

Beaminster Area Team Ministry



The Parish of St Mary, Beaminster
(Charity Commission No. 1133757)

Annual Report and Accounts 2022



St Mary's Church Beaminster

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2022

St. Mary's Beaminster is situated in Church Street, Beaminster. It is part of the Beaminster Team Churches and in the Diocese of Salisbury within the Church of England.

Status: The PCC is a registered as a Charity with the Charity Commissioners.

Charity registration No: 1133757

Team Rector: Revd. Canon David Baldwin

Team Vicar: Revd. Jo Neary

Team Curate: Rev. Fiona Beale

Church Wardens: Mrs Judith Hansen

Elected Members:

Tom Cunningham, Vivien McMurray and Dan Rootham (Standing down in 2023)

Judith Hansen, Philip Crawford and Gillian Perrott (Standing down in 2024)

Sue Counsell, Marlene Jackaman and Barbara Simmonds (Standing down in 2025) Wendy Simmons stepped down early due to illness and subsequently died.

Deanery Synod Reps: Ann Crawford and Rudi Simmonds (Kath Barnett stood down early).

Team Council Reps: Judith Hansen.

Lay Vice Chairman: Rudi Simmonds

Secretary to PCC: Vivien McMurray

Treasurer to PCC: Vacant but Chair of the Finance sub-committee: Marlene Jackaman

Church Office and address for correspondence: 8, Hogshill Street, Beaminster DT8 3AE.

Team Administrator: Anne Woodward

Team Online and Media Administrator: Harry Neary

Bank: HSBC. 17, East Street, Bridport DT8 3JZ

Independent Examiner: Gareth Hewett

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

Objectives and Activities: St. Mary's PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent the Revd Canon David Baldwin in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission of the Church-pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. It also has maintenance responsibilities for the church and churchyard.

Committees and their briefs: The Standing Committee is the only committee required by law. It has the power to transact PCC business between meetings, subject to any directions given by the PCC. The various subcommittees meet as and when required.

Team Safeguarding Officers: Liz Brown and Barbara Simmonds

Team Health and Safety Advisor: Neville Adams

Electoral Roll Officer: Jenny Langridge who says that at the end of the year there were:-

103 parishioners on the roll. (Previous update: 101). 6 people died, 3 people have moved into care homes and 2 people have left the congregation. The 5 year update was completed in 2019.

The Parochial Church Council: Review of the year January to December 2022

Business returned to near normal after the pandemic and as we learned to live with the Coronavirus. The PCC met in January, March, June, September and November in church with some short Extraordinary meetings as needed and notably a meeting in January with the Archdeacon of Sherborne. This was followed in February by a lengthy meeting with the Diocesan Advisory Committee in church. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the aspects of the faculty applications for the installation of the solar panels and the Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHP). Also to discuss the plans for the upgrading of the current kitchen, installation of the W.C. and the associated drainage, adaption of the crypt to create equal access around the church and the installation of LED lighting. Following this the PCC held a meeting with the church architect Daniel Cantrell from John Stark and Crickmay, to go over the plans for the proposed upgrade to the kitchen and the W.C.

The APCM was held in March. The Standing Committee comprising the Team Rector, Church Warden, Lay Vice Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary met to set agendas for PCC meetings and on an ad hoc basis, when decisions regarding the fabric projects needed to be made.

Minutes of the PCC meetings are usually displayed on the notice board in Church. The bulk of the PCC agenda is covered by reports of the work of the subcommittees:

1. Finance: Chairman Hugh Lindsay who had to stand down as his wife's health deteriorated. Marlene Jackaman took on this role. Wendy Simmons the Treasurer herself had to stand down due to ill health at the beginning of the year. A paid treasurer, Chris Ward was appointed to get the accounts in order to be verified and these were presented and agreed in May after the APCM.

2. Fabric with the Church Environment Group: Rudi Simmonds, Gill Perrott and Tony Giddings who later resigned. Rudi Simmonds and Gill Perrott formed a working party with Judith Hansen the churchwarden to move the projects forward and agree to 'sign off' the works to the west end wall. Gill Perrott continued to carry the Carbon Zero project forward and 2022 saw the installation of the Air Source Heat Pumps and the solar panels. Two flags have also needed replacing this year.

3. Mission and Outreach: Chairman Revd Jo Neary.

4. Worship: Chairman Revd David Baldwin.

5. Pastoral care: Chairman Rev Prebendary Alastair Wheeler.

These groups also include members of the congregation and usually convene between PCC meetings sending their reports to the PCC via the secretary.

The Foodbank subcommittee: Chair Rev Jo Neary, later came under the auspices of the Team Office.

The Health and Safety Group did not function as such as there was no volunteer to take this on. Advice was sought from Neville Adams the Team Safety Advisor as needed. The Fire Safety Officer from Dorset and Wiltshire Fire Service was contacted and visited to give advice regarding the fire exits. A defibrillator was purchased and sponsored by the Friends of St. Mary's Church. The PCC were also in regular contact with the local Police Support Officer as the church has had problems with school children causing vandalism on several occasions over the year. As I write this, the PCC will need to consider CCTV cameras being installed in church and the Friends of St. Mary's are also willing to support us with this project if agreed. We are very grateful to them.

In May the family of Martin Schellenberg our director of Music who had died in the church in 2021 placed a plaque to his memory on to the music stand. We are very grateful to Dr Peter Nardone who took over in 2021. In 2022 the church has been filled with musical occasions, organ recitals and his cheerful sense of humour giving encouragement to keep the choir singing in spite of reducing numbers. We are grateful to the extras that join us at the special services in the year. At the end of the year we were delighted to receive 3 choir stalls on loan from St. Mary's Church Bridport. They fit in nicely with the church furniture and most pieces that have been made by Ron Emmett over the years.

There was much to celebrate in June with a special service of thanksgiving for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. A new Bishop arrived at Salisbury and several of us went to the Cathedral for the Inauguration of the Ministry of the Right Reverend Stephen Lake. Champagne and excellent nibbles were served on the Green. Each member of the congregation was given an envelope containing £10 with a challenge to do something creative and make a difference to someone or something with the contents. This indeed happened and David set up a 'Hardship Fund' in the team and the result was incredible thanks to the generosity of our congregations.

Our own Sarah Keen was ordained deacon and took up a position in the Golden Cap Team.

Fiona our curate came to the end of her curacy and set about finding a parish.

One of our retired clergy the Rev Elfreda Savigear died following a progressive illness and care in a specialist nursing unit in Poole. Her funeral service was very well attended.

So also several members of our congregation died in 2022 namely, Carol Lindsay, Colin Smith, Marjorie Aird, Jim Foster, Duncan Harris and Wendy Simmons. Over the years they have faithfully contributed much to the life of St. Mary's and are greatly missed. Paul Martin-Davies, Patricia Harris, and Barry Longman, all had to move to nursing or residential homes as more care was needed. Robert Hahn who so enjoyed coming to 'Walk in Wednesday', was sadly forced into moving to Weymouth as his home in the Wessex Autistic Unit in Barnes Lane was closed down. The sight of his enjoyment of the art class and the music is now a happy memory.

The whole country was saddened by the death of HM the Queen in September and gave thanks for all that she had done during her reign while celebrating her life of devotion to service.

The Beaminster Festival was back in full swing this year. The congregation was involved with catering for the performers, making coffee and welcoming initiatives linked to the local community.

3 members of the Church Flower Arranging team thoroughly enjoyed their part in proceedings.

An Advent Team Quiet Day was held in Netherbury Village Hall led by the Rev. David Campbell and was much enjoyed by everyone. Jackie Bush provided the catering and the choice of soups and cake was much appreciated. The Beaminster Lights Event was back in spite of the concerns over energy

costs and lifted the spirits! The Parent Teacher Associations of the local schools set up their stalls in the church. Our Christmas tree this year was sponsored by AJ Wakely and was remarked upon by several people that it was a beautiful specimen

Thanks go to everyone in the congregation for all your help and particularly this year to the Fabric subcommittee who have been juggling all the projects, getting quotes and faculties, applying for grants and keeping things on track with the wall, the Kitchen project, the LED lighting, the drains, the trees, the solar panels, the ASHP's, WiFi etc.... I could go on.

The Finance subcommittee headed by Marlene Jackaman have done a huge amount of sterling work by introducing on line banking and introducing a card reader for donations. Dan Rootham has kept on taking the cash to the bank. Well done to them.

Last but not least we must mention Judith Hansen, our churchwarden who has gone beyond the call of duty to keep the show on the road. A big thank you goes to her.

Vivien McMurray (PCC Secretary)

St. Mary's Ringing Guild Report

We still have a loyal band, if small band of ringers at St. Mary's and we nearly always manage to ring for every church service. We also have 4 regular visitors who have second homes in the area.

We joined three National Ringing Events in 2022. Firstly for the late Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations, again at the occasion of HM's demise and the succession of her son King Charles III and then the day of the Queen's funeral. On each occasion we were able to ring all ten bells, half muffled as appropriate. This year we only rang at one wedding.

In the summer we had an outing and rang at 4 towers in the Yeovil area.

Our annual spring clean led to a discussion about a possible fire risk presented by the boxes of old hymn books stored at the bottom of the spiral staircase. These have all now been removed.

We also had some concerns about the maintenance of the bells and asked Taylors, the bell foundry in Loughborough to carry out an inspection and service them. The PCC has been sent a copy of the report which mentions the leaking tower roof and the detrimental effects on the bell fittings. In the ringing room, damp can stiffen the ropes making ringing difficult. We now put plumbing pipe insulation on the ropes below each sally (the fluffy bit!), when they are not being rung. This has helped to keep the tail ends flexible.

We had a wonderful celebration in February when over 40 ringers in the area came together over tea in the Strode Room. We rang a Quarter Peal on all ten bells to mark the 90th birthday of Sue Philp. So overall it has been another busy year and we thank the PCC for their continued support.

Jill Parr (Tower Captain)

St. Mary's Church Flower Arrangers

We are now a group of 14 ladies who, in turn, provide the floral pedestal with fresh flowers throughout the year, excluding Lent and Advent. In addition we come together to decorate the whole church for important festivals in the Church calendar. 2022 was busier than normal as we also celebrated the Platinum Jubilee of HM the Queen through flower.

Jean Owen organises the rota for the pedestal flowers and Rita Cowie looks after the allocation of arrangements for festival flowers. Judith Hansen, our church warden created a map of the church detailing all the flower stations. The usual festivals are Easter, Harvest and Christmas and an allocated amount of money is available for arrangements, on these occasions.

In line with the commitment by Beaminster Town Council to achieve plastic free status and the church commitment to Eco principles, we have agreed not to use any more Oasis flower foam and our current stocks have now been used up. We have also been encouraged to use living plant material which can be planted in the church yard and reused in the future. This results in our using different ideas while flower arranging- in addition to our classical creations.

This Christmas we all met in the Greyhound for lunch and invited those ladies who had 'retired' from the group. We plan an afternoon tea to cement our fellowship in flowers and thank everyone for their continued commitment and would welcome any newcomers to the group.

Ava Livingstone

Pastoral Care

The Lay Pastoral Assistants are a feature of church life, encouraged and trained by a diocesan scheme to have a particular concern in caring for one another and for others in our wider community, whom I support.

Those cared for in this way range from people who are sick or housebound, including taking communion out to some of them on a regular basis, regular visiting and pastoral contact. Sadly the hope last year of increasing the number on our team from its current 5 people did not work out, and we are likely to lose one of our small remaining band in the next few months.

The names and phone numbers of our LPAs are printed in the magazine, but if you or someone you know feels that an LPA may be able to help, you are asked to talk to David or Jo in the first instance so that they know who is being supported in this way.

Alastair Wheeler

St Mary of the Annunciation, Beaminster
APCM Music Report, 2022

Over the past year we, like most church communities, have evolved from a congregation licking its wounds after Covid to a more stable situation where normal service has now largely been restored. Through the year I have managed to put in place those things that I had hoped might be possible. The monthly music scheme is always published and displayed in the north porch allowing congregation to find out what a particular piece of music was heard after the service or what hymns there are to look forward to next week. It's not an important document or even one that we necessarily adhere to rigidly, but it is a declaration of intent and I hope bears witness to an element of thought, planning and care taken over the commitment to weekly worship. For just over a year now I have had the responsibility of selecting the hymnody used week by week in St Mary's and, whilst the choices might not always be to everyone's taste they are hopefully in sympathy with the church seasons and feel of the services. We have also started developing the congregational music for our Communion services, combining our well known setting by John Rutter, with the newer Mass of St Cedd that I wrote for the congregation to sing at Chelmsford Cathedral in 2001. I would hope to add further to this as time moves on.

The choir has remained at around a dozen singers, with occasional help from extras on special services. We were all saddened at the death of Colin Smith whose distinctive bass voice and large personality had enlivened our lives for many years. A few months before he died he wrote to me saying that he had invited his friend, Maurice Yarham, to join the choir and that he'd be coming along that Friday night. He rounded off the email by saying "If you don't want him then you had better contact him and tell him not to come". This was in keeping with Colin's directness and assuredness, however Maurice did come on that Friday night and joined as a tenor, adding to the faithful service given week by week by the other choir members. The only other change in personnel has been the departure of Tom Cunningham who decided in December that he, for personal reasons, should move back to the congregation for the time being. Although not singing, he is still part of the choir family and we enjoy his support and company Sunday by Sunday. I am continually grateful to those who step up when I am called away for musical reasons or holidays; Brian Ridley has been taking choir practice in my absence and Jonathan Delbridge has been deputizing on the organ for many of the services this year. Our worship is enhanced by their gifts, and I thank them for their support.

Another important change has been the addition of some music desks for the choir. These were in St Mary's, Bridport, where there has been no choir for some time now. Our bass, Barry Gibbs arranged for them to come to us on a permanent loan and we are very grateful to him for doing the work required to necessitate this change. The singers now have somewhere to put their books and music which is very useful. Additionally the style of the desks is in keeping with the other furnishings in the church. Lunchtime concerts made a welcome comeback in 2022 and a series of organ recitals in June and July was well attended and supported by a dedicated crew of coffee makers and stewards. What a great team!

Peter Nardone
Director of Music & Organist
March 2023

St. Mary's Church Beaminster

Annual Report to the P.C.C. for the care and maintenance of the Churchyard 2022

It has been a very good year in the Churchyard, the rebuilding of the West wall is now completed at last and looks beautiful. Wild flower seeds were sown and in July, after the removal of masses of Stinging Nettles, they were amazing (many thanks to Inge-Marie).

The Large Macrocarpa which grew from the adjoining property at the West end of the Churchyard was felled in the Autumn, with the permission of the owners following the damage after a bad storm. Surprisingly, although it was so large, no one seems to have missed it.

We also have a new Shed kindly erected by Ian and Keith. This gave us an opportunity to clear around the area of stones - dust bins - old pots and odd planks of wood and fencing. The Compost heap is well managed and of a quality that cannot be bettered. The Copper Beech continues to grow at a rate of knots, is becoming a problem and needs expert advice.

Valarian, beautiful though it is, causes a lot of work as it reseeds everywhere including the Stone walls. We make a concerted effort to dead head the flowers before the seed blows around. In summer the cobbled paths are also a lot of work, we do not use chemicals unless we absolutely need to in exceptional circumstances.

A concerted effort was made on the border near to the lift to remove or severely cut back the shrubs which were outgrowing the size of the plot.

The Memorial Garden is changing as many more Plaques are added each year. The Circle of Wild Flowers is diminishing. However, overall it is a lovely garden and widely visited by the local community and many visitors to the Church.

We are a team of five people, very friendly and if anyone would like to join us we would be very pleased.

Jenny Tyler,

Church Warden's Annual Report for 2022

This year St. Mary's has seen the numbers in the congregation return to a more normal size and it has been good to welcome newcomers to the church and area also. We are grateful as ever for the many services provided by the Clergy including Weddings, Funerals, Baptisms and Wednesday morning Communion. Walk in Wednesday has seen people young and old continuing to drop in for coffee and a chat, as well as joining the Art Table or playing musical instruments or knitting prayer shawls. Toddler and Baby group continues to provide a Monday morning of fun and chatter for Mums, Dads, toddlers and babies and we welcome new people most weeks. Messy Church continues to meet in the Church or Churchyard with enjoyment and christian teaching through word, song and crafting fun. I would like to thank everyone who volunteers to host these events as well as those who create rotas, provide a welcome at the Church door, read the lesson, write prayers, assist with Communion, arrange the flowers or make coffee on Sunday mornings. Our services are much enhanced by the beautiful music provided by our Organist Peter Nardone and our faithful choir members and I thank them on behalf of all of us. The sound of our bells ringing out across the town continues to be a joy and again I thank our ringers for the time and effort put into this. It has been our pleasure to welcome our local schools who continue to hold services and other events in our Church.

This year has seen quite a lot of activity within the Church and grounds. Completion of the West Wall repairs and the attachment of loose memorial stones to the wall have left it looking very smart and tidy. The gardeners dug a small bed in front of the wall and sowed wild flower seeds providing a very beautiful array of flowers which were much admired. The plan is a repeat sowing this year. We much appreciate all the work that the volunteer gardeners do to keep the Churchyard looking as it does.

A Faculty has been applied for so that light pruning of the Copper Beech tree at the rear of the Church, (which now has a Tree Preservation Order on it), can be carried out and the Field Maple can be felled as the roots are penetrating the drains and it has outgrown its space - all in agreement with the planners. We are grateful to Ben Sabran (Stonemason) who continues to carry out work on our behalf to both outside and inside the church including levelling/cleaning paving, removal of Ivy, repairs to the tower and cleaning and polishing of the the Rood Screen.

A Faculty was obtained and the installation of two Air Source Heat pumps and forty solar panels has furthered our aim of being as close to a 'green' church as possible, and as I write we are about to finalise the sale of electricity that the solar panels are producing. Many thanks to Gillian Perrott for all the work she has undertaken in getting the installations in place and coping with the sometimes frustratingly slow progress involved.

The lift is continuing to cause problems and as I write a meeting has been arranged to meet a supervisor from the lift company to discuss what might be done.

The lights in the Church are gradually failing and we are in the protracted process of trying to agree suitable replacement LED lights. A Faculty has been applied for so that the long awaited work on the Kitchen/Toilet/Crypt/Sewer reordering work can go ahead. We are grateful to the Friends' of St. Mary's for their supplying funds for both of these projects.

I am especially grateful to Gillian Perrott for her assistance in applying for Faculties. Having not had any experience of this previously I was relieved when she offered her help. Thanks also to Rudi Simmonds for his input into Fabric matters and for the purchase of the Wifi which supports the ASHPs.

Thanks are due to Marlene Jackaman, Chris Ward, Dan Rootham and other members of the Finance Committee for their work in keeping our Accounts in order and for the installation of the new Card Machine which is proving a success. Also I offer my thanks to the Church Secretary Vivien McMurray who opens and closes the church each day and without whose advice and work I would have struggled this year.

As can be seen from this report it takes the contributions of many people to keep our Church working and worshipping as it does, supporting congregation and community alike. New volunteers are welcome and I will always be happy to find them something to do!!

I believe that the buildings and contents of the Church are mostly in good order. We are grateful for the loan of moveable choir stalls from St. Mary's Church in Bridport which have improved the look of that area of the Church.

I pray that God will continue to richly bless His Church here at St. Mary's in all we say and do for His sake and to His glory.

Judith Hansen
Church Warden
March 2023

CHURCH ATTENDANCE FIGURES FOR 2022 WITH COMPARISON FOR 2021

	Sunday 8:00		Sunday 09:30		Wednesday 10:00		Messy Church	
	2022	2021	2022	2021	2022	2021	2022	2021
Number of services	52	41	52	41	52	33	7	4
Attendance (Adults)	356	326	2825	1870	652	360	160	108
Attendance (under 16)	1	1	99	10	1	0	139	75
Average attendance all ages	7	8	56	46	13	11	43	46

These figures include Easter Sunday Service but exclude the Christmas Services

	2022	2021
Baptism all ages	5	3
Marriages	4	6
Thanksgiving Service/deceased	11	3
Funerals in church	10	7
Burial	4	2
Interment of Ashes	10	6
Funerals elsewhere	12	6
Home Communions	70	24

Online Statistics for October 2022 provided by Harry Neary

Average views of Rev Chat was over 100 per video via Facebook, and another 20-30 on YouTube.
Worship at Home average views was 60-70 on Facebook with another 30-40 on YouTube
Visits to the website was 4231, a rise of 9.4 percent over the previous October.

Marlene Jackaman
Mar-23

Attendance Stats for 2022

	JAN		FEB		MAR		APRIL		MAY		JUNE		JULY		AUG		SEPT		OCT		NOV		DEC		TOTALS
	< 16	Adult	< 16	Adult	< 16	Adult	< 16	Adult	< 16	Adult	< 16	Adult	< 16	Adult	< 16	Adult	< 16	Adult	< 16	Adult	< 16	Adult	< 16	Adult	
Sunday 8am	0	30	0	25	0	40	1	27	0	34	0	25	0	43	0	24	0	27	0	35	0	26	0	20	357
Sunday 9.30am	0	257	3	251	7	248	15	229	18	285	9	217	12	263	6	239	6	208	8	254	2	194	13	180	2924
Wednesday 10 am	0	59	0	64	0	68	0	38	0	55	1	39	0	47	0	77	0	53	0	48	0	64	0	39	652
Messy Church	15	19	0	0	14	12	22	30	11	19	0	0	0	0	0	0	21	24	18	21	38	35	0	0	299
All Prayer Sessions	0	8	0	11	0	9	0	17	0	23	0	20	0	18	0	0	0	28	0	17	0	19	0	7	177
School Services	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	110	50	0	0	413	189	762
Saints & Special Days/Services	0	9	0	0	2	49	0	85	0	0	1	290	0	0	0	2	15	150	25	124	0	0	0	3	755
Ash Wednesday	0	0	0	0	0	24	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	24
Maundy Thursday							0	33	0	0									0	0	0	0	0	0	33
Good Friday							0	37	0	0									0	0	0	0	0	0	37
Easter Eve Vigil 6am							1	23	0	0									0	0	0	0	0	0	24
Easter Day 8 am							0	12	0	0									0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Easter Day 9.30 am							3	64	0	0									0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ascension Day									0	36									0	0	0	0	0	0	0
All Souls Memorial																			0	0	0	0	0	0	36
Remembrance Service																			0	48	0	0	0	0	48
9 Lessons & Carols																					0	180	0	0	180
Crib Service																							2	95	97
Midnight Service																							28	101	129
Christmas Day 8am																							1	63	64
Christmas Day 10.30am																							0	9	9
TOTALS	15	382	3	351	23	450	39	519	29	452	11	591	12	371	6	342	42	490	161	597	40	518	465	754	6663

Red figures included elsewhere - itemized for information

June Sp Services including Truro Choir 234 attendees
Sept Special Thanksgiving Service for the Queen RIP
Oct Sp Service - Confirmation Service

Finance Committee Report

When I joined the Finance Committee in 2017 having just been appointed as Church Warden, I asked Hugh Lindsay if he would continue in his role as Chair of Finance, as normally the two wardens would chair either Fabric or Finance and Jack Barnet was doing a fine job as Chair of Fabric. (Hugh agreed and continued in this role until January 2022.) Wendy Symonds was our treasurer and with Hugh's and Wendy's financial backgrounds and reasonable stability in the country's economy, our church sailed along in calm waters.

In January 2022 it was apparent Wendy was unwell and was struggling to present the year end accounts. At the same time Carol, Hugh's wife, was also a very poorly lady. Hugh stepped down as Chair of Finance and I took over the reins as Chair of Finance and Acting Treasurer. Before moving on I want to take this opportunity of thanking Hugh for all his professionalism and commitment to our church finances over many years. I want also to pay my respects to Wendy. Her book-keeping was meticulous, and it is only after taking over from her that we realise just how much work is involved in our church accounting. Carol and Wendy are no longer with us but those of us who had the privilege of knowing them, will never forget them. Likewise, Robin Musson, who also was part of the Finance team for many years.

A lot of changes have been made during 2022. We now operate with on-line and telephone banking. We appointed Chris Ward as our bookkeeper who, along with Dan Rootham, devised a very comprehensive coding system and impressive spreadsheets, so we are aware at each quarter end just how our finances are progressing – or otherwise. It has been a learning curve and we've tweaked the system as we've jogged along. Thank you, Chris and Dan.

Whilst we were creating new systems, there were major projects ongoing. The boundary wall, the solar panels, and the Air Sourced Heat Pumps. A lot of money passing through the accounts. Gill Perrott, managed to get us a grant from Dorset Council of £19,371 for the panels and the heat pumps and we were able to reclaim VAT on some costs (the VAT claim monies will be shown on 2023 accounts). Rudi Symons and Judith Hansen were feeding us all the information we needed on the projects, so thanks to those people.

From the accounts you will notice we are showing a deficit on the 2022 General Account of £24,470 (£19,682 deficit for 2021). Our biggest outlay is the Parish Share, rising over a five years' period, from £50,045 in 2018 to £58,951 in 2022. However, in the 2023 Budget Guide for the Diocesan Synod, dated 24 September 2022, it is written that for every pound we pay 72p comes back to us on clergy stipends, pensions, and housing, 13p goes towards ministerial and parish support and 2p on work with children and young people. Another big outlay is our annual insurance premium of £7,429, £3,981 of which came back into our account when an insurance claim had to be made for storm damage to our porch lantern.

Over £7,000 has been received through legacies, £1,000 specifically made for the maintenance of our church bells. Peter Nardone arranged for some of his friends to come and give organ recitals during the summer months which made a nice profit of over £700 for us. We now have a defibrillator and the Friends of St Mary's funded this to the tune of £1,170, for which we thank them.

We do need to oversee the ongoing deficits on the day to day running of our church. We need regular committed income (setting up standing orders and completing gift aid forms if you are a taxpayer). We need suggestions for fund raising events and we need enthusiastic people to help us in fund raising.

You may question why I am asking for more cash whilst sitting in the CCLA accounts is £235,828. We have some major projects in hand. A new kitchen, installing a toilet and replacement lighting doesn't come cheap and it would be my hope that some money could be placed into investments generating higher interest rates which, in turn, could reduce our deficit without effort.

After many years of examining our accounts, Gareth Hewitt will no longer review our accounts in the future. He has given so much of his time and professional advice. He has been a true friend of St Mary's Church and we will miss his valued input.

Thanks to the PCC for their support over a difficult period and special thanks to Philip Crawford, Hugh Lindsay, Dan Rootham, Brian Ridley, and Chris Ward for their commitment. – **Team Finance.**

Marlene Jackaman
Chair of Finance
15.3.2023

St Mary's Beaminster Parochial Church Council

General Account

(Parish Finance: everyday income and expenditure)

Q1 2022	Q2 2022	Q3 2022	RECEIPTS	Q4 2022	TOTAL 2022
£	£	£		£	
11,671	20,121	11,256	Voluntary Giving	17,036	60,084
494	713	592	Outreach	638	2,437
2,341	3,022	772	Activities for generating funds	610	6,745
0	0	0	Income from investments	0	0
1,295	2,008	6,388	Church Activities	3,875	13,566
1,446	2,536	52	Other Income	856	4,890
17,246	28,400	19,060		23,015	87,721

Q1 2022	Q2 2022	Q3 2022	EXPENDITURE	Q4 2022	TOTAL 2022
£	£	£			
21,697	18,217	14,738	Overheads	14,738	69,390
2,912	346	259	Receipts Disbursed	0	3,517
2,442	3,857	3,444	Services Support	4,140	13,882
6,891	5,774	5,023	Church Building & Grounds	5,428	23,116
67	0	0	Mission & Outreach	0	67
0	0	0	Donations	0	0
50	1,170	0	Other Expenditure	1,000	2,220
34,059	29,363	23,464		25,305	112,192

Q1 2022	Q2 2022	Q3 2022		Q4 2022	TOTAL 2022
-16,813	-963	-4,403	DEFICIT/SURPLUS FOR QUARTER	-2,291	
			TOTAL DEFICIT FOR 2022	-24,470	

Bank Accounts	
HSBC balance end Q4	25,950
Notes:	
<i>Other income:</i>	
Includes insurance proceeds	3,982
<i>Various other collections/payments (in/out):</i>	
Transferred from the Fabric Fund to the General Account (Q1)	43,583
Payments made from the General Account incorrectly (Q1)	9,791
In/Out: Payment to Christian Aid (Q2)	1,502
Payments made from the General Account incorrectly (Q3)	11,944
Transferred from the Fabric Fund to the General Account (Q3)	11,944
In/Out: Salisbury DBF Sudan General Fund (Q4)	46
In/Out: Rector's Talent Fund (Q4)	100
Team News clarification: TN subs are paid into the TN account. The team administrator invoices Beaminster PCC but the invoice is for the total number of copies delivered to Beaminster each month and includes a number of copies that are complimentary and copies that are placed for sale in the church.	

Chris Ward
Q4 2022 Final
3rd February 2023

Reviewed and agreed the books and records by:

GARETH HEWITT:

DATE:

21/03/2023

M. Jackson

Chair. Finance

Rev Canon David Beek
Tea Rev
28/03/23

Reconciliation between CW accounts dated 03/02/2023 and Final proposed accounts

	Income	Expenditure	Deficit
	£	£	£
Per Original Accounts	82,446.00	107,352.00	-24,906.00
Cheque included in 2021 accounts (Q1 Expenditure: Receipts Disbursed)	-	-778.50	778.50
Cheque included in 2021 accounts (Q1 Expenditure: Receipts Disbursed)	-	-178.75	178.75
Bank charges (Q1 Jan 2022)	-	18.57	-18.57
Bookkeeping costs (Q4 Dec 2022 Accrual)	-	627.12	-627.12
Income banked in Jan 2022 (Q1 Income: Voluntary Giving)	124.00	-	124.00
Insurance claim (Q1 and Q2 Income: Other Income, Q1 and Q2 Expenditure: Overheads)	3,981.68	3,981.68	-
Defibrillator (Q2 Income; Voluntary Giving, Q2 Expenditure: Other expenditure)	1,170.00	1,170.00	-
Revised Accounts	87,721.68	112,192.12	-24,470.44
FINAL ACCOUNTS	87,721	112,192	-24,470
Check	0.68	0.12	-0.44 Rounding

St Mary's Beaminster Parochial Church Council

Fabric Account

(Capital Projects: legacy income and capital expenditure)

Financial Summary for Quarter 4 – October to December 2022

Q1&2 2022		Q3 2022	RECEIPTS		Q4 2022	TOTAL 2022
		£			£	
1,000	0		Legacy Restricted		0	1,000
3,000	1,000		Legacy Unrestricted		2,000	6,000
78	39		CAF		39	156
0	19,371		Other Income (Grant for solar panels and ASHP from Dorset Council)		0	19,371
4,078		20,410	TOTAL INCOME		2,039	26,527
Q1&2 2022		Q3	EXPENDITURE		Q4 2022	TOTAL 2022
		£			£	
47,881	1,164		Boundary Wall		1,756	50,800
7,657	24,251		Solar Panels		721	32,629
288	1,249		Kitchen & Toilet		0	1,537
8,077	24,536		Air Source Heat Pump		8,387	40,999
0	0		Church Lighting		0	0
36	17		Bank Charges		15	68
0	0		Giving Machine Equipment		388	388
63,939		51,217	TOTAL EXPENDITURE		11,266	126,422

Bank Accounts

HSBC balance end Q4

126,320

Notes:

- Transferred from the Fabric Fund to the General Account (Q1/Q2)
- Transferred from the General Account to the Fabric Fund (Q1/Q2)
- Payments made from General Account incorrectly (Q1/Q2)
- Legacy paid into General Account incorrectly (Q1/Q2)

Corin Ward
Monday February 20, 2023
Fabric Account Report Q4 Final

Reviewed and agreed to the books and records by:

Gareth Hewlett:

Date

G. S. Bell

07/03/2023

Rev Canon David Bell

Treasurer

28/03/23

M. Jackson
Chair. Finance

St Mary's Beaminster Parochial Church Council - PCC A

CCLA Account - PCC A

Q1 2022	Q2 2022	Q3 2022	RECEIPTS	Q4 2022	TOTAL 2022
13.29	30.40	56.61	Interest	100.29	200.59
13.29	30.40	56.61		100.29	200.59
13.29	30.40	56.61	SURPLUS FOR QUARTER	100.29	200.59

Bank Accounts

CCLA Balance at end Q4 15,451.41

Approved by the PCC on

and signed on behalf of the PCC by:

Reverend Canon David Baldwin:

Marlene Jackaman:

Reviewed and agreed to the books and records by:

Gareth Hewett:

Date:

07/03/2023

St Mary's Beaminster Parochial Church Council - Fabric Account

CCLA Account - PCC Fabric

Q1 2022	Q2 2022	Q3 2022	RECEIPTS	Q4 2022	TOTAL 2022
15.52	306.48	807.41	Interest	1,430.35	2,559.76
15.52	306.48	807.41		1,430.35	2,559.76

15.52	306.48	807.41	SURPLUS FOR QUARTER	1,430.35	2,559.76
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Bank Accounts

CCLA Balance at end Q4 220,376.65

Notes:

TRF to HSBC Fabric Account 04/05/2022 200,000.00

Approved by the PCC on

and signed on behalf of the PCC by:

Reverend Canon David Baldwin:

David Baldwin

Marlene Jackaman:

M. Jackaman

Reviewed and agreed to the books and records by:

Gareth Hewett:

G. Hewett

Date:

07/03/2023

St Mary's Beaminster Parochial Church Council

HSBC Stewardship Account

Q1 2022	Q2 2022	Q3 2022	RECEIPTS	Q4 2022	TOTAL 2022
13.29	30.40	56.61	Interest	100.29	200.59
13.29	30.40	56.61		100.29	200.59

Q1 2022	Q2 2022	Q3 2022	EXPENDITURE	Q4 2022	TOTAL 2022
15.00	15.00	15.00	Bank Charges	15.00	60.00
15.00	15.00	15.00		15.00	60.00

- 1.71	15.40	41.61	DEFICIT/SURPLUS FOR QUARTER	85.29	200.59
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Bank Accounts

HSBC Balance at end Q4	415.00
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Notes:

8,960.00	16,444.29	8,867.16	Transfers to General Account	13,136.00	47,407.45
			Voluntary Giving recognised in		
8,955.00	8,041.00	7,729.00	General Account	13,346.00	38,071.00
			HMRC Recovery recognised in		
-	9,456.45	-	other accounts	-	9,456.45

Approved by the PCC on

and signed on behalf of the PCC by:

Reverend Canon David Baldwin:

David Baldwin

Marlene Jackaman:

M. Jackaman

Reviewed and agreed to the books and records by:

Gareth Hewett:

G. Hewett

Date:

07/03/2023

Fabric Report for 2022

The following is a report for the activities carried out during 2022 on the church fabric

Toilet & Kitchen

After many comments, reviews and a DAC meeting, the final design has been approved by the PCC, and the process for obtaining the necessary approvals started. Dorset Council have given planning approval for the external works (installation of a sewer and crypt cover) and a Faculty application for the work has been submitted to the DAC. When approved, the specification for the work will be sent to various companies for quotation.

A minor problem caused by not closing an Interim Faculty for investigation of the sewer and crypt cover meant that we had to apply for another Faculty to close this, which now has been completed.

When the work is carried out, various items will need to find new homes in the church, or be removed. This is an ongoing task (for example a cupboard has been moved from the vestry and put in the shed (replacing various items that the Beaminster Festival had been storing there) and we need to review items to see if they are still required.

Heating

The Air Sourced Heat Pump system has been installed, and after initial minor problems is now working correctly. The gas boiler is automatically used during very cold weather and when the fan heaters are in use. Gill is continuing to monitor the system performance.

Solar Array

The Solar Array has been installed and is fully operational. When the electricity is not required for church use it is automatically exported to the national grid. At the moment we are not receiving any payment for this, but we are changing our electricity supplier to one who will pay for the excess electricity (Supplier still being 100% green energy).

West Wall

The west wall repairs are now complete (including the damage from the fallen tree), but will require regular inspections for any new cracks from settlement, etc.

Lights

First the good news, the external light on the church was damaged during a storm, this has been repaired and is now working, also the lights on the gate on the ramp have also been repaired.

On the internal lights, it was planned to simply replace the existing units with similar LED lights – how wrong can you be! It reminds me of the joke 'How many people does it take to change a light bulb?', at the moment the following have been involved – PCC members, 2 different lighting companies, 3 different lighting consultants, at least 3 different DAC members, the church architect, plus others – also the need to meet the requirements of various documents and specifications. At the moment no one has been able to propose an acceptable solution, we are continuing to investigate.

Trees

Work is needed on the Copper Beech tree and a large self-seeded Field Maple near the shed. The Copper Beech has a Tree Preservation Order and we now have permission to carry out the work.

Bell Tower

During maintenance of the bells water damage to some of the wooden beams was noticed, this requires the leak to be fixed and further investigation to see if the beam needs repair.

WiFi

The new WiFi has been installed and appears to be operating correctly, the only known problem was when 'Three' were doing an upgrade to the Beaminster transmitter.

The system is now on an unlimited data monthly account with 'Three'

To access requires a password, we require a policy on the management of access to the WiFi.

The Lift

The lift continues to have reliability problems, Judith has had discussions with the company but it is still to be resolved.

Minor Tasks

Various other tasks have been carried over the year as required

Thanks to Judith, Gill, Fabric sub-committee members and all others who continue with the upkeep of the fabric of the church.

Rudi Simmonds 20/3/2023

Team Safeguarding Officers Report for 2022

The Beamminster Team is committed to making the churches and the church schools in the Team safe and welcoming places for all.

All the necessary Safeguarding checks were carried out during the year. No referrals were made to the Diocesan Safeguarding Team.

Applications for DBS checks have been registered as requested throughout the year and all renewals have been completed. We continue to be grateful for access to the Diocesan DBS Microsite, a Dashboard with relevant information about staff and volunteers within the Team, enabling us to keep all data secure, in one place and up-to-date.

Members of the Team completed the Domestic Abuse Awareness Training which was facilitated by the Diocesan Safeguarding Team.

The Team website provides contact details, at parish and diocesan levels, for all who are looking for safeguarding advice together with the Team's Safeguarding Policy.

We should like to thank everyone in the Team for their continued care for each other and alertness to the needs of those around them so that our churches are truly safe and welcoming places.

Barbara Simmonds

Liz Brown

Beamminster Team Safeguarding Officers

Friends of St Mary's Church Beaminster

Minutes of the 21st Annual Meeting

22 February 2022 at St. Mary's Church Beaminster

Present: Jack Barnett (Chairman)

Mrs J Tyler (Secretary)

Mrs G Sansom (Treasurer)

Mr A Giddings (Project Manager) Absent

Committee Mr P Brook

Miss E Snell

Mrs S Mallinson

Mrs S Corner Absent

The Chairman welcomed the Members and the Minutes of the 20th AGM were read. There are 97 Members including Life Members and 7 New Members.

The Treasurer then gave a report on the Balances of the accounts and reported to Members of the Legacies left to the 'Friends' in the past year. Gill mentioned that as it is a Charitable Account The Bank is now charging 40p for each cheque paid into the account and for every payment. Gill appealed to Members who did not already pay by Standing Order would they please consider doing so. The Auditors were thanked and Linda le Breton kindly agreed to continue for the coming year. Two Concerts are arranged for this year. In April there will be Jazz in the Church with the 'Sunset Café Stompers' and also in October a concert with The Parnham Voices.

The Chairman then stood down for the election of the 2022 Committee. Jack Barnett was re-elected as Chairman and the Committee were also elected en bloc. Although both the Treasurer and Secretary are retiring at the end of this year. An appeal was made, but sadly there were no volunteers from the floor to replace them.

Jack then gave a presentation Showing some wonderful views and pictures of the Church and some items which the 'Friends' have contributed to over several years, and are funding ahead.

The Organ 2008, Table top Tombs re-set by Ben Sabin, The Lift £10,000, Crocketal Pinnacle and Flag pole 147 steps to the Tower. Clock inside the Tower £2,236 donated. Bells and Bell Room. Boiler £5000 Microphones for any gathering, War Memorial Window, and Defibrillator £1000.

Peter Brook told Members that we must keep ahead we must not lose momentum it would be good to have some younger people and some new ideas for fund-raising. Linden Boothby praised the Committee for the never ending list to keep the Church well looked after for generation to come.

Canon Rev'd David Baldwin gave an update. The Covid Lockdown has left the Church with a £455,000 deficit. Many people have great affinity with the Church, but sadly young people do not come to worship. Update: Drainage – not as big a job as first thought, some of the work already done some years back. The Faculty will be granted for Solar Panels, Eco heat pumps, a grant of 40% has been offered. The new works will be to install Toilets, Kitchen and Janitorial area. However just a few days ago the tree on the west right hand corner fell onto the west wall, fortunately, the damage to the wall is not as bad as first thought, and as the Stone Masons are already working on the wall we hope it can be rectified soon and not incur huge costs.

The meeting closed at 3.35pm followed by Tea and Cakes

Jack Barnett

Sheet1

Friends of St Mary's Church, Beaminster

Income and Expenditure for the year ending 31st December 2022

	2022	2021
Income		
Donations	1256.00	1270.00
Tax Recovery – 2 years	437.50	
Jazz Concert – ticket sales	1475.00	
" " - wine donations	228.00	
Parnham Voices Concert – ticket sales	550.00	
" " - wine	130.90	
Total	4077.40	1270.00

Expenditure		
Admin' photocopying etc	33.92	9.68
Bank charges - £5.00 per month	60.00	
Bank activity charges	13.01	
Jazz Concert – fee	600.00	
" " - wine donations	56.00	
" " - flowers – thank you gift	6.50	
Defibrillator	1170.00	
Parnham Voices Concert – fee	175.00	
" " " - wine	44.00	
" " " - publicity etc	12.30	
Total	2170.73	9.68

Statement of Account

Carried forward HSBC	3949.45	2689.13
Carried forward CCLA	115234.08	115220.39
Total resources at start of year	119183.53	117909.52
Income	4077.40	1270.00
Interest CCLA	1124.29	13.69
	124385.22	119193.21
Less expenditure	2170.73	9.68
Total	122214.49	119183.53
Represented by		
Balance at HSBC	5856.12	3949.45
Balance at CCLA	116358.37	115234.08
Total	122214.49	119183.53

The Friends of St Mary's, Beaminster
Treasurer's Report for the year ending 2022
AGM 2023

As you will see there is a healthy balance in the Bank due to fund raising and an increase in the interest accrued in the CCLA deposit account - £1,124.29 against £13.69 last year.

For new members, the reason for the large amount sitting in the CCLA account is due to a legacy of over £100,000.00 left to the Friends in 2019, some of which will be used to fund the kitchen refurbishment and the provision of a WC in the Church.

The Jazz Concert in April was a huge success. It attracted a large audience and brought in over a thousand pounds. The Parnham Voices Concert in October had a much smaller audience but still raised almost £450.

The only major expenditure this year was to purchase a defibrillator for use in the Church and in the Community.

Currently membership stands at 64 annual members and 33 life members. We need to find a way of attracting new people to join, in 2019 there were 135 members. Several of our members have died during the year including Colin Smith who for many years along with Eric Whittle upheld the aims and objectives of the Friends either as Chairman or Secretary and they are both sadly missed.

I have made an appeal in the February Team News for new members and we are also planning to take part in the Beaminster Connect initiative on Saturday 22nd April along with many other organisations in the town in an effort to attract more Friends.

I will conclude by saying yet again that it is still my intention to step down as treasurer when someone can be found to fill the post.

Gill Sansom
Treasurer

Finally I would like to thank Linda le Breton for auditing the accounts and Brian Ridley for submitting the Friends' claim for tax relief on Gift Aid donations.

The Beaminster Area Team Ministry: Annual Clergy Report To The APCM's 2023

As I write this my 12th annual report to the parishes of the Beaminster Team, I think back to a recent conversation Jo and I had a few weeks ago. She correctly pointed out to me that it is often too easy to dwell on things that have not gone to plan rather than to celebrate the many things across the team that have happened and breathe new life into the lives of our communities. I am sure that Jo will write about some of these in her section of this report. But as I write I reflect on the many good works that you all do, everything from looking out for others, organising activities that bring communities together, caring for God's world and the environment. Then there are the many often unseen things such as caring for our buildings and the churchyards, preparing churches for worship, providing food for events, ringing bells, which brings joy to many (There will always be the occasional moan!) musicians and singers and those who serve as Foundation Governors at our church schools, the list is endless to you all thank you for what you do and for your commitment and time.

Last July we welcomed Bishop Stephen as our Diocesan Bishop and he challenged us to do something that showed the love of Christ to our communities. He gave all those who attended his welcome service a £10 note and Jo and I asked people to match this and you were brilliant in your response. You have helped us to support the work of Mountjoy School and many individuals who have been affected by the financial crisis of the past months. This was truly the love of Christ in the world.

Whilst across the team we have seen a near return to normal after the pandemic we have begun to see the growing fragility of some of our smaller communities of faith. In 2020 The General Synod started their work on simplifying areas of church life that have always seemed to have made life difficult. One of these was an amendment to how teams could better organise themselves allowing for greater cooperation and cohesion, especially in the area of forming joint councils within teams. Over the past 13 years I have been trying to encourage the parishes of the team to work cooperatively with each other, acknowledging that we are one community of faith. Many parishes are now desperately struggling to find people to serve on PCC's with often one person having to undertake multiple offices. Four of our parishes do not have any Churchwardens and only three parishes have the luxury of two who can share the considerable weight of office. One parish does not have a PCC. It is clear to see that the inevitable is beginning to happen and that work required to be undertaken by PCC's cannot be upheld. Only by parishes accepting that we have to look for fresh ways of working together will churches across the team survive and flourish in the future.

Having just completed the recent round of 12...yes 12 PCC meetings it was plain to see that a number could see the benefit of forming closer ties and working relationships with their neighbours, even if they have been sworn enemies since fighting on opposite sides in the English Civil War! Needless to say others have doggedly refused to give such discussions any countenance. I need to find a platform for us to come together so that we can pray about and discuss how this might look and work in reality. The Team Council is clearly not the place as at the last Team Council Meeting there were 6 parishes that had no representation present. After Easter Jo and myself will seriously look at what and how we can do this.

In the meanwhile I would ask for your continued prayers as to how we can address the seriousness of decline and the immediacy of developing a clearer vision for mission and evangelism.

Finally I would like to say a huge thank you to Jo, Neville and Barbara and all of our Partner Priests, including Dr David Campbell, for their help and support over the year, without them the team would not be able to offer the service rota we have provided post covid.

And finally I am pleased to be able to announce that following her interview Fiona has been appointed as Priest in Charge of the Parishes of Aberporth, Blaenporth and Betws Ifan, which is part of the Local Ministry Area of Bro Teifi in St David's Diocese. The provisional date for her licensing is Monday 22nd May at 7.00 pm in Aberporth. Her farewell service will be the Team Service at 11.00 am in Beaminster on Sunday 30th April. We all congratulate Fiona on her appointment and the next steps in her ministry and I would like to thank her sincerely for all the hard work and effort that she has given across the team over the past three and a half years.

Jo writes: So much happens over the course of the year and there is much to celebrate. Highlights include:

- Strong relationships with all our schools including worship in school and in church, RE lessons, foundations governors, SIAMS and Ofsted support, pastoral care and chaplaincy to our school communities.
- Worship and activities for children and families including Messy Church, toddler group, summer holiday activities, prayer spaces, family worship and baptisms.
- 22 baptisms and 12 confirmations, nurturing faith in children, teenagers and adults.
- Wide engagement through our online worship, Facebook community and Rev Chat discussions.
- New things are still springing up: this year a new ministry knitting prayer shawls.
- And old things still flourishing: Worship, Walk in Wednesday, Messy Church, Gin Church, Christmas and Easter outreach, Fairtrade, Ecochurch, Foodbank, fundraising, social activities, coffee mornings, churchyard care - just to name a few.

What shall we do next? Continue to engage and serve our communities. Pray faithfully. Listen to the needs of our communities. Listen to the prompting of the Holy Spirit and Study and share scripture together. Worship. Listen to the wisdom of experience of each other and work better together to continue to tell the story of God in the world today.

Baby and Toddlers group 2022

On Monday mornings, during school term time, the church undergoes its first transformation of the week. The chairs at the back of church are moved to the edges, to provide a clear space all across, which is then filled with the toys that spend the rest of the week hidden away in the old pulpit. Parents (sometimes grandparents and great grandparents too) and children arrive from 10am onwards, and soon there is activity everywhere – sit and ride toys being ridden, babies lying on the padded play mat and observing each other as much as playing with toys, disputes over who is cooking what in the play kitchen, towers being built and tunnels crawled through, parents taking the chance to enjoy a cup of coffee or tea, to chat together, to join in games with the children. At 11:15, the toys are cleared away, and we gather on the mat to enjoy a story, sing songs, and finish our time together with a prayer. The children and parents leave at 11:30, and by midday, everything is back in place, the church is quiet and ordered once again.

In May, we celebrated the first birthday of the group, with a Bouncy Castle in church for the morning! Some of our Monday morning 'regulars' have been coming since the very first meeting in May 2021, and throughout the year we have welcomed new families, including some who initially come as part of baptism preparation. We have contact with over 20 families, and it has been good to be able to welcome some of them to Messy Church too.

Barbara Simmonds LLM