



ANNUAL REPORT 2024



Annual Parish Vestry Meeting
followed by
Annual Parochial Church Meeting
Sunday 19th May 2024 at 11.15am in
the Church

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1. AGENDA FOR 14TH MAY 2023

Part A - Vestry Meeting

1. Prayers
2. Minutes of the Annual Parish Vestry Meeting held on 14th May 2023
3. Election of Two Churchwardens

Part B - Annual Parochial Church Meeting

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on 14th May 2023
3. Matters Arising
4. Parochial Church Council Report 2023 - 2024
5. Electoral Roll Report
6. Financial Report followed by appointment of Independent Examiner
7. Fabric Report
8. Deanery Synod Report
9. Election of PCC Members
10. Reports from Groups and Activities
11. Rector's Report
12. Questions from the floor
13. Closing Prayers

2. MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH VESTRY MEETING, SUNDAY 14TH MAY 2023

The meeting held in the church, began with prayers at 11.30 and was chaired by Revd Paul Seaton-Burn. Forty-nine parishioners were present.

Minutes

The Minutes of the Annual Parishioners' Vestry Meeting of Sunday 8th May 2022 were accepted as a correct record.

Election of Churchwardens

Revd Paul Seaton Burn explained that the main business of the Vestry meeting was to elect two churchwardens to serve for the forthcoming year. Paul thanked David Watts and Charlotte Ellis for their service during the last year especially since most of the time had been during the Vacancy, with the additional pressure of the recent lighting project in the church.

There were two nominations for Churchwarden: David Watts and Charlotte Ellis. David was first appointed in 2017 and Charlotte in 2021. David had therefore served for 6 years and could not ordinarily stand again due to the note below in italics. However, Paul said that the Church of England is pragmatic and, providing that those present agree, a dispensation could apply to the relevant section. Molly Warrington agreed that continuity would be helpful as Paul was relatively new in post but pointed out that David deserved a break and the same thing should not happen next year. David Parry-Smith said that the PCC would then have a year in which to prepare and encourage someone else to stand.

Paul asked people to vote that David Watts's term could be extended by a further year. No one was against and no one abstained.

The meeting moved to a vote for both David Watts and Charlotte Ellis to be elected for a further year. They were unanimously elected – no one was against and no one abstained.

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 14TH MAY 2023

Apologies

Margaret Cox, Gordon Cummings, Charlotte and Mark Hays, Charles Parker, Revd Janet Parker, Judith and Richard Tonry.

Minutes

The Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting of Sunday 8th May 2022 were accepted as a true record.

Matters arising

There were none.

The reports presented to the 2023 meeting are summarised below and can be found on the church website www.stmaryslinton.org.uk. Look under Resources and APCM reports.

Parochial Church Council Report May 2022 – April 2023

Two particular issues added to the PCC workload. Some aspects from the Covid pandemic restrictions were still present in services and church activities. Each change or relaxation required discussion, risk assessments and due consideration of people's fears and concerns. Secondly, the Vacancy continued for a further nine months, giving a total of eighteen months without a Rector and three rounds of adverts. We were very grateful to David and Charlotte, our Churchwardens, for all that they did during this time and to Revd Michael Wilcockson for being willing to take many of our regular services along with help from other clergy.

We were pleased to welcome Revd Paul Seaton-Burn as Rector in February 2023. Organising Revd Paul's Collation and Induction service was not straight forward as the church was undergoing major work. Scaffolding was erected in January in order to undertake repairs specified in the five-yearly inspection, to completely redesign the lighting system which had been poor for years and to clean and paint the plasterwork. The church was closed during the week to allow the contractors to work without interruption. A great deal of cleaning and furniture moving was carried out by volunteers each weekend to allow Sunday services to take place, as well as coffee mornings and other events. The contractors kept to their schedule and scaffolding was removed by Easter. In addition to maintaining the fabric of the church, the benefits of the decoration and the lighting are obvious for all to see. We were indebted to The Friends of St Mary's for funding the project.

PCC meetings were held in church from March 2022 to take advantage of the extra space but hearing each other speak was difficult and the lighting then was so bad. We reverted to using the pavilion from January 2023. The standard six meetings were held during the year. Regular agenda items included reports from the churchwardens (in lieu of a Rector) and the four main PCC committees: Fabric, Finance & Stewardship, Children & Families and Events. Reports were also received from the Parish Safeguarding Officer, the Ministry Team for worship and spiritual initiatives, the Pastoral group, St Mary's two Deanery Synod representatives and the Chair of Governors at Linton C.E. Infant School.

Financial Review – to 31st December 2022

Income of £140,758 and expenditure of £163,111 resulted in a deficit of £22,352 for the year. Sue Ellis, Treasurer, pointed out that the regular outgoings are kept to a minimum but still exceeded the regular income, including gift aid refunds. The Parish Share, paid to the Diocese, is a significant sum and is beyond our control. Other expenses are closely monitored. The PCC aimed to address the imbalance by deferring some projects and encouraging increased giving by the parish as well as the wider community who appreciate St Mary's Church being in the village. Options for giving are on St Mary's website: look under Church Life and How to Donate.

Sue said that the deficit would be covered by church reserves but that cannot continue indefinitely, although another deficit budget had been set for 2023.

Sue Ellis proposed that Kate Sargeant be reappointed as Independent Examiner; seconded by Sue Filby and agreed by those present.

Michael Younger reiterated that using reserves should not continue as funds would very soon run out. He thanked people for their existing giving; pointed out that the fees and subscriptions for outside organisations and activities increase regularly and our church giving should be viewed in the same light. The Parish Giving Scheme allows for annual increases and is strongly recommended.

Anne Parry-Smith asked whether there was any progress in finding a Stewardship Officer - see later questions.

Sue Ellis was thanked for being treasurer with great efficiency. The accounts were adopted.

Electoral Roll Report

The report from Jo George, Electoral Roll officer, stated that no one had been removed from the Roll but six new names were added so the number was recorded as 132. New lists were displayed on the internal notice board

by the church door. The Electoral Roll was completely revised in March 2019. Jo added that she had since received a further application for the Roll.

Fabric Report

Richard Tonry's report described the extensive work undertaken from November to March, for repairs related to the Quinquennial report and a major re-lighting project for the church. There was also ongoing servicing and repairs in other areas. The Rector commented that he was very pleased that the church could now be open and accessible every day once again.

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 31st May 2023. The Synod met three times during the year. Discussions included completing the work on 'Living in Love and Faith', talking to parishes in order to create the Deanery Development Plan for the next 5-10 years, supporting youth work via Youthinc, recording that three clergy vacancies had been filled and monitoring payment of the various Parish Shares.

Election of Deanery Synod representatives

Andrew Gore and David Parry-Smith had been nominated for a further term of three years. There were no other nominations. Andrew and David were duly elected.

Election of Parochial Church Council members

Continuing members on the PCC were confirmed as:

Elected in 2021: Helene Evans, Sarah King, John Organ, Richard Tonry, Molly Warrington.

Elected in 2022: Jacqui Burge, Andrew Cornell-Webb, Sarah Nickolls
Churchwardens (ex-officio): David Watts, Charlotte Ellis.

Sue Ellis, Sue Mudge, Patricia Scofield, Michael Younger had served their three year term of office, giving 4 vacancies.

The electoral roll number allows for up to 12 elected members.

Nomination forms had been completed for Tom Dodd, Sue Ellis to be re-elected, Ann Slaymaker and John Thorne. These four people were elected; with no votes against and one abstention.

The requirement for retiring members to stand down for at least a year had been removed from the updated Church Representation Rules 2020.

Reports from Committees and Organisations

Reports from the following groups were included in the 2023 APCM booklet in paper form and on the website:

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; Warm Hub initiative; Mothers Union; Music Ministry; Pastoral Group; The Friends of St. Mary's; The Monday Gang.

The Rector said that he was pleased to note that we had two Governing Body Chairs in our congregation. He thanked Nicola Collard and Gill Powell for their Christian ministry in the Infant School and Linton Heights Junior School, respectively. Paul also thanked the Friends of St Mary's for their financial contribution, the bell ringers, the Events committee for enriching the church fellowship, David Parry-Smith for his commitment and the musicians who enhance the worship at the various services.

Rector's report

The Rector said that the annual meeting provides a time to look back and also a time to look forward to the new season – as in Ecclesiastes chapter 3 – a time for everything. God has been faithful to us and will be faithful. If God is present, he will endure for ever, in Linton and the wider world. No one is more important than any other person; but all are inter-related with God at the heart of everything.

Paul thanked the church family for his welcome in February and also thanked Michael Wilcockson for his tremendous contribution during the Vacancy and David Parry-Smith as Lay-chair of the PCC.

Questions

In answer to Anne Parry-Smith's earlier question - Paul said that one person was considering the Stewardship Officer role.

Andrew Cornell-Webb stated that he felt that 2023 could be a defining year. Andrew has long term family connections in Linton, spanning two world wars and asked what does post-Covid St Mary's look like? He is waiting to make a contribution, as some of his ancestors were unable to do – waiting for a new Rector and no excuse now to be passive. Paul responded, saying that he was grateful for Andrew's personal insight. Paul sensed that different offerings for worship could be helpful – some contemporary reflection as well as more formal worship drawing upon traditional music.

Michael Younger reminded the meeting that the PCC shelved the question of being a member of Inclusive Church during the Vacancy so that a new Rector could be involved. Michael hoped that the PCC would return to the issue.

John Organ said that he had been approached about taking the role of Stewardship Officer and, after prayerful consideration; he was pleased to say that he would do so.

Sue Filby asked for more information about Mental Health First Aid. David Parry-Smith responded that we all have mental health in the same way as physical health. Training was offered after a presentation at Deanery Synod about three years ago. People can be referred across the Deanery and signposted to other organisations, e.g. Samaritans, bereavement counselling. More local training can be arranged if required.

David Watts concluded by hoping that we may be like Paul the apostle and know utter extravagance, inner energy and boundless strength. God has provided a Rector for Linton and has not finished with us yet – and we welcome Paul to our community.

The meeting ended with prayer at 12.35.

4. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL 2023 - 2024

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 2023 until this report are:

Incumbent Rector - The Revd Paul Seaton-Burn installed in February 2023

The Revd Michael Wilcockson, Curate from July 2019, Associate Priest November 2021

Churchwardens Charlotte Dodd (nee, Ellis)
David Watts

Licensed Lay Ministers (LLMs) Sarah Thorne Children and Families Minister
Cathy Watts Safeguarding Officer

Representatives to the Deanery Synod Andrew Gore from 14.05.2023 - 31.05.26
David Parry-Smith from 14.05.2023 - 31.05.26

Elected members Helene Evans from APCM 2021
Sarah King from APCM 2021
John Organ from APCM 2021
Richard Tonry from APCM 2021
Molly Warrington from APCM 2021
Jacqui Burge from APCM 2022
Andrew Cornell-Webb from APCM 2022 - Secretary
Sarah Nickolls from APCM 2022
Sue Ellis from APCM 2023 – Treasurer
Tom Dodd from APCM 2023
Ann Slaymaker from APCM 2023
John Thorne. from APCM 2023

Structure, governance and management

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules, updated in 2022. 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 cooperating 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 the Pavilion adjacent to the Church.

Review of the year to April 2024

This has been a year of change and growth at St Mary's Linton.

At the 2023 APCM, our long-serving PCC Secretary Sue Mudge stepped down from her role after 9 years of faithful and hardworking service, I thank her so much for her support and wisdom in my first year of the role. This has also been the first full year that St Mary's has been out of Vacancy since 2020-2021 after Maggie Guite stepped down in July 2021. Our new rector Paul Seaton-Burn has brought with him so many new and positive ideas for the church while improving upon the current services that St Mary's held already. We also have a new Parish Coordinator Elena Beletskaya who has taken permanently over from Anne Parry-Smith we give all our thanks to her for her years of service in the role, and a thank you to Tom Dodd who was Interim Parish Coordinator before Elena took over.

All COVID restrictions are now removed from the church however people in the Church are still allowed to take the sacrament in one kind increasing inclusivity and choice in the Church. It has also been wonderful to see the return to a more physical practice of sharing the peace with handshakes as the norm with also the option of bowing as previously. To me one of the greatest things that have come from this Church in the past year is choice. If you don't feel comfortable sharing the chalice or shaking a person's hand, then you are free not to do this if you want to wear a mask to protect yourself and others you are free to do so as well. Seeing our Easter Service where so many people came up for Communion or Blessings shows that those members of our village and beyond who may not want to come to all services still feel comfortable engaging in what we do.

As a registered social worker who works in a child protection team, I would be remiss to not mention the work of our children and family's ministry led by Sarah Thorne over the past year. It can be easy to not see the work of our children's ministry as it operates mainly out of the usual Sunday hours. However, every month this year at Messy Church I have witnessed God's grace and love work through every child who is present. This is extended during the week at Tots in Tow and Baby Steps and during the holidays at Make Lunch Club. I am a big believer in community groups and the work they do both secular and non-secular. Community groups pick up the slack of support that has been reduced in recent years due to budget cuts, for some mothers and fathers these groups are the only time they can get their little ones to socialise with others as free Nursery hours do not come

in place till a child is 2 or 3 years old and with an offer of one Sunday a month getting an afternoon of activities and some snacks is a real boon of support for the poorest in our society.

Moving on from this it's always important to praise the hard work done by so many in the church this past year, I have mentioned Sarah Thorne already. I would also like to thank our two churchwardens David Watts and Charlotte Dodd (nee Ellis) whose continued hard work in the church has kept things together over the past year. I would again be remiss if I did not mention another great stalwart of the church, and this is Nannette Blackmore who is the church verger. Nannette prepares the church for every Sunday and other additional services such as Ash Wednesday and Remembrance, she makes sure all the silverware is cleaned and prepped, the wine and water decanted among other things and that the church is presented in a way that shows to newcomers that we love our church. I would also like to thank Jacqui Burge who has supported Nannette when Nannette jets off to Portugal or was recovering from her recent operation.

I could spend the entire report listing thanks to people who have served the church so for all those who serve in the church through Music, being a Deacon, being a Sides-Person, being an LLM, reading the Bible in church, leading the prayers and many more roles including all members of our congregation thank you so much for your help, without people there is no church.

Now to move on to the activities of the PCC this year. The PCC met in May 2023, July 2023, September 2023, November 2023, January 2024, and March 2024. During these meetings, a wide range of topics have been discussed including the ongoing discussion around furniture in the church, the progress of the new pavilion kitchen, and much more. The PCC also votes in our wonderful governors over at Linton Infants. Nicola Collard and Jacqui Burge were voted in again after their current terms ended and Luci Neville was voted in for her first term. The PCC receives reports from a wide range of church and community activities such as our child and family's ministry, the events committee, and the deanery synod among others. We also discuss safeguarding in the church, and we discuss the finances of the church in detail. Unfortunately, as mentioned further in this report there is still a disappointing deficit of the budget for the church, this year the PCC elected John Organ to be a stewardship officer in the church who will be in charge of finding ways to raise further funds so hopefully we can cut this deficit and turn it to a surplus before we are forced to have to cut our charitable donations.

Overall this year has been a year of change for both the church and the PCC and I am looking forward to seeing what happens with both as I settle into my role over the next year.

Andrew Cornell-Webb, PCC Secretary

5. ELECTORAL ROLL REPORT

ELECTORAL ROLL REPORT- During the year we have sadly lost six members of our congregation, but with a direct approach it has been possible to add six new members, so the total on the Electoral Roll remains at 132.

If you would like to be added to the Electoral Roll or have any questions, please do contact me – jo.george@stmaryslinton.org.uk

Jo George - Electoral Roll Officer

6. 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 2023 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.

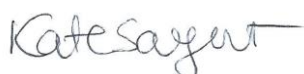
Basis of this report

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.



Signed:
Independent Examiner

26/02/24

St Mary the Virgin, Linton: Financial Review 2023

In 2023 a total of £224,248 was received by St Mary's. This compared with expenditure of £231,013 leaving a deficit of £6,765. We have been running a deficit since 2017 except for 2020 when a legacy gave us a small surplus of £1000. The Church accounts are based receipts and payments rather than accruals. This means some items relating to 2023 have been paid out in 2024 which will affect the 2024 budget.

Regular giving has is slightly lower than 2022. This source of income, particularly through the Parish Giving Scheme¹, is particularly important as it is fairly predictable from year to year. Tax recovered through Gift Aid is also a significant part of our regular income.

Grants are another important part of income. Last year the Friends of St Mary's and the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme have enabled the lighting project to be completed. The Anderson Trust made a grant for appliances for the Pavilion kitchen which is still to be upgraded. These funds are being held in a restrictive fund. All grants, and some donations, are for specific purposes. These include the amount held in Children's and Families Ministry which enables the work Sarah Thorne undertakes as Children and Families Minister.

Fundraising is important and our Christmas Tree festival weekend brought in much needed funds. This year the total received for weddings and funerals increased as did our Pavilion lettings.

The largest item of expenditure was Church Major repairs, consisting of the Lighting Project, funded by the Friends and LPWGS. The next largest item was the Ministry Share. This is the sum sent to the Diocese, to enable us to have a full-time Rector, as well as contributing to some central administrative and mission costs. The PCC has committed to paying the Ministry Share in full; even though the sum is not covered by regular giving.

Though the PCC has continued to trim general running expenses, the church must be maintained in good repair, and we aim to provide a welcoming and well-maintained space for everyone. Other priorities include supporting the valuable work of the Beacon Youth Trust, which took most of the PCC's allocation to charitable giving.

The Balance Sheet summarises the funds of the church. Some sums within this figure are 'Restricted', in that they have been given for a specific purpose only. Other sums are 'Designated'; these have been set aside by the PCC for specific purposes. The 'unrestricted' General Fund, which, at the end of 2023, amounted to £27,992 (£3,122 less than last year).

¹ Please ask the Treasurer for more information.

Summary

Although the deficit is less than the previous year this must not lead to complacency as we cannot continue to deplete the reserves.

Reserves Policy

In 2023, the PCC continues with a reserves policy; continuing to retain a sum of £22,500 for contingency cover.

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's Linton
Statement of Financial Activities

For the period from 01 January 2023 to 31 December 2023

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Prior year total funds
Incoming resources					
Incoming resources from generated funds					
Voluntary income	200,290	1,900	—	202,190	124,501
Activities for generating funds	7,485	15	—	7,500	5,065
Investment income	1,261	128	—	1,390	493
Incoming resources from charitable activities	13,166	—	—	13,166	10,698
Other incoming resources	—	—	—	—	—
Total incoming resources	222,204	2,043	—	224,248	140,758
Resources used					
Cost of generating funds	350	—	—	350	—
Cost of generating voluntary income	—	—	—	—	—
Fundraising trading cost of goods sold and other costs	772	—	—	772	1,044
Charitable activities	229,275	614	—	229,890	162,066
Governance costs	—	—	—	—	—
Total resources used	230,398	614	—	231,013	163,111
Net incoming / outgoing resources before transfer	(8,194)	1,429	—	(6,765)	(22,353)
Transfers					
Gross transfers between funds - in	43	—	—	43	—
Gross transfers between funds - out	—	(43)	—	(43)	—
Net incoming / outgoing before other gains / losses	(8,151)	1,386	—	(6,765)	(22,353)
Other recognised gains / losses					
Gains / losses on investment assets	3,618	—	—	3,618	(1,180)
Gains on revaluation, fixed assets, charity's own use	—	—	—	—	—
Net movement in funds	(4,533)	1,386	—	(3,146)	(23,533)
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward	66,215	5,742	—	71,957	95,491
Total funds carried forward	61,682	7,128	—	68,810	71,957

St Mary's Linton Return of Parish Finance for year ending 31 December 2023

Incoming Resources	2023	2022
Voluntary Income		
Tax efficient planned giving		
Gift Aid - Bank & Parish Giving Scheme	49,899.93	49,553.94
Gift Aid - Envelopes	469.00	1,125.00
Total tax efficient planned giving	50,368.93	50,678.94
Other planned giving	3,410.00	4,333.00
Loose plate collections	3,217.43	4,282.43
Giving through church boxes	287.51	557.09
One off Gift Aid gifts	1,895.00	1,210.00
Donations, appeals, etc (note 1)	8,057.16	8,522.74
Tax recovered through Gift Aid	15,171.62	14,405.81
Legacies	2,966.68	
Non-recurring one off grants (note 2)	116,816.02	40,511.29
Total for voluntary income	202,190.35	124,501.30
Activities for Generating Funds		
Other funds generated (note 3)	971.45	795.89
Christmas Events	2,042.85	
Social Events (note 4)	4,486.46	4,269.35
Total for Activities for Generating Funds	7,500.76	5,065.24
Bank and building society interest	1,390.25	493.87
Church Activities		
Fees for weddings and funerals	11,710.00	9,788.00
Pavilion lettings	1,456.90	910.00
Total for Church Activities	13,166.90	10,698.00

Total for Incoming Resources	224,248.2 6	140,758.4 1
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Resources Expended	2023	2022
Costs of Generating Funds		
Christmas Event Costs	350.00	
Costs of Social Events (note 4)	772.89	1,044.86
Total for costs of Generating Funds	1,122.89	1,044.86
All Mission Giving and Charitable Grants & Donations (note 5)		
Giving to missionary societies	920.69	778.50
Secular Charities	1,145.26	1,157.78
Youthinc	300.00	300.00
The Beacon Youth Trust	6,500.04	6500.04
Total for All Mission Giving etc	8,865.99	8,736.32
Church Activities		
Ministry Share	68,221.95	66,322.18 7
Salaries (note 6)	10,181.16	12,268.30
Expenses (clergy, pastoral staff, etc)		
Working expenses of Incumbent	480.00	480.00
Children's and family's ministry (note 7)	4,538.61	4,463.11
Total for Expenses	5,018.61	4,943.11
Parish Training and mission		423.27
Regular Church running expenses (insurance, cleaning, admin)		
Church running - insurance	3,806.82	3,493.34
Organ / piano tuning	510.00	235.00
Church telephone/Wi-Fi	406.62	201.22
Church maintenance	5,010.71	3,273.12
Cleaning	73.98	18.98
Upkeep of services (note 8)	10,642.93	11,957.61
Upkeep of churchyard	171.69	205.91
Administration	2,256.30	2,174.66
Flowers (note 9)	173.15	47.00

Total for Regular Church running expenses	23,052.20	21,606.84
Church utility bills (gas, electricity, water)		
Church running - electric	1,696.06	1,401.90
Church running - gas	2,366.00	2,718.77
Church running - water	58.34	42.96
Total for Church utility bills	4,120.40	4,163.63

	2023 £	2022 £
Costs of trading		
Pavilion		
Pavilion running - electricity	628.51	522.25
Pavilion running – maintenance	1,106.39	440.33
Pavilion running - water	58.35	42.93
Total for Costs of trading	1,793.25	1,005.51
Total for Church Activities	112,387.57	110,309.57
Total for Resources Expended	122,376.45	120,090.75
Major Capital Expenditure		
Church major repairs	108,201.58	43,021.08
Peace Garden	435.45	
Total for Major Capital Expenditure	108,637.03	43,021.08
Total Expenditure	231,013.48	163,111.83
Total Income	224,248.26	140,758.41
Total Expenditure	231,013.48	163,111.83
Balance	-6,765.22	-22,352.42

St Mary's Linton

Balance sheet As of: 31 December 2023

	2023 £	2022 £
Fixed assets		
Pavilion (note 10)	500	
Investments (note 11)	32,438	28,819
	<u>32,938</u>	<u>29,319</u>
Current assets		
Cash at bank and in hand	40,659	48,825
	<u>40,659</u>	<u>48,825</u>
Liabilities (note 12)		
LCHT	1,293	2,693
Linton Parish Charities	3,494	3,494
	<u>4,787</u>	<u>6,187</u>
Net current assets less current liabilities	<u>35,872</u>	<u>42,637</u>
Total assets less current liabilities	<u>68,810</u>	<u>71,957</u>
Total net assets less liabilities	<u>68,810</u>	<u>71,957</u>
Represented by		
Unrestricted		
Unrestricted - General fund	27,292	30,412
Designated		
Designated - Contingency	22,500	22,500
Designated - Pavilion (note 10)	500	500
Designated - Children and family ministry (note 13)	11,389	12,804
Restricted		
Restricted - Anderson Trust (note 14)	1,664	64
Restricted - Bells	1,450	1,422
Restricted - Churchyard (note 15)	144	238
Restricted - Music	1,320	1,518
Restricted - Organ Fund	2,511	2,496
Funds of the church	<u>68,810</u>	<u>71,957</u>

St Mary the Virgin, Linton

Notes to Financial Statements

Return of Parish Finance

1. Donations include monies given through the good box and our new Payaz as well as personal donations.
2. Grants received this year include £1600 from the Anderson Trust for appliances for Pavilion kitchen, £88,126.61 from the Friends of St Mary's, £23,572.42 from the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme, £1400 from Cambridgeshire ACRE for Warm Hubs. For children and families ministry -£998 from Transforming Lives for Good, £300 from the Anderson Trust and £819 HAF grant (government funded Holiday Activities and Food program).
3. The income from other funds generated includes £11.50 from the book stall and £48.66 from 'Give as you Live'. This year we received £521 from CHCT Ride and Stride and £65 from Church bookings.
4. Social events include refreshments after services, our regular coffee mornings and other organised events such as a singalong, vintage teas, wreath making, Christmas tree festival with Serenata female voices and a New Years Eve party. Overall, £5406.42 profit was made from these events.
5. Charitable giving this year includes £500 to USPG, £500 to Haverhill Foodbank, £350.69 to Friends of the Holy Land, £193.57 to the Poppy Appeal, £350.69 to Cambridge Churches Homeless Project and £101 to Ely 2025 mission fund. Also £300 to Youthinc (Deanery Youthwork scheme) and £6,500.04 to support the work of the Beacon Youth Trust. In addition, £70 from the card reader was given to Christian Aid which was included in £1957 sent to Christian Aid by Pam following the May coffee morning, the Murder mystery evening and Christmas Quiz which she organized.
6. Salaries relates to payments made to our organists and parish administrator, less than in 2022 due to some weeks without a paid administrator. It also includes an honorarium for the enormous amount of work carried out by our Children and Families Minister.
7. Children and Families Ministry covers all expenses relating to young people including Make Lunch, Messy Church, Baptism resources and books for Year 6 leavers.
8. Upkeep of services includes fees paid to Ely and Non-Stipendiary priests for taking weddings and funerals.

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9. The cost of flowers has largely been covered by separate collections and the generosity of the flower arrangers.

Balance Sheet

10. Pavilion at cost £77,031. This has been depreciated and is shown at a nominal value of £500.
11. Investments: The CBF Church of England Investment Fund - Accumulation Shares.
12. Liabilities represents funds held for the Linton Community Help Team and Linton Parish Charities.
13. The Children & Families Ministry fund is money donated specifically for Children and Families Ministry.
14. The Anderson Trust fund represents money held over for purchase of appliances for the Pavilion kitchen.
15. The Parish Council gave us £500 in 2020 to cover on going expenses of the Monday Gang

Sue Ellis – PCC Treasurer.

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7. FABRIC REPORT

The Fabric Committee met in June and December 2023

Works to the fabric of the Church

Following the successful completion of the QI, Lighting and redecoration works last year, there have been no further works to the fabric. The Architect is looking at a scheme for replacing the floor in the Resurrection Chapel, currently concrete paving installed in the mid 1960s, with a stone floor. We are awaiting his specification so that prices can be obtained for the work prior to including this in a Faculty application.

Fixed installations and services

There was a problem with the boilers locking out in the autumn. NG Bailey had difficulty identifying the exact cause of the problem but were finally able to get one boiler running the evening before the start of the Christmas Tree Festival. The second boiler was fixed on 16th December, both have run well since. The Diocese and the CofE drive towards net zero means we can no longer replace boilers like for like without applying for a Faculty. While the boilers can still be maintained, the PCC agreed to look into options for alternative heating systems, although replacement with a more efficient boiler may prove to be the best option.

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

It is still hoped to replace some of the remaining pews with chairs like those in the nave. The DAC have been approached for advice on whether it is worth pursuing a Faculty to remove the pews, and representatives are due to visit the church in May. 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 Faculty approval. The Friends have donated a mobile and height adjustable oak lectern funded by a legacy from Enid Bald. This is already proving useful for services and events.

The Churchyard

The resurfacing of the paths in the Churchyard, by Parish Council contractors, was finally carried out late in 2022 but there is a tendency for a puddle to form outside the north door after heavy rain. The churchyard liaison committee met to discuss this last year. The PC have decided that the paths will need to be resurfaced from scratch once funds are available.

The revised lettering to the main notice board to include Paul's details has been ordered and we are awaiting the application to the board.

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

Other Land

As reported to the last three APCMs, 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 agreed that Andrew should negotiate with the Diocese on funding of this work but he has had no success.

Richard Tonry.

Chairman, Fabric Committee, on behalf of the Churchwardens, 19th May 2024

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8. DEANERY SYNOD ANNUAL REPORT

Meetings held: 12th July 2023, 3rd Nov 2023 and 14th March 2024

Talks

12 July 2023

Revd Mandy Flaherty, Development Officer for Schools Mission
Schools as part of our Mission Plan

3rd November 2023

Revd Mark Rodell, Development Officer for Learning
Open Christian Learning

14th March 2024

Rupert Shortt, author and Research Associate at the Von Hugel Institute,
University of Cambridge
Lent Talk and Discussion - The Hardest Problem: God, Evil and Suffering

Finance

2023 Ministry Share was met in full entitling the Deanery to 2.5% rebate which will be shared back to the parishes in proportion with the amount each has paid. The total balance is £31,159.12 which is divided between 3 funds: Deanery Development Fund (£7387.94), Parish Grant Fund (£8479.35) and Parish Loan Fund (£17,064).

YouthInc

In partnership with Cambridge Youth For Christ, Youthinc is continuing to search to recruit someone to work with our parish churches, in particular to enable older primary school children to build upon their experiences in Sunday school. Meanwhile local churches are joining to share resources to plan events.

Deanery Event Come and Sing planned for the 10th February 2024 2-5pm at Ickleton Church/Hall was cancelled due to lack of support and interest. Jenny Duke would like to re-schedule, date tbc

Granta Deanery Development Plan 2024 – what happens next?

The DDP took 18 months to complete. The process itself was very important as it got PCCs and congregations to discuss their immediate local needs and to formulate plans for the future. The DDP also raised common concerns and issues for all parishes in the Deanery. These are outlined in the Plan on pages 10- 12 under the three headings: 'Deanery internal aspirations and concerns',

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'Deanery external aspirations and concerns' and Five-year vision for the Deanery. These three areas are the ones which the Diocese have paid particular attention to.

All DDPs in the Ely Diocese have been read and reviewed by senior Diocesan clergy which includes: the Bishop, both Archdeacons, Director of Mission and Ministry and the Director of Planning.

Drawing together all the Ely DDPs, the Ven Richard Harlow (Archdeacon of Huntingdon and Wisbech) and the Revd Iain Osborne (Director of Planning) produced a paper entitled 'Deanery Development Planning: What Happens Next?' which using the five areas of development, based on the five 'levers' of Ely 2025, collated the main issues raised by all Ely's DDPs. The five levers are:

- Nurture a confident people of God
- Develop healthy churches and leaders
- Serve the community
- Re-imagine our buildings
- Target support key areas

Each of these five levers are separated into three areas of responsibility: Diocesan, Deanery and Parish. Clearly the idea that any of action points can be implemented by 2025 is unlikely so realistically the aim is for Ely 2035; progress is already taking place, but of course much will depend on the vision of the new Bishop of Ely once he or she is installed.

What happens next for Granta Deanery depends on the three areas of responsibility.

Firstly, Parishes/benefices need to review their section of the DDP regularly with their incumbent.

Secondly, the Rural Dean, Lay Chair and Deanery Synod need to review the issues raised for the Deanery as a whole, especially internal aspirations/concerns and the Five-year vision. This has already started.

Thirdly, the Diocese need to review the issues raised in the external aspirations/concerns. This is probably the most problematic area as in reality it will depend on the Rural Dean and Lay Chair to prompt review and action. In other words, the Deanery can't just wait for action, we have to be pro-active.

Archdeacon visitations

These will be supported by Rural Deans and will begin in Jan 2025. Purpose of the audit is also to support churches and flag up where there are areas of concern. Clergy and wardens will be involved in these visits.

Ascension Day Service

Deanery Ascension Day Service 9 May 2024, Balsham Church, Preacher Cathy Watts, Warden of Readers, Ely Diocese.

Next Deanery Synod Meeting

Tuesday 16 July 2024 location tbc. Meeting starts at 7.30 and tea/coffee are usually available beforehand.

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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. BELL RINGERS

Ringling has continued over the past year with regular ringling for the 10am Sunday service and on Wednesday evenings for the weekly practice. We have again benefitted from a ringer moving into the village as well as seeing encouraging steps being taken by our learners in recent months. Ringling has progressed well with the addition of more advanced methods; this has been enabled by a sustained increase in attendance at practice nights. We were able to ring for the Coronation of King Charles III, including the youngest member of the band (aged 3), which was recognised with a thank you card from the King. We also had the delight of ringling for the wedding of Charlotte and Tom, including a peal which was the first in the tower for 11 years. We are always on the lookout for new learners, or for new ways to share what we do with the wider community.

If you are interested in finding out more please contact our secretary Sue Ellis on sue.ellis@stmaryslinton.org.uk

Stephen Croxall

Tower Captain

St Mary the Virgin, Linton

9.2. EVENTS COMMITTEE

The Events committee has had a busy year and we would like to thank those who have supported our events. Our monthly coffee mornings have continued and are well supported. We have also had many events including: sing along to the musicals, a games and picnic morning, a talk on Ely Cathedral with afternoon tea, a harvest bring and share lunch, the Hadstock Silver Band, a Christmas Tree Festival including the Serenata Singers concert, a Christmas wreath workshop, a New Year's Eve party, a Jigsaw challenge, a pilgrimage to Ely and the New Cambridge Singers concert. We have also provided refreshments at special services such as the carol service. The aim of the events committee is to enhance the social life of the church and to cover its costs. We are very pleased to let you know that since the last APCM we have managed to make a surplus of over £5,000 for church funds, which is £1,000 more than the previous year.

Charlotte Dodd, Chair

9.3. FLOWER MINISTRY

There are six flower arrangers who throughout the year take in turns arranging the flowers around the church.

The pedestal and high altar are the most prominent places seen and each arranger will have a turn doing these. They also choose what colour the flowers are for these arrangements, and they use the appropriate colour when there are festivals such as Christmas and Easter when the church is white and gold/yellow.

With Eastertide continuing until Pentecost, the windowsills, along with the pedestal, high altar and porch will be filled with spring-like flowers, new life within the church.

Flowers have always been at the forefront of recovery, joy, birth and in death, and the arrangers will do their best for you all to enjoy them throughout the year.

We have a collection towards the flowers and very much appreciate the donations given by our congregation.

Nanette Blackmore, Verger and one of your flower arrangers
nanette.blackmore@stmaryslinton.org.uk

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9.4. LINTON C E INFANT SCHOOL

School Improvement and Development Plan (SIDP)

We have a very clear and detailed SIDP, with five main areas of foci for 2023/2024: embedding curriculum progression, preparing for SIAMS inspection, strategy for parental engagement, improving outcomes in writing and embedding maths mastery.

Governors and teachers work together to ensure that the objectives are being met and that we are constantly reviewing and developing. I also sit on the Head Teacher Performance Review Committee to help Kelly Harries plan, monitor and achieve the targets which are aligned with the SIDP and track her own personal performance.

What we are achieving is extremely positive. The school should be very proud of what it has managed to achieve this year. The curriculum offer is impressive, we boast a high level of quality teaching and the children are excited and engaged. School trips and other activities help to make learning fun and memorable, while also providing opportunities that some children would otherwise not get the chance to experience.

As part of Governor monitoring, in March we had a 'Full Governor Day of Business', an annual opportunity for Governors to meet parents, join classes, hear pupil voices, meet with teachers and even have lunch with the children! It is always time well spent, it gives us time to observe, report and reflect and to build familiarity and relationships.

Pupils who qualify for Pupil Premium and those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) continue to be very well supported, we now have 17 on the SEND register and 24 Pupil Premium children and those with english as an additional language. Linton Infants provides excellent pastoral care, children benefit from one to one care, targeted therapy sessions and a sensory room with wonderful outdoor spaces too.

Linton Infants is very well supported by the community, parents are extremely supportive and we get a lot of positive feedback from them. The staff team go from strength to strength, working well together, with

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respect and confidence. Well-being is generally in a very good place for both staff and pupils, the school remains to be a place where people feel welcome, safe and happy.

Budget

The budget continues to be a concern for the school, as it is for the majority of schools not only in our local area, but nationally. We still struggle with a deficit. The cost of living crisis has hit us all, including schools. The financial team continues to keep close eyes on budget planning and keeping costs down wherever possible. The school team have all been mindful of saving money while being creative so that the children are not denied educational opportunities and quality of teaching. Before and After School Clubs provide a significant source of income and we have already had more than predicted uptake on our upcoming Summer Holiday Club provision. Money raising events have been successful and we are grateful to the PTFA for their contributions. All of this has gone a long way to keeping the deficit from getting any bigger this year, but long term the deficit will inevitably grow.

In September the Governing Body met with Jonathan Lewis, (Director of Education for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough), to discuss a realistic plan to pay back this deficit. The number of pupil intake has been very low, which has had huge negative impact on the budget and Jonathan pointed out that the next few years were not looking any better, with national birthrates declining. So we agreed to put to consultation that the school would reduce the PAN, (Published Admissions Number), going down to a structure from six to five classes, with effect from September 2025. By resulting staff restructuring this would save enough money to pay back the deficit over a period of time.

Linton Infants FaceBook page has raised the profile of the school and has been an excellent channel to showcase what the school is doing. Despite low forecast figures, we have 51 first choice applications for September, which is hugely positive.

Governing Body

Currently we benefit from full numbers on the Board of Governors, as we have done for the past several years. We have 8 Foundation Governors, 2 Parent Governors, 1 staff Governor, 1 local Authority Governor, 1 Co-opted Governor, 1 Associate governor and the Head Teacher.

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We have welcomed Luci Neville as Foundation Governor after Michael Younger stepped down, Michael now acting as an Associate Governor. Matt McLoughlin stepped down as Parent Governor and delighted to welcome James Swann as his replacement.

Our Clerk Emma Hicks has decided to step down and we are advertising for somebody to take on this position. A huge thank you to Emma who served her role as Clerk for many years with great efficiency, she is a very skilled Clerk and we have all appreciated all she has done.

I have also decided to step down from my role as Chair of Governors for which I have served, for what will be, 5 years and several more prior to Chair on the Governing Body. I am still hopeful that someone will express an interest in taking on this role as I am keen to ensure that there is a good handover.

My time as Chair has been thoroughly rewarding and I will be sorry to leave. I have learned so much and really valued relationships I have made with children, parents and staff, not least Kelly Harries. I started my role as COVID hit, which posed huge challenges which we got through, we had a successful Ofsted and I am confident that we will exceed expectations at our SIAMS Inspection. It is a good time to pass the baton as I believe the school is in a good place, stable and moving forward with a strong team of Governors to support our vision.

Nicola Collard

Chair of Governors

Friday Church

What a joy Friday Church continues to be! We are so happy to be such an important part of the school week with parents attending who often say how much they love it too. The children look forward to coming as much as we look forward to having them. They are fantastic listeners and volunteers. They are confident to read from the front and many hands shoot up when they are questioned, keen to take part and share what they have learned.

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Michael Wilcockson joined myself and Sarah in leading Friday church this year. Over the Autumn Term we unpicked the Lord's Prayer two sentences at a time over 6 weeks, then went told a few parables, which involved the very popular exercise of losing and finding sheep! Then we had Advent and the Christmas story. 'God the Rescuer' was our theme for the Spring term, using Old Testament stories, this led nicely into the Easter Story of how God rescued the world through Jesus. For the Summer Term we plan to tell the stories after the resurrection, then ascension, pentecost and the early church. After half term we will talk about Paul's journey and how we can share God's word.

We are all very much invested in Friday Church, including the staff, parents, Governors and the church community. Friday Church provides a familiar routine, embedding Christian tradition in a church building which is a familiar and happy place to be, with meaningful worship, prayer and contemplation at the heart of what we do.

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9.5. CHILDREN AND FAMILIES MINISTRY



Children and Families Ministry Report: APCM May 2024



Children are like dandelions! Some love them, some think they are a nuisance. They are 'loud' and in your face one day, the next they are blown away by a puff of wind. We can influence and nurture the growth of a child for only a short span – if they



feel bored or unwanted, the damage is huge and we will have lost them – for ever?

We celebrate another year of ministry amongst the children of Linton and their families. This report tries to give a glimpse of where God has been working by focussing on the highlights!

May 23 – Baby Steps in the pavilion – eight babies and their parents explored how we nurture our baby's spiritual growth through games, songs and stories.



June 23 – Picnic in the Park – we joined with our friends at Linton Free Church to offer free children's crafts, celebrating community and loving Linton.



July 23 – Tots in Tow fundraising coffee morning and toddle event. Messy Church barbeque rounded off the term.

August 23 – Make Lunch Club ran through the school holidays. We served a total of 567 meals in through 2023! The summer programme ended with our annual School Bag Blessing.

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Sept 23 – New school year – Friday school service restarts. Ely cathedral celebration and commissioning of those who work with children across the diocese. Playtime toddler groups conference in Milton Keynes where Sarah met a Storm Trooper!

October 23 – visit to Chestnuts Playgroup with a Bible story. Make Lunch forum. Churches Together Light Party November 23 – Make Lunch annual review by TLC – we were rated GOLD! Make Brunch club on school inset day.

December 23 – Tots, Make Lunch and Messy Church all took part in the Christmas Tree Festival. Messy Christingle was very special, led by our amazing Messy volunteers and the Crib Service was led by a team of parents.



January 24 – Thanks to government Holiday Activities and Food 'enrichment experience' funding, Make Lunch were able to visit the pantomime. Oh yes we did!

February 24 – Sarah took some time off! Make Lunch in half term with dinosaur theme!

March 24 – Last Friday school service of the term was led by all three of the leadership team as we travelled with Jesus' friends from Palm Sunday through to Easter Sunday. Messy Good Friday in the village hall and Churches Together Easter Trail enabled more than 100 children, and their families, to hear the Easter story.



April 24 – Open The Book assembly at Castle Camps. Another Baby Steps group starting. Registering for Holiday Activities and Food funding for summer holidays.

As we reflect on the fragility and short life of the dandelion, the Children and Families team thank all who have invested in the ministry in so many ways. You will receive your reward!

Sarah is now entering her last year in her role as Children and Families minister.

Maybe children's ministers are a little like dandelions too!

Sarah Thorne Children and Families Minister (LLM)

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9.6. PASTORAL GROUP

The group is made up of 8 members, all committed to extending the kindness and compassion to our community whilst upholding safe working practices. We usually meet, as a whole 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. Pastoral partners have been introduced for the group members; the idea is to encourage contact with a named partner for support in addition to that gained from the whole group meetings.

The group discuss our training needs at each meeting. We undertake the safeguarding checks and complete the training required by the Diocese. In the last year we have agreed and reviewed a risk assessment to ensure continuity and safer practice. We also agreed that a signed and dated photo identification card could be made available to anyone who wanted to carry one.

Pastoral visits are made 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 the individual. The group has collectively MANY years of experience. We continue to contact some people by phone, arrange face-to-face visits, Home Communion visits are offered too. It is wonderful to see the regular visits and communion happening at both Nichols Court and Symonds House again.

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.

Sue Filby, sue.filby@stmaryslinton.org.uk

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9.7. THE FRIENDS OF ST MARY'S

Report to APCM from The Friends of St Mary's,
Linton



**Friends of
St. Mary's
Linton**

'The Friends' is a secular charity, formed to help with the costs of maintaining the church building, its fixtures and fittings. Currently there are 80 members who pay a membership fee each year, currently £20 although many give more. In addition to a modest programme of social events we also administer the funds bequeathed by Richard Godel and make available any surplus from them in accordance with his wishes.

Historically the Friends have funded all of the costs associated with maintenance identified at the Quinquennial Inspection (QI) enabling the PCC to use their funds for other purposes. Since April 2023 we have paid an architect's bill of £23,183.66 and £10,339.38 in builder's fees for works associated with the QI and also £395 for protection of the organ during that project. Additionally over the course of the year we have paid £3,678.30 for work on the church boiler comprising repairs and a new Hive thermostat, £88 for window repairs, £1,530.00 for two Bose speakers for the church public address system and £894.91 (yes, really) for replacement bulbs for the church projector. Including the QI related payments this amounts to a total of over £40,000.

We have also received, with gratitude, a donation for the cost of the adjustable new lectern, received in memory of Mrs Edith Bald.

The Friends are grateful to the church for allowing us to run the October coffee morning. In December we took part in the Christmas Tree Festival. Our new year coffee and mince pies morning was as always a happy social event but the highlight of the year for us was our quiz, held in the church in February. Many thanks to David and Cathy Watts for running the quiz itself and the hard-working committee members for providing food, running the raffle and dealing with the organisation of the event.

Our traditional Summer Teas will take place this year on Thursday, 27th June, Thursday, 11th July and Thursday, 8th August – as with all our events all are welcome . We also hope to have coffee mornings in October and January. Please look out for the posters or check our website at <https://www.friendsofstmaryslinton.org.uk/>

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I should like to thank all our committee for their work on behalf of the Friends, particularly our Treasurer, Mr Hugh Paton and Mrs Judith Tonry our Secretary. We were all very sorry to receive the resignation of Mrs Celia Fisher from the committee last year. Except for the ex-officio members all the committee posts will be confirmed for the following year at our AGM on 15th May in the church pavilion.

We always welcome new members and encourage all who value the church building to join us.

Andrew King, Chair, The Friends of St Mary's, Linton.
April 2024

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9.8 Music Ministry Report

APCM report on Music Ministry May 2023-April 2024

The Music Ministry at St Mary's, Linton benefits from the musical skills of many people to cover the requirements of our wide variety of services. On this occasion we bid thanks and farewell to Russell Taylor who has contributed so much to the Music Group as keyboard accompanist over many years.

Pam Richardson, after many years singing in the choir, has stepped down and we thank her for her commitment - her voice will be sorely missed.

Our voices change as the years pass, sopranos once high and powerful become lower in range and more mellow. Men's voices may eventually become weaker. We are always keen to welcome new singers in the choir and the music group and I am always happy to discuss what is involved with anyone considering joining us. We are privileged to lead God's people in singing his praises in our worship.

2024 has been a difficult year so far for Anne and me. Following my collapse in mid-January it was a truly blessed relief for me to get well knowing that Tom Dodd, Jacqui Burge, Sue Arden and Simon Godsill were keeping the musical show on the road, as it were.

I am also grateful to David Poulter (previously organist of several large cathedrals) who has made himself available to play for funerals. Our musical relationship with our local undertakers, Paintins, is both professional and cordial.

The choir has expanded its repertoire this year adding, amongst others, Howard Goodall's "Love divine, all loves excelling" and "Lo, star-led chiefs" by William Crotch for an Epiphany choral evensong. More recently we gave our first singing of Debbie Wiseman's "Alleluia. O clap your hands together", which was written for the coronation of the King and Queen last year.

We have also introduced David Thorne's "Mass of St Thomas" for the Sung Parish Communion service – a popular setting in many parishes.

As always, I am grateful to Anne for her administrative support and keeping the choir library in order – a not insignificant task.

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As I reminded an old friend recently all things change but God is always the same – a constant. This is what kept me going through the dark days of January and February. My first service back playing the organ at St Mary's was on Easter Day, and what a joy that was.

Thank you all for your kind prayers and support.

David Parry-Smith
Director of Music