



## **ANNUAL REPORT 2022**



Annual Parish Vestry Meeting  
followed by  
Annual Parochial Church Meeting  
Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2022 at 11.30am  
in the Church

# St Mary the Virgin, Linton

## Contents

1. Agenda for 8 <sup>th</sup> May 2022 .....	3
2. Minutes of the Annual Parish Vestry Meeting, Sunday 23 <sup>rd</sup> May 2021 .....	4
3. Minutes of The Annual Parochial Church Meeting, Sunday 23 <sup>rd</sup> May 2021 .....	4
4. Annual Report of the Parochial Church Council 2021 - 2022 .....	8
5. Financial Review to 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2021 .....	12
6. Electoral Roll Report .....	22
7. Fabric Report .....	23
8. Deanery Synod Report .....	24
9. Reports from Groups and Activities .....	26
9.1. Beacon Youth Trust Report .....	26
9.2. Bell Ringers .....	27
9.3. Events Committee .....	27
9.4. Flower Ministry .....	27
9.5. Linton C E Infant School .....	28
9.6. Church Links with Linton Heights Junior School .....	30
9.7. Children and Families Ministry .....	31
9.8. Together with God .....	32
9.9. Space for the Spirit .....	33
9.10. Mothers' Union .....	34
9.11. Music Ministry .....	34
9.12. Pastoral Group .....	35
9.13. The Friends of St Mary's .....	36
9.14. The Monday Gang in the Churchyard .....	37

# **St Mary the Virgin, Linton**

## **1. AGENDA FOR 8<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2022**

### **Part A - Vestry Meeting**

1. Prayers
2. Minutes of the Annual Parish Vestry Meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2021
3. Election of Churchwardens

### **Part B - Annual Parochial Church Meeting**

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2021
3. Matters Arising
4. Parochial Church Council Report 2021 - 2022
5. Financial Report followed by appointment of Independent Examiner
6. Electoral Roll Report
7. Fabric Report
8. Deanery Synod Report
9. Election of PCC Members
10. Reports from Groups and Activities
11. Churchwardens' Report
12. Questions from the floor
13. Closing Prayers

## **St Mary the Virgin, Linton**

### **2. MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH VESTRY MEETING, SUNDAY 23<sup>RD</sup> MAY 2021**

The meeting held in the church, began with prayers at 11.15 and was chaired by Revd. Canon Dr Maggie Guite, Rector. Twenty-eight parishioners were present.

#### **Minutes**

The Minutes of the Annual Parishioners' Vestry Meeting of 11<sup>th</sup> October 2020 were accepted as a correct record. Note that annual meetings were deferred from April until October due to the COVID-19 pandemic and national lockdown.

#### **Election of Churchwardens**

Helene Evans, elected in 2018, had indicated her wish to stand down after 3 years. There were two nominations for Churchwarden: David Watts and Charlotte Ellis. They were unanimously elected for a year. David was first appointed in 2017.

David proposed a vote of thanks to Helene on behalf of everyone. He said that it had been a pleasure to work alongside Helene, a caring, faithful and spiritual person; during what had proved to be a difficult year due to the effects of the Coronavirus pandemic. Maggie Guite added that Helene and David had made a good team and had provided welcome support to her.

David Parry-Smith asked what was planned for the Archdeacon visitations in the light of continuing Covid-19 restrictions. Charlotte Ellis replied that she intended to book an online service for 7<sup>th</sup> June and so would be able to start officially after that date.

*It was noted that at the March 2017 PCC meeting, members had agreed that the normal term of office for a churchwarden at St Mary's should revert to being 3 years, with the option of extending to a maximum of 6 years if wished; and still to be elected annually in line with the guidelines in the Churchwardens Measure 2001.*

### **3. MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING, SUNDAY 23<sup>RD</sup> MAY 2021**

#### **Apologies**

Jacqui Burge, Sue Filby, Jo George, Charlotte and Mark Hayes, Sarah King, John and Sue Organ, Rachel Organ, John and Sarah Thorne, Richard Tonry.

#### **Minutes**

The Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting of 11<sup>th</sup> October 2020 were accepted as a true record.

#### **Matters arising**

There were none.

**The reports presented to the meeting are summarised below and can be found on the church website [www.stmaryslinton.org.uk](http://www.stmaryslinton.org.uk). Look under Resources and APCM reports.**

# **St Mary the Virgin, Linton**

## **Parochial Church Council Report April 2020 - March 2021**

The PCC report for the delayed annual meeting held in October 2020 covered the twelve months from April 2019 - March 2020.

The Standing Committee met by Zoom on the scheduled PCC date in May 2020. The meeting was dominated by the effects of the national lockdown. The church was closed completely from late March - June 2020. It was then open only for private prayer which was also allowed during the next two lockdown periods of November 2020 and January - April 2021. The Ministry team put a lot of effort into devising ways of offering virtual worship using YouTube videos, Zoom, Facebook Live etc. Paper worship sheets were delivered to those unable to access online methods. The PCC met via Zoom for the remaining five of the six scheduled meetings during the year to March 2021. Regular agenda items included reports from the Rector and the PCC committees: Finance & Stewardship, Fabric, Children & Families and Events committees. Reports were also received from the Parish Safeguarding Officer, Ministry Team, St Mary's two Deanery Synod representatives and the Chair of Governors at Linton C E Infant School. Aspects from the seven objectives in the Mission Action Plan were included in discussions. Extending children and families ministry was a particular focus. David Parry-Smith, Lay-chair, said that conducting PCC business by Zoom had been a real challenge for members.

## **Financial Review to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020**

Income of £114,986 and expenditure of £113,929 resulted in a small surplus for the year. However, Sue Ellis, Treasurer, noted that about £6,000 of income from Gift Aid refunds and grants related to 2019 and if that were removed, the year would have ended with a deficit figure. The largest proportion of expenditure is the parish share, for clergy costs and a contribution to diocesan costs. Church running expenses and repairs were lower than 2019. Some church members had generously made one-off donations, set up standing orders or transferred to the Parish Giving Scheme which allowed regular giving to continue even when services in church were suspended. In spite of this, the income from giving was lower than in 2019. David Parry-Smith, chair of the F&S committee, said that this was not sustainable longer term as income was not covering expenditure. David asked people to consider whether they might afford to donate more to the church in recognition and thanksgiving for God's love.

The accounts were proposed, seconded and accepted by the meeting. Maggie Guite thanked Sue Ellis for her considerable skill as Treasurer. Sue Ellis proposed that Kate Sergeant be re-appointed as the independent examiner. This was seconded and agreed by the meeting.

## **Electoral Roll Report**

The report from Jo George, Electoral Roll officer, stated that three people had been removed from the Roll and three new names added so the number remained 129. The Electoral Roll was completely revised in March 2019.

## **Fabric Report**

Richard Tonry's report listed work undertaken and described a number of projects in progress. It had been difficult to liaise with contractors during lockdown periods, causing delays. Installing broadband in church was crucial to allow services to be streamed, instead of using the Rector's phone and 4G connection. Digging a trench for the phone line had been a tedious saga of missed visits and frustration. It was then expected in May 2021. The delay had also affected the Parish Council plan to resurface the churchyard paths and had caused that to be postponed. Maggie Guite thanked Fabric Committee members.

## **St Mary the Virgin, Linton**

### **Deanery Synod Report**

Andrew Gore and David Parry-Smith had been elected to represent Linton on the Deanery Synod from the APCM in October 2020 until 31<sup>st</sup> May 2023. The Synod met twice via Zoom. In addition to the ongoing business discussions about finance and other deanery matters including vacancies, one-off presentations are included. 'Getting to know you – Sharing a view of your Deanery' involved two Diocesan Development officers and allowed parishes to describe how they had adapted to the pandemic and their anticipated challenges for the future. At the second meeting, David Parry-Smith gave an update on Mental Health First Aid with a view to a group of First Aiders being set up in the deanery. Linton involvement is strong as Michael Younger continues to be Deanery Treasurer, Anne Parry-Smith acts as secretary and Andrew Gore is Lay-chair.

Two additional points were mentioned at the APCM. Andrew Gore said that the Deanery Pastoral Plan, involving consultation with each parish and benefice, had been delayed due to the pandemic. David Parry-Smith referred to the 'Living in Love and Faith' course, for which discussion groups were about to start in Linton, and said that our views would eventually feed into General Synod discussions.

### **Election of Parochial Church Council members**

Continuing members on the PCC were confirmed as:

*Elected in 2019:* Jacqui Burge, Gill Powell.

*Elected in 2020:* Sue Ellis, Sue Mudge, Patricia Scofield, Michael Younger.

Churchwardens (ex-officio): David Watts, Charlotte Ellis – replacing Helene Evans.

Richard Tonry, elected in 2018, had served the three year term of office. Jo George, Judy Nightingale (both elected 2019) and Jackie Hall (2020) also wished to resign. Another vacancy was created by Charlotte Ellis (2019) becoming churchwarden and one place had remained unfilled – giving six places.

The electoral roll number allows for up to 12 elected members. Six nominations had been received for six places: from Molly Warrington, Helene Evans, Eduardo Andrade, John Organ, Sarah King and Richard Tonry. These six people were elected to the PCC. The requirement for retiring members to stand down for at least a year had been removed from the updated Church Representation Rules 2020.

Maggie Guite thanked the retiring members for their contribution to the PCC.

### **Reports from Committees and Organisations**

Reports were included in the 2021 APCM booklet in paper form and on the website. In addition photos of activities were submitted and presented on the screen in church during the meeting. They were received from the following groups:

Beacon Youth Trust; Bell ringers; Events committee; Flower ministry, Linton C E Infant School; Church links with Linton Heights Junior School; Children and Families ministry; Together with God and Space for the Spirit services; Mothers Union; Music Ministry; Pastoral group; The Friends of St. Mary's; The Monday Gang.

Additional comments were made and some questions taken from those present at the meeting.

Michael Younger had concerns about the Beacon Youth Trust in light of another change of youth worker. He wondered how the work could be made more prominent, wondered if we had rather a low profile as a church, suggested more involvement may be necessary, queried whether any needs were not being met and encouraged people to pray for a suitable

## **St Mary the Virgin, Linton**

replacement. In response Maggie Guite said that affordable housing in the area remained an issue. David Watts said that the Trust had now acquired the building in the recreation ground, formerly Linton Action for Youth (LA4Y) and it was well placed to reach a particular section of the community in line with the Parish Council funding. The Trust is grateful for the Romsey Mill partnership which should help recruit another youth worker and also cover some of the work in the meantime. Gill Powell requested that another Trustee be sought from St Mary's when Maggie Guite leaves.

David Parry-Smith enquired why the Infant School budget had decreased. Michael Younger, as a governor, explained that the budget is allocated according to numbers of children. The number of children in Year 1 is fewer than normal with only 48 in the year group; yet the school has an experienced group of staff and incurs the same costs. Funding levels for state schools in Cambridgeshire have been much lower than other areas for years, in spite of repeated representation to governments. Michael suggested that demographics used were not always up to date and that people could write to the MP.

Michael Younger noted that there were reports published in the APCM booklet from 14 different areas of activity. He thanked Sue Mudge, PCC secretary, for compiling the document and also the people who wrote those reports, which he said demonstrated great commitment and spirituality from relatively few numbers of people.

### **Rector's Report**

Maggie Guite's report was published on the website alongside the APCM report.

In her spoken report Maggie wished to thank all those involved in church life, who are too many to name, but include the churchwardens, ministry team, clergy and LLM colleagues. The October 2020 APCM was 7 months after lockdown started. Recent months have demonstrated plenty of community engagement which necessitated learning new skills in order to offer worship on a variety of platforms. Maggie thanked everyone for showing a great spirit of 'carrying on', for resilience and forward thinking. The Community Help Team filled an immediate need in the village along with Sarah Thorne's Children and Families work, including delivering Boxes of Hope and preparing for Linton Make Lunch Club.

Entering a Vacancy will inevitably create more work for some but Vacancies can be a time of growth. The last six years have developed the 'Church in the Community, Community in the Church' vision. Life in the Spirit is all about connecting – connecting with God, connecting with each other and with the whole human community, and connecting more deeply with Creation in which the Spirit moves and breathes. Maggie ended with the plea 'Let's keep on keeping on in faith, hope and love, and show appreciation for each other as we do so.'

There were no questions for Maggie.

In conclusion, David Watts thanked Maggie on behalf of church members. It was her last APCM in Linton and as a Rector, following a peculiar year of great strain. It was Maggie's responsibility to shepherd us through it, using her ministry motivated by love for all people, shaped by a deep awareness of the fragility of human nature. Plans are being developed for Maggie's last service on 4<sup>th</sup> July and a social occasion on 23<sup>rd</sup> July. David thanked Malcolm Guite for his ministry to us and also thanked the other clergy and LLM people who lead services.

The meeting ended in prayer at 12.35.

## St Mary the Virgin, Linton

### 4. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL 2021 - 2022

#### Administrative Information

St Mary's Church is situated in Church Lane, Linton. It is part of the Diocese of Ely within the Church of England. The correspondence address is 4 Bakers Lane, Linton, Cambridge, CB21 4NF. The registered charity number is 1138508.

PCC members who have served from the APCM in May 2021 until this report are:

<i>Incumbent</i>	Vacancy - The Revd Canon Dr Maggie Guite retired in July 2021 The Revd Michael Wilcockson, Curate from July 2019, Associate Priest November 2021	
<i>Churchwardens</i>	Charlotte Ellis David Watts	
<i>Licensed Lay Ministers (LLMs)</i>	Sarah Thorne Cathy Watts	Children and Families Minister Safeguarding Officer
<i>Representatives to the Deanery Synod</i>	Andrew Gore David Parry-Smith	from October 2020 - 31.05.23 from October 2020 - 31.05.23
<i>Elected members</i>	Eduardo Andrade Jacqui Burge Sue Ellis Helene Evans Sarah King Sue Mudge John Organ Gill Powell Patricia Schofield Richard Tonry Molly Warrington Michael Younger	from APCM 2021 (left Linton/resigned) from APCM 2019 from APCM 2020 - Treasurer from APCM 2021 from APCM 2021 from APCM 2020 - Secretary from APCM 2021 from APCM 2019 from APCM 2020 from APCM 2021 from APCM 2021 from APCM 2020

#### Structure, governance and management

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules, updated in 2020. All church attendees are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC.

#### Objectives and activities

The PCC of St Mary the Virgin has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. It also has maintenance responsibilities for St Mary's Church and for the Pavilion adjacent to the church.

#### Numerical performance in 2021 - 2022

With the gradual easing of Covid restrictions throughout 2021, more people have returned to church. This is reflected in the numbers attending major festivals. At Easter roughly 70 people attended services over the Easter Eve and Easter Day. Numbers at Christmas Eve and



## St Mary the Virgin, Linton

Christmas Day were more than double what they had been the previous year with a significant number of new faces.

Our regular services have shown some improvement. The Sunday 8am congregation is back in size to what it was pre-pandemic. The 10am service has seen some growth in numbers with new faces but is still below pre-pandemic levels in size, a feature seen in many churches. In some instances we know that this is because individuals are clinically vulnerable and still shielding; in others age, time and restricted social interaction has produced a frailty which makes them unable to be with us. For these people the paper service copies and Zoom services are a tremendous boon. Thursday communions draw a faithful, regular number but not as large as previously. It has been a joy to resume our regular infant school services and return to regular communions at Nicholls Court. Services in Symonds House have yet to be restarted on a regular basis. Evening prayer on Fridays brings in a faithful few to reflect after the end of the working week.

### **Review of the year to April 2022**

Extensive changes to our lives were experienced in the previous year due to the pandemic. Three separate lockdown periods and varying Covid-19 restrictions impacted on worship, church life and all other aspects of our being. Thanks to a good national vaccination programme, restrictions have gradually been eased since last May, in line with government and Church of England guidance, but life for many people is not yet back to how it was at the start of 2020. The omicron variant caused some concern in the winter. Covid measures were discussed at each PCC meeting and opinions expressed about appropriate actions.

Most aspects of worship have now been reinstated as face to face with the Sunday 10am service also being offered by Zoom. Printed worship information is still hand-delivered to around 20 households for use at home. Most church committees and planning groups continued to meet by Zoom throughout the year but recent meetings have been in person and generally welcomed by the participants. Covid restrictions were lifted nationally in late February. More chairs were replaced in the nave which had the advantage in creating the space for the children's area to be refurbished. Good ventilation was still maintained in the church and mask wearing became a personal choice; although we were still encouraged to be sensitive to other people's needs and concerns.

We were sad to say farewell to Revd. Canon Dr Maggie Guite in July, upon her retirement as Rector. Malcolm Guite also conducted a number of regular services for St Mary's and I certainly miss his sonnets which concluded his sermons. Maggie's last service was a very joyful celebration, organised outdoors to allow singing as well as maintaining social distancing. Even the heavy rain shower part way through did not detract too much from the celebratory atmosphere. An evening picnic in the churchyard later in July was well attended and enabled us to present Maggie with a number of gifts from the Team to show our appreciation of her ministry and to wish her and Malcolm a happy retirement.

Moving into **the Vacancy** presented an ongoing challenge of finding clergy to cover all the services. David Watts has been able to plan ahead and book visiting priests, including Archdeacon Alex, Bishop Dagmar and Bishop Stephen. We are especially grateful to Michael Wilcockson who has taken several services each month, including a range of additional services for Remembrance, the Advent / Christmas period and Easter time. Michael started the year as Curate and was licensed as Associate Priest by Archdeacon Alex in November.

## St Mary the Virgin, Linton

The PCC had five scheduled meetings and the Standing committee met or had email correspondence between PCC dates, to deal with specific items. Reports from committees were received at each meeting and the function and responsibilities of the PCC were carried out even though church life was in some respects still not normal. Various aspects of the seven objectives of The Mission Action Plan (adopted in 2017) are embedded within different PCC agenda items. However, lack of face to face meetings and disruption experienced by external businesses meant that some projects were slow to progress, particularly those related to the fabric of the church.

The PCC set up a sub-group at the July meeting to consider and compile ideas for the **Parish Profile**; the document used to inform and attract candidates interested in applying to be the new Rector. The five Team PCCs wrote their own part and Molly Warrington very nobly offered to put the whole document together, which then had to be approved by each PCC before sending it to Archdeacon Alex. The churchwardens provided information about the vacancy and appointment process at each subsequent PCC meeting.

Sarah Thorne and the **Children and Families** team have continued to engage with a number of local families who experience food poverty in school holidays. Boxes of hope were delivered when social restrictions were in force but the Linton Make Lunch Club has been able to meet weekly during holidays since last summer. This and other activities are described in section 9.7 and fund raising to support the ministry is ongoing.

The **Finance and Stewardship** committee monitors income and expenditure throughout the year and prepares the budget which is submitted for PCC approval in November. We are grateful to Sue Ellis, treasurer, for her work in keeping the accounts up to date and providing the appropriate information to the PCC. Maintaining and encouraging regular giving from church members is a particular concern and the role of stewardship officer is still vacant. We were grateful to people for the response to the Giving Day held in June. Inevitably, loyal supporters move away or die and newer members may not appreciate the amount of expenditure which is beyond our control. Regular giving including gift aid refunds does not currently cover the regular expenditure. We can dip into reserves in the short term but ultimately this situation cannot be sustained and the chance to develop other initiatives and areas of mission is limited. We achieved a small surplus this year due to generous additional donations and legacies. See section 5 for the Financial Review.

Every PCC meeting includes a report from **Cathy Watts, Safeguarding Officer**. All PCC members are required to be DBS checked and have taken online training. The PCC upholds the House of Bishops policies of 'Promoting a Safer Church' and 'Protecting all God's Children'. The Ely Diocesan website has an extensive safeguarding section. It includes a Parish Dashboard which gives excellent advice and allows us to ensure that we are compliant with current policies and procedures. The Dashboard uses a 'RAG' rating system – Red for urgent action, Amber for items in hand and Green for actions which have been accomplished. There is safeguarding information on the home page of St Mary's website and also displayed in church.

Consideration of worship and spiritual matters is informed by the **Rector's report** (pre-vacancy) and **Ministry Team** report. Weekday Advent Promise and Passiontide Promise services took place online. Advent and Lent study groups were a mixed offering of online or in person. Maggie instigated a number of groups last summer to study the 'Living in Love and Faith' course, as recommended by the Diocese and part of a national church initiative. It

## St Mary the Virgin, Linton

raises some big questions about diversity and inclusivity within the church, looks at interpretation of Bible teaching, considers secular views and challenges our individual opinions. These are ongoing themes; supported by a sermon from Michael Wilcockson in the autumn and questionnaires completed by members with the results posted on the website. We say that we aim to be an inclusive church in the Parish Profile but what does that mean in practice and how do we demonstrate it?

Nicola Collard, **Chair of Governors at Linton C E Infant School**, submits a termly report to PCC meetings to inform members of school events and progress. Sue Filby resigned as a Foundation Governor when her term of office ended in the autumn and her place was filled by Katherine Croxall. The other Foundation Governors are Jacqui Burge, Hannah Foote, Moire Jarritt, Cathy Watts, Michael Wilcockson and Michael Younger. We nominate 8 Foundation Governors out of the total of 14 school governors. The PCC is very grateful to these people for their contribution to the governance and upholding the Christian ethos of our church school. See also section 9.5.

The **Fabric** committee reports on necessary repairs to the church building and pavilion in the short term as well as prepares proposals for longer term projects. The PCC is grateful to The Friends of St Mary's, a separate charity which funds a high proportion of the church repair and improvement work. See sections 7 and 9.13.

Reports are received from the two **Deanery Synod** representatives to inform PCC members of views and events within the wider area of the Granta Deanery. See section 8 for more information.

The PCC is grateful to the **Events committee** - see section 9.3. The committee continues to organise a variety of social activities such as the popular monthly Saturday coffee mornings, as well as making an invaluable contribution by providing hospitality after special services.

We commend Sue Filby for completing an ALM course in pastoral ministry, with particular emphasis for older people. We are currently very fortunate to have such a strong Ministry Team, in its widest sense, able to lead all aspects of our worship, guide us in our 'Rooted in God, Rooted in Community' vision and who do so largely without financial payment. We thank you for your care, love and time.

Sue Mudge  
PCC Secretary

## St Mary the Virgin, Linton

### 5. FINANCIAL REVIEW TO 31<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER 2021

#### Independent Examiner's Report to the PCC of St Mary's, Linton

This report on the accounts of the PCC for the year ended 31 December 2021, is in respect of an examination carried out in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 ("the Regulations") and s.43 of the Charities Act 1993 ("the Act").

#### Respective responsibilities of the PCC and the Examiner

As members of the PCC you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts; you consider that the audit requirement of the Regulations and section 43(2) of the Act do not apply. It is my responsibility to issue this report on those accounts in accordance with the terms of the Regulations.

#### Basis of this report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 43(7)(b) of the Act and to be found in the Church guidance, SORP 2005 edition, issued by the Finance Division of the Archbishops' Council. That examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the PCC and a comparison of the accounts with those records. It also includes considering any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

#### Independent Examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements – to keep accounting records in accordance with section 41 of the Act; and – to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the requirements of the Act and the Regulations have not been met; or
2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Kate Sargent

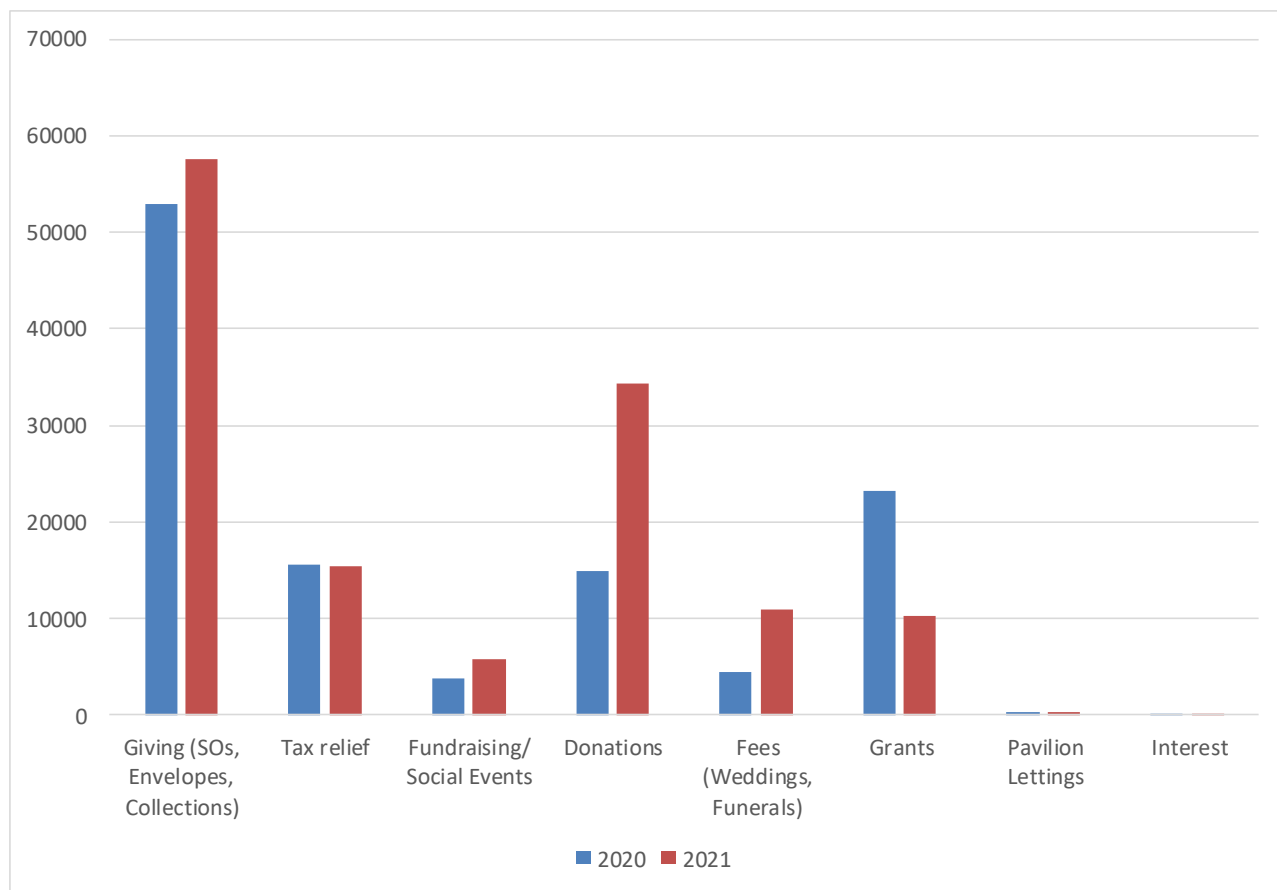
28/2/2022

## St Mary the Virgin, Linton

### Where does the money come from?

In 2021 St Mary's received a total of £134,381.10. A substantial part of this was the result of our gift day which not only brought in one off donations but encouraged regular givers to review their giving. Two legacies were also received this year. In addition income was increased by four weddings this year, a collection for Revd. Canon Maggie Guite on her retirement and various fund raising events. Grants include funds from the Parish Council, the Anderson Trust and the Friends of St Mary's.

**Income: £134,381.10**



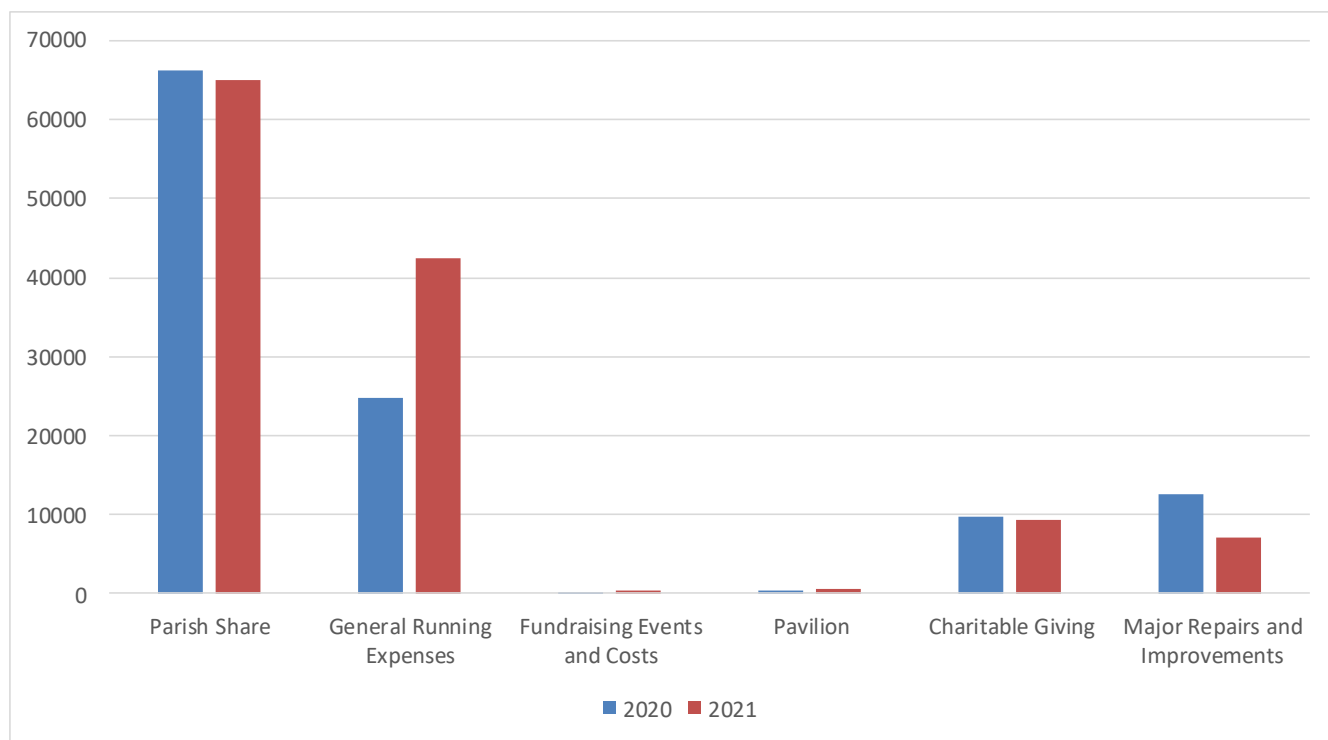
### Where does the money go?

Total expenditure during the year was £124,726.89

As the chart below shows, the most significant part of expenditure goes on the Parish Share, which was £65,032.83. As in previous years, the PCC (in line with the majority of other parishes in the Deanery) is committed to paying the Share in full, principally because otherwise the Diocese would not provide us with a full-time Team Rector and House for Duty Team Vicar. During 2021, Wi-Fi has been put in the Church allowing services to be Zoomed, Smart water has been applied to the roof, a new notice board placed at the top of Church Lane, quotes obtained to improve the Church lighting. Apart from this the Children and Families team have been busy raising funds which have been allocated to their ministry, notably the Make Lunch scheme and earlier in the year Boxes of Hope.

## St Mary the Virgin, Linton

Expenditure: £124,726.89



In budgeting beyond the Ministry Share, the PCC continues to prioritise expenditure on:

- providing a welcoming and well-maintained space for services;
- supporting the valuable work undertaken with Linton's young people, through the Beacon Youth Trust;
- providing administrative support, to free up time for the incumbent to spend on pastoral activities;
- maintaining the Pavilion as both a meeting space and an asset;
- as a reflection of God's generous giving to us, giving back a proportion of income to those in need;
- developing initiatives related to the Mission Action Plan.

### Summary

The final accounts for 2021 show a surplus. However, as this is due to receiving legacies there is no room to be complacent. Every donation however big or small is important to keep the finances of the Church afloat. Day to day running expenses of the Church continue to be kept to a minimum, however we do have a significant Parish Share to pay and there is a responsibility to keep the Church in good repair.

### Reserves Policy

In 2021, the PCC continued with a reserves policy; retaining a sum of £22,500 for urgent repairs and as contingency cover.

# **St Mary the Virgin, Linton**

## **Financial Statements**

The financial statements which follow comprise:

- A statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) for the year, showing all resources made available to the PCC and all expenditure incurred by it, and reconciling changes to funds.
- A return of Parish Finance which shows the same information but gives a breakdown of income and expenditure.
- A Balance Sheet showing assets, liabilities and funds.

## **Accounting Policies**

These accounts have been prepared under the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 and in accordance with the Charities SORP (2005) and applicable standards. The PCC is registered with the Charity Commission under the name of The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of St Mary the Virgin, Linton, Diocese of Ely, charity registration number 1138508.

# St Mary the Virgin, Linton

## St Mary's Linton Statement of Financial Activities

For the period from 01 January 2021 to 31 December 2021

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Prior year total funds
<b>Incoming resources</b>					
Incoming resources from generated funds					
Voluntary income	116,425	1,010	—	117,435	106,354
Activities for generating funds	5,705	—	—	5,705	3,798
Investment income	6	0	—	6	59
Incoming resources from charitable activities	11,233	—	—	11,233	4,726
Other incoming resources	—	—	—	—	—
<b>Total incoming resources</b>	<b>133,370</b>	<b>1,010</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>134,381</b>	<b>114,937</b>
<b>Resources used</b>					
Cost of generating funds	91	—	—	91	—
Cost of generating voluntary income	—	—	—	—	—
Fundraising trading cost of goods sold and other costs	232	—	—	232	247
Charitable activities	123,386	1,016	—	124,402	113,681
Governance costs	—	—	—	—	—
<b>Total resources used</b>	<b>123,710</b>	<b>1,016</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>124,726</b>	<b>113,929</b>
<b>Net incoming / outgoing resources before transfer</b>	<b>9,660</b>	<b>( 6)</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>9,654</b>	<b>1,008</b>
<b>Transfers</b>					
Gross transfers between funds - in	4,628	—	—	4,628	—
Gross transfers between funds - out	( 3,094)	( 1,533)	—	( 4,628)	—
<b>Net incoming / outgoing before other gains / losses</b>	<b>11,194</b>	<b>( 1,540)</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>9,654</b>	<b>1,008</b>
<b>Other recognised gains / losses</b>					
Gains / losses on investment assets	—	—	—	—	2,929
Gains on revaluation, fixed assets, charity's own use	—	—	—	—	—
<b>Net movement in funds</b>	<b>11,194</b>	<b>( 1,540)</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>9,654</b>	<b>3,938</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>					
<b>Total funds brought forward</b>	<b>79,588</b>	<b>6,171</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>85,759</b>	<b>81,821</b>
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>	<b>90,782</b>	<b>4,631</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>95,414</b>	<b>85,759</b>



## St Mary the Virgin, Linton

### Return of Parish Finance for year ending 31 December 2021

	2021 £	2020 £
<b>Incoming Resources</b>		
<b>Voluntary Income</b>		
Tax efficient planned giving		
Gift Aid - Bank	49,793.89	44,856.58
Gift Aid - Envelopes	1,220.00	1,745.00
Total tax efficient planned giving	51,013.89	46,601.58
Other planned giving	4,596.80	2,789.00
Loose plate collections	1,951.83	3,516.01
Regular Gift Days	6,106.00	1,500.00
Giving through church boxes	518.26	199.25
One off Gift Aid gifts	5,795.00	2,489.31
Donations, appeals, etc (note 1)	5,901.05	3,183.48
Tax recovered through Gift Aid (note 2)	15,373.56	15,486.85
Legacies	16,000.00	7,500.00
Non-recurring one off grants (note 3)	10,178.89	23,136.82
<b>Total for voluntary income</b>	<b>117,435.28</b>	<b>106,402.30</b>
<b>Activities for Generating Funds</b>		
Other funds generated (note 4)	2,572.62	1,340.03
Summer Event		
Christmas Events	885.15	265.05
Social Events (note 5)	2,247.43	2,193.10
<b>Total for Activities for Generating Funds</b>	<b>5,705.20</b>	<b>3,798.18</b>
Bank and building society interest	6.87	59.27
<b>Church Activities</b>		
Fees for weddings and funerals	10,908.00	4,420.00
Pavilion lettings	325.75	306.00
<b>Total for Church Activities</b>	<b>11,233.75</b>	<b>4,726.00</b>
<b>Total for Incoming Resources</b>	<b>134,381.10</b>	<b>114,985.75</b>

# St Mary the Virgin, Linton

## Return of Parish Finance for year ending 31 December 2021

Resources Expended	2021 £	2020 £
<b>Costs of Generating Funds</b>		
Summer Event Costs		
Christmas Event Costs	91.83	
Costs of Social Events (note 6)	232.38	247.90
<b>Total for costs of Generating Funds</b>	<b>324.21</b>	<b>247.90</b>
<b>All Mission Giving and Charitable Grants &amp; Donations (note 7)</b>		
Giving to missionary societies	718.50	895.50
Secular Charities	1,785.30	1,593.14
Youthinc	300.00	300.00
The Beacon Youth Trust	6,500.04	7,041.71
<b>Total for All Mission Giving etc</b>	<b>9,303.84</b>	<b>9,830.35</b>
<b>Church Activities</b>		
Parish Share	65,032.83	66,206.93
Salaries (note 8)	11,373.11	7,523.76
<b>Expenses (clergy, pastoral staff, etc)</b>		
Working expenses of Incumbent	480.00	480.00
Rector's telephone	52.50	90.00
Education (note 9)	3,182.66	663.19
<b>Total for Expenses</b>	<b>3,715.16</b>	<b>1,233.19</b>
Parish Training and mission	48.00	423.27
<b>Regular Church running expenses (insurance, cleaning, admin)</b>		
Visiting speakers/ locum	149.20	
Church running - insurance	3,359.76	3,270.59
Organ / piano tuning	0.00	105.00
Church telephone/Wi-Fi	2,394.50	
Church maintenance	5,115.32	1,438.70
Cleaning	0.00	292.02
Upkeep of services (note 10)	10,156.98	5,745.84
Upkeep of churchyard (note 11)	45.50	74.75
Administration (note 12)	2,224.37	1,093.70
Flowers (note 13)	257.60	31.73
<b>Total for Regular Church running expenses</b>	<b>23,703.23</b>	<b>12,052.33</b>

## St Mary the Virgin, Linton

<b>Resources Expended</b>	<b>2021 £</b>	<b>2020 £</b>
<b>Church utility bills (gas, electricity, water)</b>		
Church running - electric	647.28	821.11
Church running - gas	2,830.75	2,675.76
Church running - water	41.84	32.12
<b>Total for Church utility bills</b>	<b>3,519.87</b>	<b>3,528.99</b>
	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>
<b>Costs of trading Pavilion</b>		
Pavilion running - electricity	259.67	155.90
Pavilion running – maintenance (note 14)	358.59	99.00
Pavilion running - water	41.84	32.11
<b>Total for Costs of trading</b>	<b>660.04</b>	<b>287.01</b>
<b>Total for Church Activities</b>	<b>92,457.84</b>	<b>91,255.48</b>
<b>Total for Resources Expended</b>	<b>108,052.24</b>	<b>101,333.73</b>
<b>Major Capital Expenditure</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>
Church major repairs	6,752.41	12,595.32
Peace Garden	294.19	
<b>Total for Major Capital Expenditure</b>	<b>7,046.60</b>	<b>12,595.32</b>
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>124,726.89</b>	<b>113,929.05</b>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>134,381.10</b>	<b>114,985.75</b>
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>124,726.89</b>	<b>113,929.05</b>
<b>Balance</b>	<b>9,654.21</b>	<b>1,056.70</b>

# St Mary the Virgin, Linton

## Balance sheet (Summary)

As of: 31 December 2021

	2021 £	2020 £
<b>Fixed assets</b>		
Pavilion (note 15)	500	500
Investments (note 16)	10,000	52,586
	<u>10,500</u>	<u>53,086</u>
<b>Current assets</b>		
Cash at bank and in hand	95,672	38,205
	<u>95,672</u>	<u>38,205</u>
<b>Liabilities</b> (note 17)		
LCHT	6,510.14	5,483
Linton Parish Charities	4,250.00	
	<u></u>	<u></u>
<b>Net current assets less current liabilities</b>	<u><b>84,911</b></u>	<u><b>32,721</b></u>
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>	<u><b>95,411</b></u>	<u><b>85,807</b></u>
<b>Total net assets less liabilities</b>	<u><b>95,411</b></u>	<u><b>85,807</b></u>
<b>Represented by</b>		
<b>Unrestricted</b>		
Unrestricted - General fund	41,472	44,640
<b>Designated</b>		
Designated - Contingency	22,500	22,500
Designated - Mission Action Plan	10,722	10,722
Designated - Pavilion (note 15)	500	500
Designated -Children and family ministry (note 18)	15,587	1,273
<b>Restricted</b>		
Restricted - Anderson Trust	757	1,973
Restricted - Bells	1,412	1,412
Restricted - Churchyard (note 19)	344	383
Restricted - Music	2,117	2,117
Restricted - Peace Garden		285
	<u></u>	<u></u>
<b>Funds of the church</b>	<u><b>95,411</b></u>	<u><b>85,807</b></u>

# **St Mary the Virgin, Linton**

## **Notes to Financial Statements**

### **Return of Parish Finance**

1. Donations include £190 received from the Historic Churches Trust for the ride and stride event, monies given through the Good Box but mostly comprises donations for our Children and Families Ministry work.
2. The figure is similar to last year although £1,816.59 of the tax recovered last year related to 2019 so it does reflect our increased gift giving.
3. Grants received this year are £1,010 from the Anderson Trust. £2,177 from the Parish Council, £500 from Cambridgeshire County Council Covid enabler, £200 from Transforming Lives for Good; all for the Make Lunch scheme. £6,005 from the Friends of St Mary's for works identified by the Quinquennial Inspection, mainly for architect's fees and the lighting project. £286.53 from the listed places of worship grant scheme which is a grant for the VAT element of eligible works carried out by the Church.
4. The income from other funds generated includes £188.34 from 'Give as you Live' and £32.59 from Amazon smile. This year it received funds for Maggie Guite's leaving gift and from the Children and Families sale. Specifically, the table top sale raised £382.79 for the refurbishment of the children's area in Church.
5. Social events include refreshments after services as well events organised by the Events Committee such as the Zoom Quiz, Malcolm Guite's Zoom evening, the photo quiz, the Vintage Tea, and our new monthly coffee mornings.
6. This relates to the cost of refreshments after services which are covered by donations and the cost of hiring the Village Hall for the Remembrance Day refreshments.
7. Charitable giving this year includes £693.25 to USPG including Maggie's garage sale, £500 to Haverhill Foodbank, £300 to Youthinc, £25 to Friends of the Holy Land, £136.80 to the Royal British Legion and £1,148.50 to Cambridge Refugee Resettlement Campaign. In addition, £6,500.04 has been given to support the work of the Beacon Youth Trust.
8. Salaries relates to payments made to our organists and parish administrator. It also includes an honorarium for the enormous amount of work carried by our Children and Families Minister.
9. Education includes our usual expenses incurred by Messy Church, SMYG, resources for Baptism and Activity Bags and Year 6 books. However, this year it also includes expenses for the Boxes of Hope and Make Lunch costs.
10. Upkeep of services includes fees paid to Ely and Non-Stipendiary priests for taking weddings and funerals. In 2021 this was £6,674. It includes the leaving gift for Maggie raised by donations from the congregations of the Team Churches. Subtracting these sums means the cost of running our services in Church is £2282.98 (2020: £2,230.51).

## St Mary the Virgin, Linton

11. Upkeep of Churchyard is from money held for the Monday Gang.
12. Administration costs have increased due to the annual Zoom fee and purchase of a new Good Box.
13. Flowers costs have largely been covered by separate collections and the generosity of the flower arrangers; however oasis has been purchased and also some flowers this year.
14. Pavilion maintenance is largely due to expenses for protecting and treating the outside of the Pavilion which has been undertaken by Andrew Gore and other volunteers.

### **Balance Sheet**

15. Pavilion at cost £77,031. This has been depreciated over the last 10 years and is shown at a nominal value of £500.
16. Investments: The sterling bond fund was repaid in full. A new investment of £10,000 was made in December into The CBF Church of England Investment Fund - Accumulation Shares. The value at 31/12/21 was £10,099.96.
17. Liabilities represents funds we are holding for the Linton Community Help Team and Linton Parish Charities.
18. The Children & Families Ministry is money donated specifically for Children and Families Ministry.
19. The Parish Council gave us £500 in 2020 to cover on going expenses of the Monday Gang.

Sue Ellis, Treasurer

## **6. ELECTORAL ROLL REPORT**

The Electoral Roll is the Parish Church's register of electors, who are therefore qualified to attend and vote at the Annual Parish Church meeting where the elections take place for membership of the Parish Church Council, and the Deanery Synod.

Last year the number on the Roll was 129. Four people have been taken off and one has been added, giving a new figure of 126.

You can be added to the Electoral Roll if you have been baptised, and are over 16, and either 'live in the parish', 'live outside the parish and have attended St Mary's for six months' or 'are a member in good standing of another church and have attended St Mary's for six months'.

If you would like to be added to the Electoral Roll or have any questions, please do contact me - [JoGeorge68@aol.com](mailto:JoGeorge68@aol.com)

Jo George - Electoral Roll Officer

# **St Mary the Virgin, Linton**

## **7. FABRIC REPORT**

The Fabric Committee met in June 2021 and January 2022.

### **Works to the fabric of the church**

There have been no works to the fabric since the last APCM, pending the post-Quinquennial Inspection works and redecoration due to happen this year.

### **Fixed installations and services**

Kershaw continued with the heating system maintenance contract. We have had a run of problems since they identified the need for a replacement pressure vessel in mid-January, then detected a fault with the boiler alarm system, then a problem with one of the boilers firing mechanism which was not identified when the system was serviced in mid-February. The problem was not finally fixed until 23<sup>rd</sup> March. It may be coincidental, but the company went into Administration on 1<sup>st</sup> April and it has been purchased from the Administrator by N G Bailey. It remains to be seen whether they will be able to provide the required level of service.

The broadband cabling was eventually installed, and the Wi-Fi installation is working, but needs enhancement for streaming some services.

The roof alarm system continues to work as expected. The only notifications received continue to be because of minor power cuts.

The contract for the fire security installations has been maintained.

### **Church furnishings**

The only change in furnishings since the last APCM has been the re-ordering of the Children's Area in the south aisle with new furniture. The old storage units have been relocated to inside the north door for kneeler storage

It is planned to replace some of the remaining pews with chairs similar to those in the nave. This and other elements of the proposed re-ordering, such as the provision of a new oak storage area in the north aisle, will be contingent on finance and Diocesan Advisory Committee approval.

### **The Pavilion**

Preparatory work for the external redecoration of the pavilion was carried out by volunteers organised by Andrew Gore during the autumn of 2021. It is hoped that actual redecoration can be carried out during 2022.

The Events Committee has investigated the cost of replacing the Pavilion kitchen. The estimate received was quite high, so a compromise initially will be to replace the current faulty cooker with a tall cabinet containing double ovens. An alternative quote will also be obtained.

The new bench and repairs to the arbour in the Peace Garden have been completed. We remain grateful to Glynis Younger and her group of volunteers for maintaining the area.

### **The Churchyard**

The resurfacing of the paths in the Churchyard, by Parish Council contractors, has been further delayed by Covid as the contractors due to carry out the work in February half-term went down with the disease. We await a revised date,

We are grateful to the Monday Gang for their continuing commitment and care of the churchyard.

## **St Mary the Virgin, Linton**

### **Other land**

As reported to the 2021 APCM, the land between Church Cottage and the previous Rectory was retained by the Diocesan Board of Finance when the Rectory building was sold. Andrew Gore has obtained quotes for resurfacing the section of Church Lane and works to the parking area. The PCC has agreed that Andrew should negotiate with the Diocese on funding of this work.

The notice board at the top of Church Lane outside the Infant School has been replaced by a metal unit. The wooden 'To Linton Church' sign has been refurbished and repainted.

### **Relationship with the Friends**

We are grateful to the Friends for funding the Architect's fees in relation to the tender specification preparation for the QI works, redecoration, and re-lighting. The Friends have agreed to underwrite the considerable cost of the QI works, redecoration and re-lighting, but expect the PCC to apply for any grant funding that may be available towards the cost.

### **Future work.**

Henry Freeland, the Church's architect, prepared a specification for the QI works to allow tenders to be invited and included the internal redecoration of the Church and the cabling and installation of the new lighting system. Tenders were received at the end of last year, and we are awaiting approval of a Faculty application from the DAC for the lighting scheme. It is hoped that the QI works, redecoration and re-lighting can be carried out this summer.

The PCC agreed to appoint Freeland Reece Roberts to carry out a feasibility study for the proposed kitchenette/servery, as the Fabric Committee had been unable to match the conflicting demands of this with the need for flower arrangers' storage etc. Henry Freeland visited the Church on 1<sup>st</sup> March and was briefed by Richard Tonry and David Watts. He was quite positive that he would be able to propose a satisfactory solution, and we hope to have his proposal prior to the May PCC meeting.

Richard Tonry.

Chairman, Fabric Committee, on behalf of the Churchwardens

## **8. DEANERY SYNOD REPORT**

The Granta Deanery Synod has met three times in the last 12 months. David Parry-Smith and I have continued to represent St Mary's on Synod.

The July Synod included a presentation by Sarah Jorgenson from Hope Into Action, a Christian charity established by Ed Walker, formerly of Shudy Camps. The charity helps churches and potential investors from their congregations acquire homes for families or individuals with difficult backgrounds or particular needs. As yet the charity has not worked with groups of rural churches to jointly fund the purchase of suitable property, but we hope that may change in the future.

In November, the Deanery hosted an open meeting with Dr Eeva John, Enabling Officer for Living in Love and Faith in which she discussed the purpose and process of the project and the resources available.

At the November Synod Rev Julie Norris, former rector of the Granta Vale group of parishes, spoke about Ethical Perspectives on Creating, Storing and Using Embryos, the issue she is currently researching. This provoked a lively and searching discussion.



## **St Mary the Virgin, Linton**

Our March Synod was entirely a business meeting. Synod assessed progress in the Living in Love and Faith process. It was apparent that only a minority of parishes, including Linton, had engaged with the project. We hope to encourage more parishes to do so before the matter comes to the General Synod next year. Synod also reviewed progress with the proposed Deanery Mental Health First Aid project and Youth Inc., the charity which seeks to make provision for work with young people in the smaller parishes which do not have their own youth provision. The charity has seen a good measure of success, although the post of part-time youth worker is currently vacant. The money raised from the first Deanery Fair since 2019 was applied to Youth Inc's work.

The next Synod will be at Bartlow on 6 July where we hope Mike Kelly, the Diocesan Youth and Families Development Officer will be speaking. Anyone can attend Deanery Synod as an observer, and we particularly welcome people who wish to hear and engage with our guest speakers. There is no obligation to remain for the business part of the Synod.

Bishop Stephen visited the Deanery Chapter and spoke to clergy and lay ministers about the Deanery Development process and Bishop Dagmar came to Linton for a Saturday morning meeting at which she discussed it with lay people from the Deanery. This is a very important process as it will shape mission and ministry not only in the Deanery but in the Diocese as a whole for at least the next decade. Every parish will be directly involved in the process.

Despite Covid, giving at both the Granta Deanery and wider Diocesan levels has held up surprisingly well. In our own Deanery all parishes, apart from Great Shelford and some of the smaller parishes in the Granta Vale group, were able to pay their full parish share in 2021. However, the Deanery's contribution towards the cost of the Great Shelford clergy post in exchange for some lay ministerial training at Deanery level by the incumbent has been terminated as it was funded from the rebate the Deanery received from the Diocese in exchange for 100% payment of parish share.

The increase in parish share will be greater next year as its main element is clergy stipends and other direct clergy costs which will have to reflect inflation. This makes it even more important that anyone who still makes regular giving by envelope or standing order switches to the Parish Giving Scheme. It also makes our St Mary's Treasurer's life easier.

Last, but by no means least, Rev Simon Talbott, who had been our Rural Dean for 6 years, was appointed Bishop Stephen's Senior Chaplain, running his private office as well as undertaking various ministerial tasks. I was pleased that Bishop Stephen invited Rev Michael Wilcockson to succeed Simon and even more pleased that Michael accepted the invitation. Despite all the Deanery's current officers being Lintonians, we do assure the rest of the Deanery that it is not a Linton takeover. The next Deanery event is the Deanery Ascension service on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> May, at St Mary the Virgin, Linton. Make of those last two sentences what you will.

Andrew Gore

Deanery Synod representative for Linton and Deanery Lay Chair.

## **St Mary the Virgin, Linton**

### **9. REPORTS FROM GROUPS AND ACTIVITIES**

The following are reports from Church activities, including some services. Thanks to all those who have contributed reports. The text has been left in the original style provided by the author. The named individual can provide further information about any aspect.

#### **9.1. BEACON YOUTH TRUST REPORT**

The following is an extract from the BYT end of year report.

'The Global Pandemic caused so much disruption across the World leaving most people and organisations uncertain about the future. This financial year 2021/2022 started with daily adjustments following the government's guidelines. Young people being among the most vulnerable population meant that the need and demand for the only youth work provision in Linton village was greater than usual. With limited resources and only a small team to deliver, it has been a very challenging year for The Beacon Youth Trust.

Beginning of April 2021 saw restrictions being eased. Youth workers slowly introduced face to face activities following the government's guidelines, starting with outdoor Monday football and 2 youth clubs. As time progressed the young people were able to have other special events like movie nights, baking and some fun trips.

The full time Youth Worker, Lizzie, left in May 2021. Young people were involved in the planning and recruitment of a new full time Youth Worker while the other team members worked hard to keep things going and made sure that young people still had support and their youth clubs.

A new full time youth worker, Cynthia Mukoko, was appointed in November 2021. This presented an opportunity to rebuild the Linton village youth provision with more consistency and capacity to do more. She has been able to continue building existing relationships and new relationships. Collaborations and partnerships have been formed with local schools, Churches and community groups.

Youth clubs have increased from 2 when she started to 4 youth groups; Year 7, Year 8, Year 9 - 11 and the 6<sup>th</sup> form youth club. Every holiday special activities and trips are held. Referrals have now started to be received from Linton Village College, so staff are working in partnership with the College and with the hope of working with more schools that are connected to Linton village.

The Beacon Youth Trust has also started a new initiative to bring together churches in Linton, The Linton Free Church and Linton St Mary's Church, to facilitate faith developing activities for the Young Christians in the village through weekly meetings, a once a month Youth Church Service and a worship youth band.

The future and development of Youth Work in Linton is looking very promising. Soon the Youth Workers will be doing a volunteer recruitment drive in the hope that with more volunteers and resources, it will bring more help and build capacity to create more projects and activities to engage young people in the community, in churches and in schools.'

We are grateful for the partnership with Romsey Mill. As the official employer of the Beacon Youth Trust's youth worker, they took the lead in recruitment and also provide valuable management, networking and training support.

The Trustees from St Mary's are Hannah Foote, David Watts, Michael Wilcockson and Hugh Paton (treasurer), along with Stephen Munday (chair/secretary), Daniel Gilbert and Alasdair McBean from Linton Free Church.

## St Mary the Virgin, Linton

### 9.2. BELL RINGERS

The past year has seen a return to normality up the tower. In line with national guidance we have been allowing more people up the tower and have slowly returned to having full practices and service ringing. Additionally we have been able to mark significant occasions, including ringing quarter peal for Remembrance Sunday and tolling a bell for the National Day of Reflection. Ringing has been a bit more back to basics, but it has been good to see the progress of all members of the band, and the standard of ringing has been consistently high. It has also been nice to hear compliments from members of the church team, congregation and local community about the return of the bells!

Numbers up the tower are a little lower than our pre-Covid levels; however with the reduced restrictions we are planning on recruiting more people to learn to ring. If you are interested in finding out more please contact our secretary Sue Ellis on [sue.ellis@stmaryslinton.org.uk](mailto:sue.ellis@stmaryslinton.org.uk)

Stephen Croxall  
Tower Captain

### 9.3. EVENTS COMMITTEE

The Events committee was set up to enhance the social life of the church but also is called upon to provide hospitality after special services, including the tea in the Village Hall following the Remembrance Day service. The committee had another busy year and would like to thank all their supporters. This year saw the continuation of some virtual events and the return to some in-person events. Events included a village photo quiz, events marking Maggie's retirement, zoom quizzes, an afternoon tea, a concert from the Tapestry Singers, a pudding evening, a film night and a Seder-style meal. We also started a coffee morning on every third Saturday of the month, which has proved to be a popular social occasion. Some coffee mornings have raised money for specific charities whereas others have been for church funds. The events committee aim to cover costs and were very pleased to know they had made a surplus of over £2,000 for church funds. Although members of the committee plan the various events, they are always pleased to have extra help with serving refreshments or the offer of a cake for the coffee mornings.

Charlotte Ellis, Chair

### 9.4. FLOWER MINISTRY

Since the last Annual Meeting, Lian Watkin retired from running the flower rota and looking after the flower arrangers. As a congregation, we should thank Lian for the loyal years she gave to St Mary's.

I have now taken on this job and there may be many hurdles along the way but with the six flower arrangers who have volunteered their time and ability to arrange the flowers in church, I am sure we can look forward to seeing their creations appearing before us very soon.

As you may be aware, flowers are plentiful but expensive, especially when you need to fill the areas around the church on a fortnightly rota. We now collect donations on the second Sunday of the month to help the arrangers with the cost of the flowers, and we thank those who do give towards this and for the monthly donation to Sue Ellis by one of our congregation.

## **St Mary the Virgin, Linton**

The church at Easter was bursting with white and yellow flowers - on the window sills, the pedestal, the porch, the font and some of the ledges. Lian was around as she was doing an arrangement in the resurrection chapel, and she will also help us out at approaching festivals.

Finally, and with pride, St Mary's church is asked to provide flowers for weddings, and this is when Lian and Mary Spriggs will spring into action as professional arrangers.

Nanette Blackmore, Verger and one of your flower arrangers

### **9.5. LINTON C E INFANT SCHOOL**

#### **School life and wellbeing**

The school, for the most part has fared well, with the rate of infections of COVID. Against local and national figures our rates have been comparatively low and the situation was manageable.

However, the picture became a rather bleak one in February. The school suffered from an alarming peak in cases from the second week in February and by the 24th a total of 43 children and 5 staff were off school. This amounted to a staggering 26% of the pupil population. This situation put the school under enormous pressure and, as you can imagine, the stress of having to cope was felt by every member of staff.

The staff reacted well and kept lessons and routine running as best they could; this being the primary focus, to try and weather the storm. It was all hands on deck and Kelly and the staff did an amazing job under the circumstances.

I can happily say that COVID numbers have, for a number of weeks, been on a downward trajectory. There is a real sense of relief amongst the staff due to the fact that numbers have stabilized and most Health and Safety restrictions have been lifted. A move toward a 'normal' school day has been met with a great sense of relief and staff members are feeling happier and very positive.

Pastoral support for the children is on-going and strategies to address anxiety are making marked improvements in behaviour and learning. We have been recently been accredited as a 'Sensory Circuit Practitioner'. This will be a welcome addition to our pastoral care skills; Lego Therapy, E4L (Emotions for learning), Sensory Therapy. Staff have also continued to be in contact with families personally, with particular focus for those who need extra help and support.

Governors have met with staff members recently to have conversations about how they have been coping. It is really pleasing that staff feel comfortable sharing so honestly with the Governors and while we can't capture everything we would wish to, we are confident that we have forged relationships which will further develop over time. We hope to build on this level of trust to facilitate a greater feeling of wellbeing. Even though there are few practical things we can do to help individuals, it is important that conversation in itself is a good thing.

#### **Curriculum**

The Senior Leadership Team and Subject leads have been working very hard to establish a new topic cycle for the year, for every subject, across every year group. This has given staff a real sense of ownership of their subjects and an enthusiasm to promote their subject in school and with Governors. A lot of work had been done in planning implementation and systems for monitoring progress. All topics appear to have breadth and depth, with room for development and refinement as they are embedded into the curriculum.

# **St Mary the Virgin, Linton**

## **Governing Body**

Meetings have continued to be held via Zoom.

I am really pleased to say that Katherine Croxall has joined as Foundation Governor, filling the vacancy left by Sue Filby and her role of Pastoral Link Governor, plus sitting on Personnel Committee. Claire Revans also stepped down as Staff Governor, being replaced swiftly by Emma Little, Assistant Head and Maths Lead sitting on Curriculum & Data Committee. I want to express my thanks to both Sue and Claire for the number of years which they have dedicated to their roles with care and commitment. We are also trying to manage succession in light of one of our Parent Governors stepping down in September; there is already a parent who is interested in taking on this role.

All key areas continue to be monitored closely and subject monitoring will continue within school and between Governor and Staff Links. I invited subject leads to present to Governors at committee meetings, which has proved to be really useful and we look to continue to do this.

Our annual 'Governor Day of Business' in March, took the form of governors being invited to attend specific lessons. Last year, because of tighter Covid restrictions, 'visits' had to be done via Zoom, so it was an exciting opportunity for Governors to be in the classroom and have face to face interaction for the first time for a long time. The sessions corresponded to the foci of priorities set out in our School Development and Improvement Plan. We also got the chance to meet and greet parents at the school gates.

## **Fundraising**

There have been two main foci for fundraising. The short term plan is the library refurbishment and the long term plan is the aim of securing 30 new laptops. We have already made good progress on both projects and hope to further raise the profile in the community to help us to reach our targets. I have just written an article for the Linton News, May edition. Watch this space, the school website and the Linton News!

As the budget continues to be extremely challenging, any support you feel you might be able to give, would be gladly welcomed.

Nicola Collard

Chair of Governors

## **Friday Church**

The Infant School was back in church before Christmas, running split school sessions and with a restricted invitation to parents. Then after Christmas the Government announced a return to more stringent Health and Safety measures so we were delivering Friday Church via Zoom. After February half term, we have been back in the Church building, yay! Chris Kemshell is also ready to join Sarah Thorne and myself in leading services, his first one was due in March.

The children have been massively excited to be back and the energy of their cheerfulness and enthusiasm is felt by all who attend. The church team and Governors feel that the staff genuinely support what we do and are also so clearly encouraging the school values in everything they do. It really is a wonderful service. The children are so brilliant at listening and engaging during the storytelling and worship and I just wish I could record them reciting the Lord's Prayer and the sending out response, it lifts the spirits! We always try and set a challenge for the week or a pause

## St Mary the Virgin, Linton

for thought, as a response to the teaching and this has been really good in exploring questions they may have and affirming and applying the message in practice.

For example a few weeks ago, I told the transfiguration story, using The Hungry Caterpillar as a comparison, (change and transformation). My takeaway thought was that we don't really see the amazing miracles Jesus did every day, but, we are surrounded by little miracles, like caterpillars turning into butterflies...what little miracles might you be able to spot and how might you share your discoveries? And then that same afternoon there was a wonderful post from an early years class on the parental mail App, with photos of drawings the children had done of hyacinth plants which they had been tending from seed - as a direct response to that morning's service.

A rota is planned for the following term or two and we have just finished our theme of the life of Jesus, after his birth at Christmas and 'The Amazing Things Jesus Did'. We have told the stories of feeding the five thousand, healing of Bartemaeus, Jesus walks on water to name a few. The theme has landed with Jesus' last stop, Jerusalem, where he did the most amazing thing ever! We also try to link with the school value on which they are focusing at any given time.

At the end of term we had a 'Palm Parade', each child was given a mini palm cross, bigger ones for the adults and we had a wonderful celebratory service. The energy and enthusiasm was incredible, such fun! The children even carried across two big crucifixes which Foundation Year had decorated beautifully. They remain on proud display in the church. The children and teachers really feel part of the service and are invested in it as their 'church'. We are building many special relationships with our amazing little people. They are now familiar and comfortable with us and the space they occupy in church and fill it with heartfelt participation and joyful sound!

As always, we appreciate all that Nanette does, in supporting us and welcoming the children, teachers and parents so cheerfully. We are also very glad how much we are supported by our Foundation Governors who attend every week, Thank you.

Nicola Collard

### **9.6. CHURCH LINKS WITH LINTON HEIGHTS JUNIOR SCHOOL**

Up until COVID struck Chris Kemshell, (Pastor at URC), and I were doing school assemblies once a month on a Monday morning. This was put on hold for the duration of the pandemic, falling in line with Health and Safety restrictions.

Chris has resumed doing assemblies recently. I have not been able to make this a regular commitment as yet. I had hoped that I may be able to resume supporting the assemblies at some point, but I am unsure as to whether this is something I feel able to do, with all of my other commitments.

While LHJS has not had a physical service in the church at the usual festivals of Harvest, Christmas and Easter, I contributed to their video presentations which they put together as an alternative, and which were sent out to parents. I send a video of a short mini reflection, prayer and blessing, which is embedded towards the end of their presentation.

Nicola Collard

## St Mary the Virgin, Linton

### 9.7. CHILDREN AND FAMILIES MINISTRY

Looking back over the past 12 months, we praise God as we see how he has been leading us on - one step at a time. A year ago, we were emerging from a year of very limited contact with children and their families. The solid foundation of relationships developed over the pandemic has enabled the team to develop and grow the ministry slowly and gently.

**Baptisms** resumed as Covid restrictions eased, with many 'lockdown babies' being baptised as toddlers! A **Baby Steps** course was run in the winter - with a 4-week break in the middle forced by rising Covid infection rates in the village. Baby Steps aims to encourage the spiritual nurture of babies and young children, giving parents confidence to talk about God, pray and play Bible stories.

**Tots in Tow** moved into the pavilion garden for the summer term and carers were delighted to meet up again in a beautiful outdoor setting.

We moved back into the village hall in the autumn and maintained a Covid-aware space where all could feel safe by capping the numbers attending. We celebrate the way God has provided - especially being chosen as one of the Co-Op Local Causes. We were presented with a cheque for £2265 in October 2021.



We celebrate the birth of **Tots Plus** in summer 2021. Young families were invited to join the elderly residents of Chalklands in the Community Garden for stories and song. **Tots Plus** continues to meet in the community room at Chalklands once a month. Any senior members of the Linton community are most welcome to join us. We will meet outside again in the summer term.

The Linton Infants School '**Friday Church**' Service was held virtually until September when we were delighted to welcome the school community back into the church. The team of Rev Chris Kemsell, Sarah and Nicola, supported by Nanette and Foundation Governors, look forward to being able to welcome parents to join the children and staff before too much longer.

**Make Lunch Club** was launched in July, after almost a year of training and planning. This is a partnership between St Mary's and national charity TLG, offering struggling families a hot meal during the school holidays when the usual support network is not available. We are grateful for regular financial



## St Mary the Virgin, Linton

support and the tenacious efforts of the team who work to apply for grants. The club has been open for ten sessions as I write. The team have needed to be flexible and resourceful and I feel so blessed to lead them. We have overcome the challenges presented and pray that God will continue to increase our impact as we serve the vulnerable in Linton.

**Messy Church** met five times during 2021. Highlights include joining in the Church of England's 'Godparents Sunday' and The Children's Society Christingle initiatives and building a life-sized Goliath who we 'knocked out' with the catapults we had made! Sessions were held in the churchyard, and we have welcomed families back into St Mary's and into the Village Hall in March and April 2022.



Covid restrictions meant the **children's area** inside the church was disassembled in 2020. Parents came up with ideas, organised fundraising, painted, assembled and sourced materials enabling the revamped Children's Area to be dedicated on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> March. The area is now a clear sign to the community that 'children are welcome here'.

**SMYG** (St Mary's Youth Group) continues to meet up once a month, ably led by Rev. Michael Wilcockson. The young people have been challenged to live out their faith, featuring preparation for confirmation and young leadership at Messy Church. The group is still needing another regular adult leader, following Ed's move away from the area.

What challenges do we face? The Children and Families Ministry at St Mary's is growing! It is exciting to see and experience the way God is working at the messy edges of the community. We value your support. If you feel moved to join in, there are some specific ways we need your help:

- Pray for us. There will soon be a WhatsApp prayer group keeping you up to date with specific prayer needs.
- Give. This could be for a specific area e.g. for Make Lunch Club. Looking forward, we need the ministry amongst families to be sustainable and recruiting a (paid) Children and Families Minister needs to be considered.
- Volunteer. Giving your time is a very precious gift. Have you heard that 'Children spell love T. I. M. E.'?

Sarah Thorne  
LLM Children and Families Minister

### 9.8. TOGETHER WITH GOD

It has been lovely to be back in church delivering these services, after doing them over Zoom for a period of time.



## St Mary the Virgin, Linton

The Zoom services were actually very good. Cathy Watts and I went to great lengths to target families by designing invitations and using them to personally invite people who we knew, to join in. This proved to be very worthwhile and had a good response, some of whom had never been to church before. Even though some, who historically were our regular families, didn't make it to the online services it was a good thing to have a reason to make contact with them.

Back at church, we have found a significant absence of families and particularly young people. This has been a general trend and not just the case at TWG services. I think this can be attributed to COVID mainly but also other factors like the fact that some of our young people are at the age where other commitments like hobbies and sports training and matches fall on Sunday mornings, or where they are at the age where church services don't 'fit' their needs.

I know that most of our congregation appreciate that a great deal of time and effort goes into preparing for these monthly services. There have been occasions when the disappointment of a very sparse attendance, has been felt both by us and voiced to us by other members of the congregation. Having said that, the services have always been hugely appreciated and enjoyed by those who have attended regularly, with plenty of positive comments to keep us encouraged to continue! Thank you. The last few months have seen an increase in attendance with a few more little ones attending; one off visits, baptism families invited to be welcomed and a couple from Tots in Tow.

I have recently put together a rota for readers and those to do the prayers, including young voices too. This not only ensures that we have a well-represented cross section of our community taking part, but also helps our planning. Our wonderful music group, led by Russell and Jacqui alternately on the piano, provides mostly contemporary, reflective and uplifting worship. We enjoy hearing other instruments played from time to time and the number of singers in this group has increased too! Huge thanks to them for helping to make our service what it is.

TWG continues to be a service which allows for much creativity, inclusiveness and deep reflection in simple form. We are very much invested in how we shape these services and thankful for God's guidance and blessing over what we do.

Nicola Collard LLM

### **9.9. SPACE FOR THE SPIRIT**

Space for the Spirit thrived during the course of 2021, with a consistent attendance of between around 20-25 people, occasionally more. We meet at 7.30 pm on the third Tuesday of the month for nine months of the year (with breaks at Easter, Christmas and in August). Reflections are a mix of secular and scriptural and last around 40 mins, with themes last year varying from Deserts to Sheep, from Transitions to Strangers. Space for the Spirit seeks to provide a calm, quiet and reflective time at the end of the day, using different kinds of music, poetry, readings, video and images.

Anyone is welcome. Do get in touch at [sfts@stmaryslinton.org.uk](mailto:sfts@stmaryslinton.org.uk) for more information or for your name to be added to the monthly circulation list.

Molly Warrington

## **St Mary the Virgin, Linton**

### **9.10. MOTHERS' UNION**

The Linton Branch of the Mothers' Union normally meets on the third Monday of the month, at 7.45pm in the Church Pavilion. Everyone is welcome to attend. The programme for the year is on the Church website.

In 2021 we enjoyed a full programme of meetings via Zoom, including a Bible Quiz in May and a very enlightening talk on Buddhism in June. July saw our first meeting together in person for over a year, when we enjoyed our annual picnic in the Churchyard. In August we held our first MU coffee morning in the Churchyard on a Saturday morning. This was a very successful outreach and fundraising event with over 40 people attending and there was a sense of real joy at being able to meet in the sunshine after so long in lockdowns. We are proud to say this has led to regular weekend coffee mornings at St Mary's with various hosts and fundraising causes.

In September we met for the first time again in the Pavilion and our varied programme brought talks about the work of the MU in Shyogwe, Rwanda and one on eating disorders. Unfortunately, due to rising COVID numbers, our Christmas party was cancelled but 2022 has started well and we have enjoyed so far this year fascinating talks on Michael Wilcockson's Journey towards Ordination and one on Celtic Christianity; a games evening and at time of writing we are looking forward to our Lent Meditation in Church during Holy Week which is open to all.

Members offer each other practical support and prayer at difficult times in our lives and aim to uphold the worldwide Mothers' Union Vision. Present in 84 countries, our members are not all mothers, or even all women. They are single, married, parents, grandparents, or young adults just beginning to express their social conscience. MU provides a network through which they can serve Christ in their own community. If you would like to know more about the Mothers' Union, please don't hesitate to contact Margaret Smith, Denise Thurston or Sue Mudge or check out [www.mothersunion.org](http://www.mothersunion.org).

Denise Thurston (Secretary)

### **9.11. MUSIC MINISTRY**

Once again, this has been a period of change and looking back it is interesting to see what we were able to achieve and to be grateful for the patience and adaptability of choir members and congregation alike.

For example, during Lent and Holy Week 2021 services were via Zoom – that ubiquitous video conferencing tool that we have had to become familiar with ("other tools are available"). Rather than using recorded music from the internet, we decided as a choir to do something more distinctively St Mary's Linton. Individuals and pairs of singers contributed recordings of singing to my accompaniment from their own homes. I then became somewhat proficient in GarageBand (!) and created a multi-tracked performance of hymns, songs and anthems that we could use during the services leading up to Easter.

Services – when able to resume in church, they were with organ but no choir or congregational singing. I was able to act as cantor (within the rules that we had adopted) and provided some hymns and songs in church. The choir was finally with great relief able to resume regular choir practices and singing in church seated in the choir stalls from September 2021.

Team Evensong in October at Castle Camps for All Saints Sunday was very successful, bringing together singers from across the team. Advent Sunday evening service in Linton was built around plainsong with psalms and readings and the great 'O' Advent Antiphons.

## St Mary the Virgin, Linton

Plainsong is popular in culture outside the church but gets a bad press within the reformed tradition – perhaps we should go more with popular culture here! We recently sang a special meditative choral Evensong for Passion Sunday (Anglican chant this time) and would very much like to return to singing Evensong monthly in future in Linton, complementing the monthly Evensong at Bartlow.

The choir took part in the service for All Souls Day and led the singing at the annual Remembrance Day Service, including the anthem by Douglas Guest (sometime organist of Westminster Abbey) of “They shall grow not old” – a favourite of ours in the choir at Linton. The Annual Carol Service was very well supported especially by young families.

Members of the choir will be singing at the Royal School of Music (RSCM) choirs Festival at **Ely Cathedral on Saturday, 14 May**. This had been postponed from 2020 when we first started to rehearse one cold evening in Ely Cathedral Song School. Everyone is welcome to join us in the congregation at the Festival of Church Music **service at 5pm**.

We are also looking forward to hosting the **Granta Deanery Ascension Day service on Thursday, 26 May at 7.30pm**. I am organising a choir for this service and would welcome singers who would like to join us. *Please use your network and encourage anyone you know who might like to sing with us for this annual event. I can't ask everyone personally but with your help we can reach more people.*

We are always happy to welcome new singers in the choir. The regular nature of building a singing team to worship on a regular basis, Sunday by Sunday and Friday by Friday creates the fertile ground in which we can grow our music ministry at St Mary's. Any prospective singers should come to a Friday evening choir practice to see what is required or contact me directly.

**The Music Group** continues in the important task of providing the music on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday (Together with God) and is led alternately by Jacqui Burge and Russell Taylor. Jacqui and I would be glad to hear of any instrumentalists and singers who feel called to serve in this way.

Our choir aspires to be an open and inclusive group of adults of mixed musical ability, but hearts called to sing God's praises. We sing music from all periods from Gregorian chant up to the 21<sup>st</sup> century world of classical composition. We have recently introduced Hymns Ancient & Modern – Hymns and Songs for Refreshing Worship (2013) as our standard hymnal, replacing Hymns Old and New, New Anglican Edition (1996), which we have used for about 25 years. The new A&M contains a wider selection of useful worship songs as well as new translations of old hymns and a substantial selection of traditional hymnody.

Donations for the hymn books are gladly received – please speak to Sue Ellis if you wish to donate a hymn book in memory of a loved one.

Finally, a note on the organ. As you know, we have been discussing plans for renovating our valuable and well-used pipe organ at St Mary's. The pandemic has rather got in the way of our progress. A Saturday coffee morning in February raised some money for the organ fund (a reserved fund in the PCC accounts). Substantial donations have been made and pledged. We will be looking for matched funding from grant making bodies as this will be a large capital project – Suzanne Darkins (Finance Committee chair) and others have kindly offered to help in this process. There is a special leaflet on the organ project available in church or from Anne [admin@stmaryslinton.org.uk](mailto:admin@stmaryslinton.org.uk) or me, [dom@stmaryslinton.org.uk](mailto:dom@stmaryslinton.org.uk)

David Parry-Smith, Director of Music

### 9.12. PASTORAL GROUP

The group is made up of 8 members, all committed to extending the kindness and compassion to our church family. Individuals are committed to safe working practices and undertake the safeguarding checks & training required by the Diocese.

## **St Mary the Virgin, Linton**

Visits are in response to requests from clergy or through family, friends or neighbours. The nature and frequency of contact is individually tailored to meet the needs of each person. Thankfully the lifting of the COVID restrictions has meant that some face-to-face visits have started again, including Home Communion visits.

We usually meet, as a group, every two months to discuss the visits/contact we have made, support each other and share the responsibilities of extending the love beyond the boundaries of services at St Mary's. It is our desire to represent the church in our role, maintaining connections, develop relationships and sharing the love of Christ with those we visit.

I would like to thank each member of the group for maintaining contacts, the support they have shown and for the opportunities that have seen kindness shared. I would like to also thank Judy Nightingale for leading the Pastoral group for the last few years, in particular her leadership during the challenges of the pandemic, I am very grateful for the handover and her continued faithful membership.

Sue Filby

### **9.13. THE FRIENDS OF ST MARY'S**

This report covers the year April 2021 to March 2022.

"The Friends" is a secular charity, formed to help with the expenses associated with maintaining the church building, its fixtures and fittings. Currently there are about 90 members who pay a membership fee each year, and in normal times the Friends have raised funds by holding social events throughout the year but this year that has not been possible due to pandemic restrictions. We also administer the funds bequeathed by Richard Godel and make available any surplus from them in accordance with his wishes.

The Friends have historically funded all of the costs associated with maintenance identified at the Quinquennial Inspection (QI) enabling the PCC to use their funds for other purposes.

This year we have paid the architect's technical design fees of £8,212 for the QI repairs and lighting project and have very recently (at the time of writing) agreed to underwrite the total of £112,312 associated with the QI works themselves, the lighting project and redecoration work though we have urged the PCC to maximise any other charitable grants or other sources of income which may be available.

In addition we have received a bequest from the late Enid Bald to cover the costs of a new wooden reading stand for the church and for some work in the churchyard.

In the coming year we hope to have a website up and running to advertise our work and help in recruiting more members from the church congregation and the wider community. We would welcome new members and encourage all who value the church building to join us.

I should like to thank all our committee for their work and their patience with me as I have eased into the chair this year at a time which has been challenging for all of us. Particularly I should like to thank our Treasurer, Hugh Paton, who manages our finances so ably and Margaret Cox our Secretary.

Andrew King, Chair, The Friends of St Mary's Linton.

## **St Mary the Virgin, Linton**

### **9.14. THE MONDAY GANG IN THE CHURCHYARD**

Over the past two years members of the gang have tended to work independently and often not on a Monday afternoon and, as, during this time we have lost some members, we are looking to recruit one or two more people. Weeding, mowing and clipping in the churchyard, along with chatting to people who stroll along the paths, is a pleasant way to spend a Monday afternoon and ideal for the recently retired who have a little time on their hands.

During the past two years much of the churchyard has become more natural, or if you like, more wild. This is the result of less intensive mowing, itself a result of lockdown. The profusion of wild flowers which have sprung up, many of which we had not seen before, has been a joy to behold.

In June 2021, Judy Nightingale and Oriel O'Loughlin counted 38 species of wild flowers. These, of course, did not include the aconites, snowdrops and other spring flowers which had died down by then, or the late-summer flowers.

Indeed, Diana Cook of the Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire Wildlife Trust was so impressed when she saw our churchyard that she thought we could be in line for a Bronze award in the Bishop of Ely's Cambridgeshire Churchyard Conservation Award Scheme, This would require some strict modifications to the mowing programme and other aspects of managing the churchyard, which we do not have the capability of doing at present. Nevertheless we have taken on board Diana's comments and are modifying our activities to encourage the wild flowers and other wildlife.

Margaret Cox