Tom Salkield	(until 2025) (until 2026) (until 2026) (until 2026) (until 2026) (resigned September 2023) (until 2026) (until 2025)
Co-options	Rev'd Ray Porter Rev'd George Cobb	

ELECTORAL ROLL 2023/24

The statistics of the roll as follows:-

The year 2023/24 started with 127 names on the Electoral Roll. During the year, the Roll was revised. 12 people were removed and 13 added. There were 4 people who had sadly died and 8 people who had moved away. This leaves 128 names now listed on the Roll who worship regularly here at St Mary's Eaton Socon, consisting of 81 female and 47 male.

Should your name, address, telephone number or email change in any way throughout the year, please let the Church Office know so that the records can be kept up to date.

Alternatively, if you are using the Smartphone 'ChurchSuite', you can amend your own details any time. If you would like more information about this facility, please contact the Church Office.

Brenda Notley (01234 589308)
Electoral Roll Officer

FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS 2023

ST Mary's Eaton Socon Parochial Church Council Statement of Financial Activities

Dec-23

	CHURCH	DESIGNATED	UNRESTRICTED	RESTRICTED	TOTAL 23	2022
RECEIPTS						
<i>Planned Giving</i>						
Bank	88350		88350		88350	88274
Envelopes	21		21		21	2938
Tax Recovered	23866	13	23879	48	23927	25475
Gift Day	7712		7712		7712	3820
Collections	7369		7369		7369	7174
Donations and Sundry Income	9503	3160	12663	940	13603	14683
Legacies		1000	1000		1000	0
Youth Work	0	5493	5493	0	5493	3628
Church Hall Lettings	4547		4547		4547	6036
Weddings and Funeral Fees	5954		5954		5954	6505
Fundraising Events	0	5353	5353	4	5357	5993
Interest Received	1927		1927		1927	605
TOTAL RECEIPTS	149249	15019	164268	992	165260	165131
PAYMENTS						
GRANTS						
Missionary and Charitable Giving	5694		5694		5694	5525
Other	0		0		0	40
MINISTRY						
Parish Share	79197		79197		79197	76748
Staff Expenses	3491		3491		3491	3977
Telephone	920		920		920	1119
0-18						
Youth Work	0	5493	5493	0	5493	6266
LIVING						
Fellowship	218		218		218	367
Pastoral	178		178	251	429	349
WORSHIP & PRAYER						
Worship	987		987	0	987	1330
Services	1412		1412	0	1412	1916
Kitchen	0	1327	1327		1327	0
Hall Hire	1224		1224		1224	1244
OUTREACH						
Outreach	123	959	1082	100	1182	468
Events	0	1660	1660	0	1660	3634
BUILDINGS						
General Maintenance/Equipt	5566	0	5566	606	6172	24567
Insurance	4822		4822		4822	4461
Gas	10604		10604		10604	7335
Electric	3014		3014		3014	2321
Water	240		240		240	211
Cleaning/Hygiene	720		720		720	387
MGMNT/ADMIN						
Staff Costs	28096	723	28819	0	28819	26374
Printing/copying	2574		2574		2574	3146
Post/Staty	427		427		427	551
Books/Posters	602		602		602	649
IT	2736	0	2736	0	2736	11946
Courses/Conf	0		0		0	19
OTHER ADMIN	746		746		746	1048
OTHER CHARGES	112	146	258	0	258	181
TOTAL PAYMENTS	153703	10308	164011	957	164968	186179
Excess/(Deficit)	-4454	4711	257	35	292	-21048

	CHURCH	DESIGNATED	GENERAL	RESTRICTED	TOTAL
BT FWD	17500	4230	21730	24926	46656
Net Movement in funds	-4454	4711	257	35	292
	13046	8941	21987	24961	46948
Transfer of funds		759	759	-759	0
	13046	9700	22746	24202	46948

ST Mary's Eaton Socon Parochial Church Council
Income and Expenditure Statement
Church General Fund as at:-

Dec-23

		2023	2022	VARIANCE
RECEIPTS				
P Giving	STO/PGS	88350	88274	76
	Envelopes	21	2938	-2917
Income Tax Recovered		19664	20925	-1261
INCOME PLANNED GIVING		108035	112137	-4102
Income Tax Recovered		2901	2417	484
Collections		7369	7174	195
Donations and Sundry Income		9503	5618	3885
OFFERING & SUNDRY DONS		19773	15209	4564
Gift Day		7712	3820	3892
Income Tax Recovered gift day		1301	899	402
GIFT DAY DONATIONS		9013	4719	4294
Youth		0	0	0
Church Hall Lettings		4547	6036	-1489
Weddings and Funeral Fees		5954	6505	-551
Fundraising Events		0	201	-201
Interest Received		1927	605	1322
INCOME OTHER		12428	13347	-919
TOTAL RECEIPTS		149249	145412	3837
PAYMENTS				0
GRANTS				
	Mission/Charitable	5694	5525	169
	Other	0	40	-40
MINISTRY				
	Parish Share	79197	76748	2449
	Staff Expenses	3491	3977	-486
	Telephone	920	1119	-199
0-18	Youth Work	0	464	-464
LIVING				
	Fellowship	218	367	-149
	Pastoral	178	12	166
WORSHIP				
	Worship	987	1254	-267
	Services	1412	1916	-504
	Hall Hire	1224	1244	-20
OUTREACH				
	Outreach	123	0	123
	Events	0	201	-201
BUILDINGS				
	Building Maintenance	5566	4030	1536
	Insurance	4822	4461	361
	Gas	10604	7335	3269
	Electric	3014	2321	693
	Water	240	211	29
	Cleaning	720	387	333
MGMNT/ADMIN				
	Staff Costs	28096	25297	2799
	Printing/copying	2574	3146	-572
	Post/Staty	427	551	-124
	Books/Posters	602	649	-47
	IT	2736	2911	-175
	Courses/Conf	0	19	-19
	Other Admin	746	1048	-302
	Other Charges	112	49	63
TOTAL PAYMENTS		153703	145282	8421
Net Excess/(Deficit)		-4454	130	-4584

ST Mary's Eaton Socon Parochial Church Council
Income and Expenditure Statement
Designated/Restricted Accounts as at :-

Dec-23

	2022	TFRS	INCOME	EXPENDS	2023	CD/FWD
GENERAL ACCOUNT FUNDS	17500		149249	153703	-4454	13046
DESIGNATED FUNDS						
LEGACY			1000		1000	1000
EVENTS	3317		4089	593	3496	6813
CATG EVENTS	423		3084	2976	108	531
CAFE GREEN all café on green	219	-100	326	159	167	286
CHILDREN EVENTS			2445	2171	274	274
LITTLE STARS	271		1112	1051	61	332
HIVE		305	342	472	-130	175
YOUTH CAFÉ		300	99	255	-156	144
EVENTS YTH		24	725	825	-100	-76
FUSION		151	626	748	-122	29
NEWDAY		79	1171	1058	113	192
TOTAL DESIGNATED	4230	759	15019	10308	4711	9700
RESTRICTED FUNDS						
BOILER/FLUES	12984				0	12984
VESTRY	7000				0	7000
NAVE	740			380	-380	360
FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS	20724	0	0	380	-380	20344
UTILITY	1236			251	-251	985
LUNCH CLUB	576	-200			0	376
OUTREACH	1812	-200	0	251	-251	1361
NEW DAY	79	-79			0	0
HIVE	305	-305			0	0
FUSION	175	-175			0	0
YOUTH EVENTS	559	-559	0	0	0	0
WORSHIP	0		63		63	63
HYMNAL	810		650		650	1460
MUSIC	810	0	713	0	713	1523
CRAFT	0				0	0
WED WELCOME	101		104	100	4	105
MENS	350				0	350
WOMEN	290				0	290
C CARE	280		175	226	-51	229
CHURCH GROUPS	1021	0	279	326	-47	974
TOTAL RESTRICTED	24926	-759	992	957	35	24202
TOTAL UNRESTRICTED	21730	759	164268	164011	257	22746
TOTAL RESTRICTED	24926	-759	992	957	35	24202
	46656	0	165260	164968	292	46948

ST Mary's Eaton Socon Parochial Church Council

BALANCE SHEET at 31st December 2023

	2023	2022
FIXED ASSETS		
Tangible fixed assets-GNL		
CURRENT ASSETS		
Debtors	2036	2186
Short Term Deposits	43545	46620
Cash at bank and in hand	9484	10961
	55065	59767
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Creditors due within one year	8117	13111
NET CURRENT ASSETS	46948	46656
LONG TERM LIABILITIES		
NET ASSETS	46948	46656
RESERVE FUNDS - GENERAL		
General at 01-01-23	17500	17370
Movement to date	257	-16430
Tfr to designated	-4711	16560
At 31-12-23	13046	17500
Desig Rsv at 01-01-23	4230	20790
Tfr from General funds	4711	-16560
Tfr from Restricted funds	759	
At 31-12-23	9700	4230
	22746	21730
RESERVE FUNDS - RESTRICTED		
BOILER/FLUES	12984	12984
VESTRY	7000	7000
NAVE	360	740
UTILITY	985	1236
LUNCH CLUB	376	576
NEW DAY		79
WORSHIP	63	0
HYMNAL	1460	810
WED WELC	105	101
MENS	350	350
WOMEN	290	290
FUSION		175
CREATION CARE	229	280
HIVE		305
At 31-12-23	24202	24926
At 31-12-23	46948	46656

CHARITIES COMMISSION FINANCIAL REPORTS



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

PCC of ST MARY'S EATON SOCON			Charity No (if any)	1130537
Annual accounts for the period				
Period start date	Jan-23	To	Period end date	Dec-23

Section A Statement of financial activities

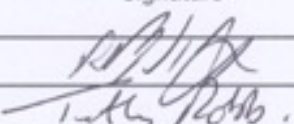
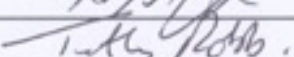
Recommended categories by activity	Guidance Notes	Unrestricted funds £ F01	Restricted income funds £ F02	Endowment funds £ F03	Total funds £ F04	Prior year funds £ F05
Incoming resources (Note 3)						
Income and endowments from:						
Donations and legacies	S01	146,487	988	-	147,475	146,004
Charitable activities	S02	9,900	4	-	9,904	13,135
Other trading activities	S03	5,954	-	-	5,954	6,505
Investments		1,927	-	-	1,927	605
Separate material item of income	S05	-	-	-	-	-
Other	S06	-	-	-	-	-
Total	S07	164,268	992	-	165,260	166,249
Resources expended (Note 6)						
Expenditure on:						
Mission & Charitable Giving		5,694	-	-	5,694	5,525
Parish Share		79,197	-	-	79,197	76,748
Ministry	S08	10,839	351	-	11,190	10,770
Youth Work		5,493	-	-	5,493	6,277
Building Costs	S09	24,966	606	-	25,572	39,282
Fundraising		1,660	-	-	1,660	4,741
Administration	S11	3,740	-	-	3,740	13,883
Staff Costs		28,819	-	-	28,819	26,374
Print, Post & Stationery		3,603	-	-	3,603	3,697
Depreciation		-	-	-	-	-
Charitable activities		-	-	-	-	-
Separate material item of expense	S10	-	-	-	-	-
Other		-	-	-	-	-
Total	S12	164,011	957	-	164,968	187,297
Net income/(expenditure) before investment gains/(losses)	S13	- 1,670	35	-	- 1,635	- 21,653
Net gains/(losses) on investments	S14	1,927	-	-	1,927	605
Net income/(expenditure)	S15	257	35	-	292	- 21,048
Extraordinary items	S16	-	-	-	-	-
Transfers between funds	S17	759	- 759	-	-	-
Other recognised gains/(losses):						
Gains and losses on revaluation of fixed assets for the charity's own use	S18	-	-	-	-	-
Other gains/(losses)	S19	-	-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds	S20	1,016	- 724	-	292	- 21,048
Reconciliation of funds:						
Total funds brought forward	S21	21,730	24,926	-	46,656	67,704
Total funds carried forward	S22	22,746	24,202	-	46,948	46,656

Section B

Balance sheet

		Guidance Notes	Unrestricted funds £ F01	Restricted income funds £ F02	Endowment funds £ F03	Total this year £ F04	Total last year £ F05
Fixed assets							
Intangible assets	(Note 15)	B01	-	-	-	-	-
Tangible assets	(Note 14)	B02	-	-	-	-	-
Heritage assets	(Note 16)	B03	-	-	-	-	-
Investments	(Note 17)	B04	-	-	-	-	-
Total fixed assets		B05	-	-	-	-	-
Current assets							
Stocks	(Note 18)	B06	-	-	-	-	-
Debtors	(Note 19)	B07	2,036	-	-	2,036	2,186
Investments	(Note 17.4)	B08	-	-	-	-	-
Cash at bank and in hand (Note 24)		B09	53,029	-	-	53,029	57,581
Total current assets		B10	55,065	-	-	55,065	59,767
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	(Note 20)	B11	8,117	-	-	8,117	13,111
Net current assets/(liabilities)		B12	46,948	-	-	46,948	46,656
Total assets less current liabilities		B13	46,948	-	-	46,948	46,656
Creditors: amounts falling due after one year	(Note 20)	B14	-	-	-	-	-
Provisions for liabilities		B15	-	-	-	-	-
Total net assets or liabilities		B16	46,948	-	-	46,948	46,656
Funds of the Charity							
Endowment funds (Note 27)		B17	-	-	-	-	-
Restricted income funds (Note 27)		B18	-	24,202	-	24,202	24,926
Unrestricted funds		B19	22,746	-	-	22,746	21,730
Revaluation reserve		B20	-	-	-	-	-
Total funds		B21	22,746	24,202	-	46,948	46,656

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

Signature	Print Name	Date of approval dd/mm/yyyy
	R B NOTLEY	25/02/2024
	T S ROBB	25/02/2024

Note 3 Analysis of income

		Unrestricted funds	Restricted income funds	Endowment funds	Total funds £	Prior year £
Analysis						
Donations and legacies:	Donations and gifts	115,615	615	-	116,230	114,310
	Gift Aid	23,879	48	-	23,927	25,475
	Legacies	1,000	-	-	1,000	-
	General grants provided by government/other charities	500	325	-	825	2,580
	Membership subscriptions and sponsorships which are in substance donations	-	-	-	-	-
	Donated goods, facilities and services	-	-	-	-	-
	Other	5,493	-	-	5,493	3,639
	Total	146,487	988	-	147,475	146,004
Charitable activities:	Fundraising Events	5,353	4	-	5,357	7,099
	Church Hall Lettings	4,547	-	-	4,547	6,036
		-	-	-	-	-
	Other	-	-	-	-	-
	Total	9,900	4	-	9,904	13,135
Other trading activities:	Wedding and Funeral Fees	5,954	-	-	5,954	6,505
		-	-	-	-	-
		-	-	-	-	-
	Other	-	-	-	-	-
	Total	5,954	-	-	5,954	6,505
Income from investments:	Interest income	1,927	-	-	1,927	605
	Dividend income	-	-	-	-	-
	Rental and leasing income	-	-	-	-	-
	Other	-	-	-	-	-
	Total	1,927	-	-	1,927	605
Separate material item of income:		-	-	-	-	-
		-	-	-	-	-
		-	-	-	-	-
		-	-	-	-	-
	Total	-	-	-	-	-
Other:	Conversion of endowment funds into income	-	-	-	-	-
	Gain on disposal of a tangible fixed asset held for charity's own use	-	-	-	-	-
	Gain on disposal of a programme related investment	-	-	-	-	-
	Royalties from the exploitation of intellectual property rights	-	-	-	-	-
	Other	-	-	-	-	-
	Total	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL INCOME		164,268	992	-	165,260	166,249

Other information:

All income in the prior year was unrestricted except for:
(please provide description and amounts)

Donations and Gifts £5523; Gift Aid £1050; events £363; grants £600 and £1155 other.

Where any endowment fund is converted into income in the reporting period, please give the reason for the conversion.

Within the income items above the following items are material: (please disclose the nature, amount and any prior year amounts)

Note 6 Analysis of expenditure

	Analysis	Unrestricted funds	Restricted income funds	Endowment funds	Total funds £	Prior year £
Expenditure on Ministry:	Staff Expenses	3,491	-	-	3,491	3,977
	Telephone	920	-	-	920	1,119
	Fellowship	218	-	-	218	367
	Pastoral	178	251	-	429	349
	Worship	987	-	-	987	1,330
	Services	1,412	-	-	1,412	1,916
	Refreshments	1,327	-	-	1,327	-
	Hall Hire	1,224	-	-	1,224	1,244
	Outreach	1,082	100	-	1,182	468
		-	-	-	-	-
	Total expenditure on Ministry	10,839	351	-	11,190	10,770
Expenditure on building/utilities	Building Maintenance	5,566	606	-	6,172	24,567
	Insurance	4,822	-	-	4,822	4,461
	Heat, Light, Water	13,858	-	-	13,858	9,867
	Cleaning	720	-	-	720	387
	Total expenditure on buildings/utilities	24,966	606	-	25,572	39,282
Expenditure on admin costs	IT	2,736	-	-	2,736	11,946
	Other Admin/courses	1,004	-	-	1,004	1,937
	architect fees/mgmt svcs	-	-	-	-	-
	Equipment purchases	-	-	-	-	-
		-	-	-	-	-
	Total expenditure on Admin costs	3,740	-	-	3,740	13,883
Other	Mission & Charitable Giving	5,694	-	-	5,694	5,525
	Parish Share	79,197	-	-	79,197	76,748
	Youth Work	5,493	-	-	5,493	6,277
	Fundraising	1,660	-	-	1,660	4,741
	Staff Costs	28,819	-	-	28,819	26,374
	Print, Post & Stationery	3,603	-	-	3,603	3,697
	Depreciation	-	-	-	-	-
	Total other expenditure	124,466	-	-	124,466	123,362
Separate material item of expense		-	-	-	-	-
		-	-	-	-	-
		-	-	-	-	-
	Total	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		164,011	957	-	164,968	187,297

Other information:

Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities

Activity or programme	Activities undertaken directly	Grant funding of activities	Support Costs	Total this year	Total prior year
	£	£	£	£	£
Activity 1					
Activity 2					
Other					
Total					

Prior year expenditure on charitable activities can be analysed as follows:

Within the expenditure items above the following items are material: (please disclose the nature, amount and any prior year amounts)

Note 11 **Paid employees**
Please complete this note if the charity has any employees.

11.1 Staff Costs

	This year £	Last year £
Salaries and wages	28,580	26,180
Social security costs	-	-
Pension costs (defined contribution scheme)	239	194
Other employee benefits	-	-
Total staff costs	28,819	26,374

Please provide details of expenditure on staff working for the charity whose contracts are with and are paid by a related party

none

Please give details of the number of employees whose total employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) fell within each band of £10,000 from £60,000 upwards. If there are no such transactions, please enter 'true' in the box provided.

No employees received employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) for the reporting period of more than £60,000

TRUE

Band	Number of employees
£60,000 to £69,999	
£70,000 to £79,999	
£80,000 to £89,999	
£90,000 to £99,999	
£100,000 to £109,999	

Please provide the total amount paid to key management personnel (includes trustees and senior management) for their services to the charity

11.2 Average head count in the year

The parts of the charity in which the employees work

	This year Number	Last year Number
Fundraising	-	-
Charitable Activities	-	-
Governance	-	-
Other	4	5
Total	4	5

11.3 Ex-gratia payments to employees and others (excluding trustees)

Please complete if an ex-gratia payment is made.

Please explain the nature of the payment

--

Please state the legal authority or reason for making the payment

--

Please state the amount of the payment (or value of any waiver of a right to an asset)

--

11.4 Redundancy payments

Please complete if any redundancy or termination payment is made in the period.

Total amount of payment

--

The nature of the payment (cash, asset etc.)

--

The extent of redundancy funding at the balance sheet date

--

Please state the accounting policy for any redundancy or termination payments

--

Section C

Notes to the accounts

(cont)

Note 19 Debtors and prepayments

Please complete this note if the charity has any debtors or prepayments.

19.1 Analysis of debtors

Trade debtors

Prepayments and accrued income

Other debtors

Total

This year	Last year
£	£
0	0
2036	2186
0	0
2036	2186

Please complete 19.2 where a material debtor is recoverable more than a year after the reporting date.

19.2 Analysis of debtors recoverable in more than 1 year (included in debtors above)

Trade debtors

Prepayments and accrued income

Other debtors

Total

This year	Last year
£	£
-	-
-	-
-	-
-	-
-	-

Section C	Notes to the accounts	(cont)
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Note 20 **Creditors and accruals**

Please complete this note if the charity has any creditors or accruals.

20.1 Analysis of creditors

	Amounts falling due within one year		Amounts falling due after more than one year	
	This year £	Last year £	This year £	Last year £
Accruals for grants payable	-	-	-	-
Bank loans and overdrafts	-	-	-	-
Trade creditors	1,582	4,908	-	-
Payments received on account for contracts or performance-related grants	1,472	1,603	-	-
Accruals and deferred income	5,063	6,600	-	-
Taxation and social security	-	-	-	-
Other creditors	-	-	-	-
Total	8,117	13,111	-	-

Section C	Notes to the accounts	(cont)
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Note 24 **Cash at bank and in hand**

	This year £	Last year £
Short term cash investments (less than 3 months maturity date)	-	-
Short term deposits	43,545	46,620
Cash at bank and on hand	9,484	10,961
Other	-	-
Total	53,029	57,581

Section C Notes to the accounts (cont)

Note 27 Charity funds

27.1 Details of material funds held and movements during the CURRENT reporting period

Please give details of the movements of material individual funds in the reporting period together with a balancing figure for 'Other funds'. The 'Total funds' figure below should reconcile to 'Total funds' in the balance sheet.

** Key: PE - permanent endowment funds; EE - expendable endowment funds; R - restricted income funds, including special trusts, of the charity; and U - unrestricted funds*

Fund names	Type PE, EE R or UR *	Purpose and Restrictions	Fund balances brought forward £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	Gains and losses £	Fund balances carried forward £
FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS	R		20,724		- 380	-	-	20,344
OUTREACH	R		1,812		- 251	- 200	-	1,361
YOUTH EVENTS	R		79			- 79	-	-
WORSHIP SUPPORT	R		810	713		-	-	1,523
CHURCH GROUPS	R		916	104	- 100	- 175	-	745
OTHER	R		585	175	- 226	- 305	-	229
	R					-	-	-
	R					-	-	-
	R					-	-	-
	R					-	-	-
	R					-	-	-
Other funds	N/a	N/a	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Funds			24,926	992	- 957	- 759	-	24,202

Note 27 **Charity funds (cont)**

27.3 Transfers between funds

	Reason for transfer and where endowment is converted to income, legal power for its conversion	Amount
Between unrestricted and restricted funds	Consolidation of Youth groups and activities within designated funds	759
Between endowment and restricted funds		
Between endowment and unrestricted funds		

27.4 Designated funds

Planned use	Purpose of the designation	Amount
future projects	fund set aside for a variety of future projects under feasibility study	6813
legacy	funds received for future utilisation	1000
youth	funds set aside for growth of youth participation	1887

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

14 The Paddock
Eaton Ford
St Neots
Cambs
PE19 7SA

To Eaton Socon PCC

Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2023

In connection with my examination no matter has come to my attention which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act and section 44(1)(a) of the 2005 Act and Regulation 4 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations and to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act and section 44(1)(a) of the 2005 Act and Regulation 8 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations have not been met or to which in my opinion attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Roger Brittain FCA

20-Feb-24