THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST MARYS CHURCH WOOTTON BEDS

England & Wales · Charity number 1150817

Details

Other names	ST MARYS CHURCH WOOTTON BEDS
Status	Registered
Legal form	Previously excepted
Registered	2013-02-14
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	The Vicarage Church Road Wootton Bedford MK43 9HF
Phone	01234768391
Email	office@stmaryswootton.org.uk
Website	www.stmaryswootton.org.uk

Activities

Objects: PROMOTING IN THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH THE WHOLE MISSION OF THE CHURCH.

Activities: Christian church

Classification

- **How:** Makes Grants To Organisations, Provides Buildings/facilities/open Space, Provides Services
- **What:** Religious Activities
- **Who:** The General Public/mankind

Geography

- Bedford

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Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2024-12-31	£157,678	£149,848	-	-
2023-12-31	£151,868	£159,947	-	-
2022-12-31	£159,750	£147,060	-	-
2021-12-31	£148,787	£147,389	-	-
2020-12-31	£161,061	£151,292	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
TIMOTHY JAMES DILLSTONE	Chair	2018-04-01
ALISON REED-THOMSETT		2025-04-27
Allyson Cable		2023-04-23
Annette Hart		2025-04-27
Claire Brice		2023-04-23
HAZEL CATHERINE SANDERS		2013-01-08
Jean-Michel Rodrigues		2024-04-22
Katharine Wilson		2025-04-27
Matthew Robert Hearn		2020-09-28
PAULINE YVONNE KENDALL		2017-01-08

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England & Wales - Charity number 1150817

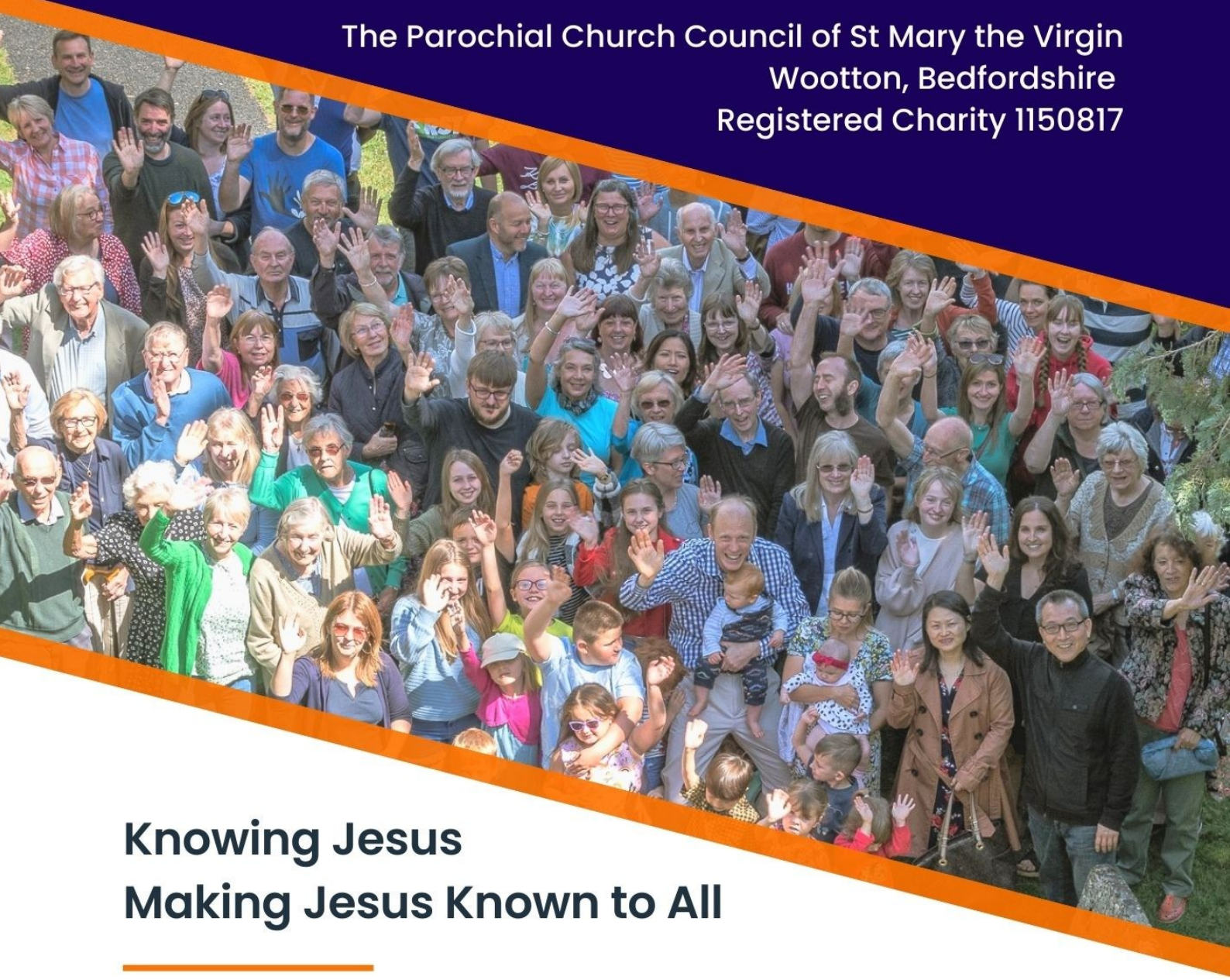
Accounts

st mary's wootton

Annual Report
& Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 Dec 2024

The Parochial Church Council of St Mary the Virgin
Wootton, Bedfordshire
Registered Charity 1150817



Knowing Jesus
Making Jesus Known to All

www.stmaryswootton.org.uk

01234 765375/768391

office@stmaryswootton.org.uk

The Vicarage, Church Rd, Wootton, Bedford, MK43 9HF

Who we are

St Mary's is a family of ordinary people brought together by the extraordinary, life-changing good news of Jesus Christ. We come from a range of backgrounds and places. None of us has it all sorted. Everyone is welcome. We try to sum up who we are and where we are going in the following statements:

Our Mission

Knowing Jesus; making Jesus known to all

Our Vision



For St. Mary's to be: a united body of worshipping disciples, rooted in the Bible and prayer, growing together in holiness and every-member ministry to become a family of:

- **loving care**, welcoming and caring for one another with the love of Jesus Christ.
- **passionate proclamation**, reaching the people of Wootton, Stewartby and beyond, with the good news of Jesus Christ.
- **glad service**, dedicated to being salt and light in the world for Jesus Christ.
- **global heart**, supporting the worldwide mission of making Jesus known, including sending men and women into gospel ministry.
- **sacrificial change**, giving generously of ourselves to realise this vision

Our Values

We believe that we are reconciled to God the Father through faith in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit, and therefore we value:

The Bible	as the written word of God and our supreme authority in following Jesus in the whole of life.
Prayer	as the prime expression of faith in Jesus and of our dependence on God's loving grace and sovereign power in all things.
Church	as a family of wholehearted worshippers and disciples of Jesus Christ committed to mutual encouragement, care, and accountability.
Evangelism	as the proclamation of the good news of God's salvation in Christ for all people
Service	as a family of God's people caring for people in Wootton and Stewartby and beyond with the love of Christ.

Our Identity



We are...

Christ's church:	the church is the bride and body of Jesus Christ; it is through him alone, revealed to us by the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures, that we know God; it is through the power of the Holy Spirit that we worship and serve Christ; and it is Christ's future return which is our hope and motivation for life.
A local church:	a full and authentic expression of the universal church, called into being and sustained by God's word. We have a specific responsibility to proclaim and demonstrate the love of God in Christ among the people of the parish of Wootton. We are also called to involvement with the world-wide mission of the whole church.
An Anglican church:	while we welcome Christians of all backgrounds, our permanent and most visible connection is with the Church of England. We accept and uphold its founding documents (The Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion, the Book of Common Prayer, and the Ordinal) as authentic expressions of orthodox Christian belief. We are committed to supporting and encouraging biblical faith and practice in the Anglican Communion, both within and beyond the diocese of St Albans.
An evangelical church:	we recognise the convictions of historic evangelicalism as crystallising and expressing the kernel of orthodox Christianity, including: the supreme authority of Scripture; the universal nature of human sin; the grace of God, seen above all in the substitutionary atoning death of Jesus Christ; and the gift of justification and new life in Christ, received and enjoyed only through repentance and faith. We value the examples, among others, of the sixteenth-century reformers, the eighteenth-century evangelists, and the nineteenth-century social reformers. We are committed to gospel partnership with evangelical mission agencies, as well as with our patron, the Martyrs' Memorial and Church of England Trust, and the Church Pastoral Aid Society.

Aims and Purposes

St Marys Church Wootton exists to glorify Almighty God through the proclamation of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ to all people, and through the pastoral care of members of the congregation and the local community. This is our mission, which we sum up as 'Knowing Jesus and making Jesus known to all', and which is our privilege and joy.

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of cooperating with the incumbent, Canon Peter Ackroyd, in promoting this mission - pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical - in the ecclesiastical parish of Wootton, which comprises the two civil parishes of Wootton and Stewartby.

Objectives and Activities

The primary objective of the Parochial Church Council is the promotion of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to the doctrine of the Church of England. The PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship in the parish church, to providing opportunities for adults and young people to hear the gospel and grow in discipleship, to caring pastorally and practically for people in need, and to supporting Christian mission within and beyond the parish. The PCC regularly reviews the effectiveness of the church's ministry in the light of its own Mission Action Plan, and the three themes of the Living God's Love vision of the Diocese of St Albans: Going Deeper into God, Transforming Communities, and Making New Disciples. In planning and overseeing the mission of the church, the incumbent and PCC consider the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the supplementary guidance on charities for the advancement of religion.

St. Mary's Vision Statement

This was revised by the Church Council during 2024, and can be found on the inside cover of this booklet.

In fulfilment of this vision the PCC identified three strategic priorities: Deeper Discipleship, Loving Evangelism, and Generous Space. Deeper Discipleship relates to the need to foster confidence in the gospel and in gospel-centred life and service. Loving Evangelism expresses our intention to reach out to those beyond the church community with the life-transforming good news of Jesus Christ. Generous Space recognises that the facilities in the church building are ill-suited in many ways to the achievement of the church's mission and vision.

Achievement of this vision depends, under God, on the willing service of many church members, led and served by the vicar and the staff team. The staff team consisted of the vicar (Peter Ackroyd), part-time administrator (Diane Murray), and part-time youth and children's worker (Emma Hearn). Jim Hignett continued to serve as licensed Reader, including significant ministry at Stewartby United Church. The council considers that the continued employment of a part-time youth and children's worker should take precedence over offering to train a curate. The council also employs the staff of St Marys Preschool.

To facilitate the ministry of the church the PCC maintains the fabric of both the church building and the church hall, which is on a separate site. Maintenance of the churchyards, which are closed, is the responsibility of Wootton Parish Council. The PCC also owns a residential two-bedroomed house, originally purchased to accommodate a curate and family; the property is currently let.



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Ministry and Mission in 2024

Worship and Prayer

Public worship was offered at 10am in the church building every Sunday morning, and at Stewartby United Church twice a month. Towards the end of the year, attendance in person at St Mary's averaged around seventy adults and fifteen children under sixteen on Sunday mornings. The service continued to be livestreamed on the church's YouTube channel.

Ministry at St Mary's is founded on expository preaching of the Bible. Sermons series during the year included series covering some of the psalms, 'The Jesus Revolution' - Luke's account of the early ministry and teaching of Jesus (cc4-6) as well as his Passion, 'Alive to God' (Romans cc6-8), and 'The God who Loves to Show Mercy' (Micah). Topical series included the Means of Grace, sermons on following Jesus in a world of war and conflict, authority, work and artificial intelligence, 'The Generous Life' (Christian discipleship and giving) and, as a prelude to Advent, the 'Four Last Things' - heaven, hell, death and judgment. During the course of the year we welcomed as visiting preachers Barry Funnell (The Word for the World bible translators), Canon Vaughan Roberts (St Ebbe's Oxford), Phil Knox (Evangelical Alliance) and Revd Rupert Shelley (Crosslinks). Other visitors during the year included our mission partners Bishop Alf & Hilary Cooper (CMS, Chile), and YP & Jude Gayet (Belgium).

The Lord's Supper was celebrated monthly. Three children and one adult were baptised during the year. Only two weddings were celebrated in church. Between them, the Vicar and Reader officiated at fifteen funeral services held for present or former parish residents at St Marys, Stewartby United Church, or Bedford Crematorium.

Early in the year the monthly Sunday evening prayer service was replaced by 'Hallowed be Your Name' - mid-week days of prayer every other month. On these days, short prayer meetings were held in church at 8am, 12noon, 4pm and 8pm, following a published pattern of prayer which church members were invited to use in their homes and workplaces where possible. This initiative fostered a greater sense of a common prayer life among church members.

Services in Holy Week and Easter included All-Age and Hour at the Cross services on Good Friday, and Easter Communion on Easter Day. Sadly, we were unable to hold a Sunrise Service as the regular site is now less easily accessible.

Services at Christmas – Christingle, Nativity, Carols by Candlelight and three services over Christmas Eve and Christmas Day - were well-attended. For the first time for some years, carol-singers led by Allyson Cable brought Christmas cheer to many village streets, concluding with a short recital in local pub.

At the invitation of the Speaker of the Borough Council, local councillor John Wheeler, we hosted the annual Civic Carol Service, welcoming to St Marys on 8 December the Mayor, Councillors and Aldermen of Bedford, the Deputy Lieutenant of Bedfordshire, many invited guests and musicians from the Wootton Lower and Upper Schools.

The parish council Act of Remembrance on Sunday 10 November at the War Memorial in Church Road, was led by the vicar and preceded by an all-age service in church.

School events in church included regular Preschool services, and a Wootton Lower School Christmas assembly.

Regular worship as well as occasional services at St Mary's was enabled by many volunteer helpers, and especially by musicians and singers. In November John Robertson retired as Organist after sixteen years of dedicated service. His retirement was appropriately marked by a well-attended and captivating organ recital in his honour given by Gary Sieling, President of the Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Organists Association, by the presentation of a garden armchair given by the congregation in appreciation of his service, and by appointment as Organist Emeritus. Ian Harris succeeded as organist.

During the year the following church members undertook the diocese's Lay Leader of Worship training, were authorized by the Bishop of Bedford to lead services at St Mary's, and were commissioned in church for this ministry: Martin & Hazel Sanders, Ant Hall, and Allyson Cable.

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Families, children and young people

This year we moved back to running 3 groups on a Sunday for the first time since before Covid. All groups use Mustard Seeds and Faith in Kids material and we now have Climbers-age 2-Yr 1, Explorers-Yr2-Yr 5 and Pathfinders -Yr 6-Yr 9. The separation of ages has been positive for the children and leaders enabling more age targeted teaching.

We ran a series of Wild Church afternoons as a follow-up from Holiday Club, these were an outreach event held outside with a series of 'forest school' type activities enabling families to explore various themes with a collective time of worship with a short talk. The target audience wasn't really reached but it was appreciated by those who attended.

We led a residential trip alongside St Peter and Paul's Church (Cranfield) to Chellington with 17 children and 7 leaders. We had various activities including a trip to a local country park and a silent disco. Our guest speaker led talks based on Jonah and we led devotional times with the children in small groups plus had a session to answer big questions about Christianity.

Our annual Holiday Club had approximately 100 children with a team of 55 volunteers. It was Olympic themed and covered various gospel passages using Scripture Union material. We invited families to bring a picnic to enjoy on the last day of the club. This was well attended, we had activities for the children and it was a great opportunity to talk with families.

A summary of activities during 2024 include:

- Weekly Sunday Children's groups
- Weekly JAM sessions
- Open the Book assemblies at Wootton Lower School
- Chellington residential trip
- Church away day with CYP sessions
- Holiday Club
- JAM trip to Sorted (4 young people & 2 YCM leaders)
- Christingle Service
- Wootton Lower School Christmas visit to Church
- Nativity service with congregational involvement
- Family Carol Service



.Discipleship, Pastoral Care and Training

Christians grow in their discipleship as they engage with one another and with the Bible's teaching in a number of settings. The PCC accordingly aims to support a range of pathways accessible as widely as possible to support, teach and encourage this lifelong process of 'spiritual formation'.

In June around fifty church members including young people attended 'Faithfull', a church away-day at the Harrold Centre. Tony Watkins, Fellow for Public Engagement at Tyndale House, Cambridge, led two sessions reflecting on Christian mission today in the light of the early church's experience in Acts.

Midweek growth groups are central to our aim to support one another in following Jesus. Five Growth Groups met during the year, weekly in the evening or daytime, to study the Bible, pray, and support one another; around half of regular church attenders are growth group members. Leaders met termly to receive training and support, and to pray together. A group for some Lunch Club members met fortnightly, and towards the end of the year offered 'Hymns we Love' to Lunch Club members. Growth Groups generally used bible study material connected to Sunday sermons; in the autumn groups also engaged with the video-based Generosity Project.

The monthly Men's Breakfast continued to meet, and attracted up to a dozen men for mutual support and encouragement.

During the first weekend in May, church members once again attended the Bible by the Beach conference in Eastbourne.

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A number completed the Crosslands Training Pastoral Care Course, led by Diane Murray. On account of other commitments, it was not possible to form a new Pastoral Care Team.

Social events were held during the year enabling church members and their guests to build relationships and to foster mutual support. These included occasional church Sunday lunches, a summer barbecue at the vicarage, and a Harvest Lunch in the church hall. In November a bonfire party was held for church families in the vicarage garden.

A bookstall was maintained in church. At Lent and Advent, church members and families were able to purchase and study daily devotional readings.

The PCC encourages church members, especially those with leadership responsibility, to attend relevant training events, in line with its Training Policy. During the year, staff and ministry leaders attended conferences run by Growing Young Disciples, Proclamation Trust, the Four Counties Gospel Partnership, St Albans Diocesan Evangelical Fellowship, and Biblical Counselling UK, as well as the Christian Resources Exhibition. Church members attended day events mainly in support of youth and children's ministry.

Mission and outreach

PCC continued to pursue St Mary's mission - 'Knowing Jesus; making Jesus known to all' - through a range of activities.

Enquiry courses for people exploring the Christian faith were offered throughout the year, using the Christianity Explored and 3-2-1 courses.

The occasional alternative and outdoor outreach and worship events, 'WILD Church' initiated in 2024 under Emma Hearn's leadership concluded with an Easter-themed event. Following a review, it was noted that though these events had attracted a number of families who did not regularly attend church, repeat-attendance was rare and no community was accordingly forming. Grateful for all that had been achieved, it was agreed to discontinue this venture.

The Lunch Club for the over 50's met monthly, preceded by a short 'thought for the day' and prayer led by team members.

Mission & Mission Partnerships

The PCC tithes its income from regular giving to support Christian mission beyond the parish, in line with its Global Mission Policy. During the year the PCC began a delayed review of the church's support for mission beyond the parish, in line with its Global Missions Policy. This review is expected to conclude in 2025.

In 2024 the following mission agencies or partners continue to receive financial and prayer support:

- Faith in Kids – resources and training for church youth and children's work
- IMPACT – Christian workers supporting local schools.
- Jude and YP Gayet - youth ministry in Belgium.
- Bishop Alf and Hilary Cooper - supporting church planting and evangelical unity with CMS in Chile.
- Speak Life – UK evangelistic ministry (Director: Glen Scrivener)
- The Church Pastoral Aid Society
- Festive – UK agency supporting discipleship and evangelism in sixth form and FE colleges
- Tearfund

PCC's support for former church member Martin Teh 2023-24 in his service as ministry intern at ChristChurch Mayfair, came to an end in August.

Throughout the year church members supported the work of Bedford Foodbank through a collection point in the church, and contributed to periodic 'red bucket' appeals for the relief of countries hit by natural disasters. Church members participated in the annual Operation Christmas Child (Samaritan's Purse) appeal, and at Christmas supported the Prebend Centre SMART appeal for the homeless in Bedford.

Church buildings

The PCC is responsible for the upkeep of the Church building, Church hall, grounds, and a residential house currently rented to a member of the congregation.

To better align with our current resources, the PCC decided to pause the Generous Space Project and refocus on the North Porch, addressing the long-overdue roof repairs recommended in the Quinquennial report. The Premises and Facilities Committee has effectively overseen various projects on behalf of the PCC, including installing new worktops, cookers, and heating in the hall. Electrical remedial work was completed in the house, while the Church benefited from electrical repairs, fibre broadband installation, and a new water meter. Progress has also been made on several issues highlighted in the Quinquennial report alongside ongoing routine maintenance.

To further support the efficient management of responsibilities, the PCC purchased a new mobile phone, two laptops, and secured a new photocopier lease.

Ecumenical Relationships

The PCC aims to strengthen Christian witness and service in the community through membership of Wootton and Stewartby Churches. Though there was no joint activity during the year, healthy relationship were maintained, and since the year end the WSC committee has reconvened, welcoming incoming pastor of Wootton Baptist Church, Tom Roberts to its meeting.

The vicar attended regular prayer meetings for leaders of Bedford Churches in sympathy with the doctrinal basis of the Evangelical Alliance, of which St Mary's is a corporate member.

The Four Counties Gospel Partnership, whose launch St Mary's had sponsored, offered a number of events to support local churches, hosted by Kings Church, Flitwick.

St Mary's Preschool

The PCC (as Registered Person) operates the St Mary's Preschool which serves local families five days a week during term time from the Church Hall under the experienced leadership of the Manager, Tracey Kerins. The Preschool roll in the autumn term comprised thirty-three children. There were eight members of staff. Staff are regularly appraised, supported to complete all required training, and encouraged to undertake professional development and progress as Preschool practitioners.

During the year, deputy manager Lina Rosato retired after thirty year's service to the Preschool and its predecessor, St Mary's Play Group, and was presented with gifts at a farewell reception. Allyson Cable and Caroline Kavanagh were appointed as Senior Deputy and Deputy Managers from 1 September.

Tracey Kerins was due to retire at the end of the year. However, recruitment of a successor proved challenging, and PCC was grateful that she agreed to continue in a part-time capacity for the winter term 2025.

Oversight of the Preschool is undertaken on behalf of the PCC by a management group comprising the Preschool Manager and deputy managers, and three members of PCC: Peter Ackroyd (Nominated Individual), Pauline Kendall and Nina Rodrigues. The management group reviews all Preschool policies annually. Members visit the Preschool during its operating hours to observe practice and support the staff, and complete relevant Educare training modules as recommended by Bedford Borough Council.

The vicar visits weekly to lead a Bible story, prayer and song. At Christmas and Easter a Preschool Church Service is held for children staff and parents.

Holywell Church of England School, Cranfield

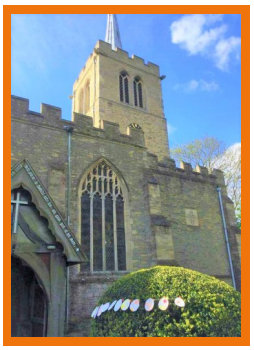
The PCC nominates a number of governors at Holywell School, a school serving years 5-8. Continuing Wootton PCC Foundation Governors were: Pauline Kendall (Chair of Governors), Martin Sanders, Fiona Frossell and Isabel Turner. The Vicar regularly met with the Head, Mike Simpson, and in partnership with Cranfield Parish Church provided support for Key Stage assemblies.

Three-tier education is being phased out across the Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire local authorities. During the year, the Holywell board and senior leadership team, with the support of the diocese, continued to prepare for Holywell to become a Church of England Secondary School, serving years 7-11 predominantly from Cranfield and Marston. With schools in Wootton switching to a two-tier structure, Wootton's connection with Holywell is expected to become progressively less significant. The PCC keeps this under review and responded to a consultation on the transition.

Deanery Synod

St Marys was represented on Bedford Deanery Synod by its licensed clergy and three representatives of the laity. During the year the Synod met four times. The vicar and Pauline Kendall are among the Deanery's representatives on Diocesan Synod. Regular reports of the proceedings of Deanery Synod were made to PCC.

Structure, governance and management



The PCC met nine times in the year. Some of the work of the PCC is carried out through the following sub-committees: Standing, Finance, Youth Council, Preschool Management, and the Premises and Facilities Team. The Standing Committee met between PCC meetings, and is made up of the vicar, wardens, treasurer and secretary. The role of the Standing Committee is to prioritise items for the PCC meeting, discuss and make decisions on items of a confidential nature or look in more detail on matters that have been brought to the PCC. The Youth Council met three times.

Following the election of new members to PCC at the Annual Meeting, PCC reviewed its committee memberships and PCC officer appointments, and engaged in some training on the purpose of PCC.

The safeguarding of young people and vulnerable adults was a standing item on the agenda of every meeting. At the beginning of the year the PCC conducted an annual review of our safeguarding practice and approved updated Safeguarding and related policies. The Parish Safeguarding Officer is Kate Wilson. She was supported by Emma Hearn, Pauline Kendall and Martin Sanders as deputy safeguarding officers. Training on safeguarding arranged by the Diocese has been attended by members of the PCC, as well as by leaders of young people's groups and others as required under the church's safeguarding policy and by the Church of England.

Issues discussed during the year by the church council included: evangelism and pastoral care; renewal of the church Mission Action Plan; the Church of England's proposed Prayers of Love and Faith; church staff contracts and salaries; St Marys Preschool; PCC finances; the care maintenance and development of the church and church hall, including the Generous Space project; youth and children's ministry, including the appointment of leaders and helpers; health and safety; proceedings at Deanery and Diocesan Synods; arrangements for Christmas and other special services; mission partnerships review; installation in the church hall of new cookers and a new heating boiler.

At the beginning of the year, following growing concern among evangelicals and others in the Church of England over the House of Bishops proposals for Prayers of Love and Faith, and in line with the PCC's 2017 Resolution on Human Sexuality, the PCC recognized that St Marys was in a state of impaired communion with the bishops serving St Albans diocese. The PCC accordingly requested alternative spiritual oversight from the Church of England Evangelical Council, and support is now being provided by Revd Canon Vaughan Roberts, Rector of St Ebbe's Church Oxford. This is a temporary and informal arrangement, pending the agreement of suitable provision for parishes maintaining the church's historic position on human sexuality. Relations with St Albans diocese remain strong: as noted elsewhere in this report, several church members participated in the Lay Leaders of Worship programme, while the Vicar served on both Bishop's Council and Diocesan Synod, and in October was elected as a member of the Vacancy in See Committee.

The PCC employs a part-time administrator, part-time Youth and Families Worker, the staff of the Preschool, and a church hall cleaner. Jim Hignett serves as a licensed Reader and attends regular diocesan events.

The PCC and staff work in partnership with teams of volunteer helpers, appointed by the PCC and the vicar.

The PCC and Administrator comply with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) regarding the privacy of church member's information.

Electoral Roll

A revision of the Electoral Roll took place in April 2024. Following the revision the roll numbered 134. At the end of the year, the total was 133.

Partnership with Stewartby United Church

Ministry at Stewartby United Church, a local ecumenical project, is provided under the terms of a Sharing Agreement in which the Church of England and the Methodist Church are the remaining active partners. Licensed ministers and congregation members from St Mary's continued to support Stewartby, leading the monthly Sunday afternoon service, speaking at the monthly T@3 event, serving on the church council and participating in other events.

Financial Review

Total receipts of unrestricted and designated giving and income amounted to £139,427 whilst restricted giving totalled £17,951, giving our church a total income of £157,678, which included £19,947 from Gift Aid eligible donations. While this was an increase, it was short of what was anticipated based on pledged donations (this was as a result of a number of church members leaving St. Marys during the year) where the total funds anticipated came to £164,959 (a shortfall of £7,281). Our total income increased by £5,809 versus the previous year - this was largely due to increased investment interest, rent for church buildings and assigned fees; by £2,638, £1,280 and £1,002 respectively, totalling £5,820 more than last year.

Our total expenditure for the year was £149,847, including Parish Share payments of £68,000. For the first time for many years, we were unable to pay Parish Share in full, owing to lower than budgeted giving income, and concerns over cash flow. The total shortfall was £11,572. Overall expenditure was £10,099 lower than 2023.

Overall, the level of giving, excluding that given for specific projects, remained broadly flat on the year. Given the small decrease in the number of members, and the cost-of-living impact upon the congregation at this time this is encouraging.

For 2024 our church set a budget of £164,959 for income and expenditure and by the end of the year we were left with a surplus of £7,830, however, without the withheld portion of the Parish Share this would have been a deficit of £3,742.

The funds we're able to utilise in our day-to-day operation and mission activities increased on the year from £18,773 to £22,471. It is noted that following on from reductions in 2021, 2022 and again in 2023 our continued ability to meet our obligations has changed from being at risk – it has now been impacted in 2024 as we were unable to meet our Parish Share in full.

We have, during the 2025 budgeting process, communicated the need for increased giving to the congregation.

Reserves Policy

Throughout the year we maintained our reserve fund at £10,000, this allows us to meet our obligation in terms of staff salaries and church running costs for a period of two months. Our cash reserves, excluding endowments, remain strong with a total of £267,891 on deposit at the end of the year, with £245,278 of this being funds restricted to specific expenditure. During the year we continued to operate two current accounts with our Metro Bank account as the main account while we maintain the NatWest Bank account to ensure no account has funds exceeding £85,000, the limit set under the Financial Services Compensation Scheme. In terms of a deposit account, we continue to invest in the CBF Church of England Funds through CCLA.

Safeguarding

St Mary's is committed to safeguarding all whom God has placed in its care. The PCC has complied with its duty to have 'due regard' to the House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy and Practice Guidance.

Ultimately, the PCC has overall responsibility to ensure all safeguarding requirements are fulfilled. The safeguarding and related policies are reviewed annually by the PCC as is the effectiveness of the church's safeguarding practice. Safeguarding is a standing item on all PCC agendas and the Parish Safeguarding Officer reports any matters arising. The Parish Safeguarding dashboard supports Parishes to have due regard to the House of Bishops' safeguarding requirements. St Mary's use this to good effect. We are also looking to adopt the safeguarding hub, a bolt on to the dashboard which assists us with safer recruitment processes.

The PCC have appointed a Safeguarding Team, Kate Wilson (Parish Safeguarding Officer and Lead recruiter), Emma Hearn, Pauline Kendall and Martin Sanders to ensure a good safeguarding culture is maintained at St Mary's. The lead recruiter for the parish ensures all volunteers are safely recruited to their roles and they complete the relevant safeguarding training for their role. All volunteers, including PCC members and group leaders have attended the relevant training for their role. A central record of DBS checks and training is held by the lead recruiter. Contact details for the safeguarding team are prominently placed around church and details of how to contact the team can be found on the parish website (St Mary's safeguarding team). Within our fortnightly bulletin, there is also a statement which highlights St Mary's commitment to safeguarding and provides web links to the safeguarding policies and the safeguarding team.

Opportunities are taken throughout the year to mention safeguarding and issues of abuse during other services. Safeguarding matters and good practice are regularly highlighted at all church activities and meetings.

St. Mary the Virgin Parochial Church Council
Independent Examiner's Report of accounts
for January to December 2024

Independent Examiner's report to the Parochial Church Council
of St Mary the Virgin, Wootton, Bedford
Charity Commission no. 1150817

This report on the accounts of the PCC for the year ended **31 December 2024**, which are set out on pages 1 to 4 is in respect of an examination carried out in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 ('the Regulations') and **s.145 of the Charities Act 2011** ('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 **s.144(2)** of the Act does 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 **s.145(5)(b)** of the Act and to be found in the Church guidance, 2006 edition. 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:

i. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section **130** of the 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

ii. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed Lynda Richardson Independent Examiner – L. Richardson

Date 24/03/2025

Signed on behalf of PCC _____ Incumbent – P.M. Ackroyd

Date 24 March 2025

st mary's wootton

St Mary's Church, Wootton

Balance Sheet to 31st December 2024

		As at 31/12/2024	As at 31/12/2023
Endowment assets			
	1509: Wootton Armstrong Fund	1,711.08	1,672.79
	1510: Wootton Church Cottages	27,516.01	26,900.31
	Total Fixed assets	**29,227.09**	**28,573.10**
Current assets			
	1501: NatWest Current	83,623.01	82,076.04
	1503: CBF Capital Fund	125,771.97	119,432.68
	1504: CBF Studley Road	1.88	1.79
	1508: Cash Book	—	—
	1511: Metro Current	58,494.78	58,731.01
	Total Current assets	**267,891.64**	**260,241.52**
Liabilities			
	1650: Loans for Stonework	—	—
	6699: Agency collections	142.59	322.90
	Total Liabilities	**142.59**	**322.90**
	Net Asset surplus (deficit)	**296,976.14**	**288,491.72**
Reserves			
	Excess / (deficit) to date	7,830.43	(8,078.06)
	Z01: Starting balances	288,491.72	294,093.10
	Z02: Other gains/(losses)	653.99	2,476.68
	Total Reserves	**296,976.14**	**288,491.72**

Represented by Funds		
Unrestricted	22,471.16	18,773.61
Restricted	245,277.89	241,145.01
Endowment	29,227.09	28,573.10
Total	**296,976.14**	**288,491.72**

St Mary's Church, Wootton

Statement of Financial Activities

For the period from 01 January 2024 to 31 December 2024

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Prior year total funds
Incoming resources					
Donations, Legacies and similar incoming resources	116,628	3,789	—	120,417	119,380
Activities in furtherance of the charity's objects	23,098	—	—	23,098	21,967
Activities for generating funds	—	—	—	—	—
Investment income	—	7,132	—	7,132	4,493
Other incoming resources	—	7,029	—	7,029	6,027
Total income	**139,727**	**17,951**	**—**	**157,678**	**151,868**
Resources used					
Grants payable in furtherance of charity's objects	8,840	—	—	8,840	8,200
Activities in furtherance of the charity's objects	117,586	13,693	—	131,279	141,731
Support costs	5,924	527	—	6,451	7,207
Expenditure on managing-administering the charity	3,276	—	—	3,276	2,807
Total expenditure	**135,627**	**14,220**	**—**	**149,847**	**159,946**
Gains / losses on investment assets	—	—	653	653	2,476
Net income / (expenditure) resources before transfer	**4,099**	**3,730**	**653**	**8,484**	**(5,601)**
Transfers					
Gross transfers between funds - in	2,275	1,395	—	3,670	3,724
Gross transfers between funds - out	(2,677)	(993)	—	(3,670)	(3,724)
Other recognised gains / losses					
Gains on revaluation, fixed assets, charity's own use	—	—	—	—	—
Net movement in funds	**3,697**	**4,132**	**653**	**8,484**	**(5,601)**
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward	**18,773**	**241,145**	**28,573**	**288,491**	**294,093**
Total funds carried forward	**22,471**	**245,277**	**29,227**	**296,976**	**288,491**

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St Mary's Church, Wootton

Analysis of income and expenditure
Selected period: 01 January 2024 to 31 December 2024

	Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	Endowment	Total This year	Total Last year
Incoming resources						
Donations, Legacies and similar incoming resources						
101 - Gift Aided	69,530.00	—	—	—	69,530.00	72,089.00
102 - Tax recovered	19,647.03	—	300.00	—	19,947.03	20,203.01
103 - Other giving	10,175.00	—	—	—	10,175.00	8,335.00
104 - Loose Collections	5,588.70	—	—	—	5,588.70	5,622.54
105 - Gift days- Sundry giving	7,457.21	—	—	—	7,457.21	5,071.76
201 - Given for specific projects	386.07	3,844.44	3,489.50	—	7,720.01	8,059.19
Donations, Legacies and similar incoming resources Totals	112,784.01	3,844.44	3,789.50	—	120,417.95	119,380.50
Activities in furtherance of the charity's objects						
302 - Rent for church buildings	19,868.18	—	—	—	19,868.18	18,587.95
401 - Monies for books	293.55	—	—	—	293.55	325.20
404 - PCC fees Weddings/ Funerals	2,937.00	—	—	—	2,937.00	3,054.00
Activities in furtherance of the charity's objects Totals	23,098.73	—	—	—	23,098.73	21,967.15
Investment income						
301 - Interest	—	—	7,132.55	—	7,132.55	4,493.98
Investment income Totals	—	—	7,132.55	—	7,132.55	4,493.98
Other incoming resources						
106 - Wootton Charities	—	—	2,000.00	—	2,000.00	2,000.00
405 - Assigned fees	—	—	5,029.00	—	5,029.00	4,027.00
Other incoming resources Totals	—	—	7,029.00	—	7,029.00	6,027.00
Incoming resources Grand totals	135,882.74	3,844.44	17,951.05	—	157,678.23	151,868.63
Resources used						
Grants payable in furtherance of charity's objects						
1001 - Overseas Mission	4,290.00	400.00	—	—	4,690.00	4,350.00
1003 - Home Mission	2,850.00	1,300.00	—	—	4,150.00	3,850.00
Grants payable in furtherance of charity's objects Totals	7,140.00	1,700.00	—	—	8,840.00	8,200.00
Activities in furtherance of the charity's objects						
2001 - Diocesan Quota	68,000.00	—	—	—	68,000.00	76,562.00
2002 - Working Expenses of Incumbent	2,762.54	—	—	—	2,762.54	3,254.34
2004 - Assistant Staff	20,916.74	—	5,745.50	—	26,662.24	26,473.45
2005 - Church Running expense	6,692.42	—	—	—	6,692.42	5,995.37
2006 - Church Maintenance	1,246.23	—	731.76	—	1,977.99	1,034.82
2007 - Upkeep of Services	2,771.65	—	—	—	2,771.65	2,632.75
2009 - Costs relating to books	617.67	—	—	—	617.67	425.41
2010 - Church hall	12,297.08	145.50	780.00	—	13,222.58	11,993.04

st mary's wootton

	Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	Endowment	Total This year	Total Last year
2012 - Major Works	—	—	2,400.00	—	2,400.00	9,477.69
2016 - Honoraria, Assigned fees	59.37	—	4,036.00	—	4,095.37	3,318.00
6000 - Studley Road	2,077.41	—	—	—	2,077.41	565.05
Activities in furtherance of the charity's objects Totals	117,441.11	145.50	13,693.26	—	131,279.87	141,731.92
Support costs						
2017 - Support Costs	2,003.26	3,920.95	527.06	—	6,451.27	7,207.76
Support costs Totals	2,003.26	3,920.95	527.06	—	6,451.27	7,207.76
Expenditure on managing-administering the charity						
4000 - Administration	3,276.66	—	—	—	3,276.66	2,807.01
Expenditure on managing-administering the charity Totals	3,276.66	—	—	—	3,276.66	2,807.01
Resources used Grand totals	129,861.03	5,766.45	14,220.32	—	149,847.80	159,946.69

St. Mary's Pre-School
January to December 2024

EXPENDITURE January - December 2024	
Salaries January - December 2024	102437.94
Pension	4209.64
Employers National Insurance/TAX	10702.63
Church Hall Rent	7946.58
PLA Membership Fee + Ofsted	113.00
Equipment and supplies	7464.28
Milkbar	1208.44
Photo developing	241.99
Staff Training	938.50
Petty Cash	0.00
DBS	338.60
Trip	1194.00
Cash in Hand - 31 December 2024	14.05
Balance in Bank - 02 January 2025	46997.79
TOTAL	**183807.44**
INCOME January - December 2024	
Cash in Hand - 1 January 2024	14.05
Balance at Bank - 1 January 2024	29879.81
Received from Fees	15087.76
Received from Bedford Bourough	138217.82
Donations	25.00
Trip	545.00
Refund	38.00
TOTAL	**183807.44**

Manager/Treasurer: Tracey A.D. Date: 7.1.2025
TRACEY KERINS

Deputy Manager: Allyson Cable Date: 9/1/2025
ALLYSON CABLE

Auditor: L. Rees Date: 29.1.2025
LESLEY REES



Administrative Information

St Mary's church is situated in Wootton village, Bedfordshire.
It is part of the Diocese of St Albans within the Church of England.
The correspondence address is :
The Vicarage, Church Road, Wootton, Bedford MK43 9HF.

The Registered charity number 1150817

office@stmaryswootton.org.uk

PCC members who served during the year were:
Revd Peter Ackroyd (chair), Allyson Cable (churchwarden), Tim Dillistone (churchwarden; Deanery Synod), Matt Hearn (Treasurer, Deanery Synod), Hazel Sanders (PCC secretary)Jim Hignett (Reader; Deanery Synod), Pauline Kendall (Diocesan Synod), David Baylis, Jenny Yang, Charlie Bellwood, Elaine Sullivan, Jean-Michel Rodrigues, Charles Ashbrook, Ant Hall, Nicola Johnson, Jon Joy, Nina Rodrigues, Claire Brice.

Independent Examiner: Lynden Richardson

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST MARYS CHURCH WOOTTON BEDS

England & Wales - Charity number 1150817

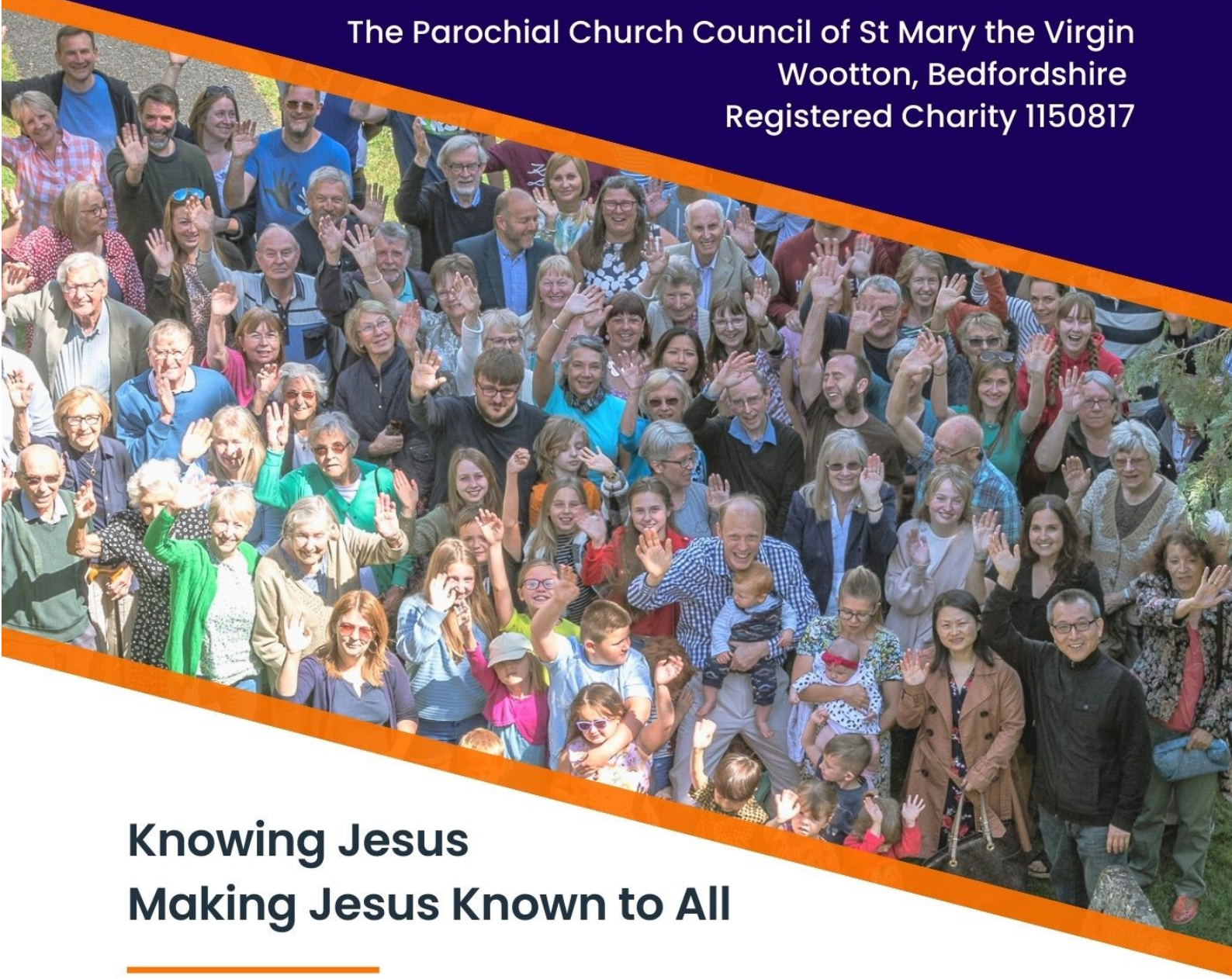
Accounts

st mary's wootton

Annual Report
& Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 Dec 2023

The Parochial Church Council of St Mary the Virgin
Wootton, Bedfordshire
Registered Charity 1150817



Knowing Jesus
Making Jesus Known to All

www.stmaryswootton.org.uk

01234 765375/768391

office@stmaryswootton.org.uk

The Vicarage, Church Rd, Wootton, Bedford, MK43 9HF

Mission Statement (what we aim to do)

Knowing Jesus; making Jesus known to all

Towards 2024 *(adopted March 2020)*



St Mary's 2020-2024:

Our vision is unchanged: to be a church family of disciples of Jesus Christ, rooted in the Bible and prayer, committed to making disciples, to holiness of life and to every-member service; a family of loving welcome, passionate proclamation, glad service, global heart and sacrificial change.*

Our five year goal is simple: to double in size

Our priority is clear: to develop our life as a church towards this goal.

Our strategy is threefold:

- to develop our facilities for growth
- to establish PCC-led teams to support ministries for growth
- to launch at least one new congregation

all in dependence on the Lord in prayer

Values Statement (what matters to us)

We believe that we are reconciled to God the Father through faith in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit, and therefore we value:

The Bible as the written word of God and our supreme authority in following Jesus in the whole of life.

Prayer as the prime expression of faith in Jesus and of our dependence on God's loving grace and sovereign power in all things.

Church as a family of wholehearted worshippers and disciples of Jesus Christ committed to mutual encouragement, care, and accountability.

Evangelism as the proclamation of the good news of God's salvation in Christ for all people

Service as a family of God's people caring for people in Wootton and Stewartby and beyond with the love of Christ.

Identity Statement



We are...

Christ's church: the church is the bride and body of Jesus Christ; it is through him alone, revealed to us by the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures, that we know God; it is through the power of the Holy Spirit that we worship and serve Christ; and it is Christ's future return which is our hope and motivation for life.

A local church: a full and authentic expression of the universal church, called into being and sustained by God's word. We have a specific responsibility to proclaim and demonstrate the love of God in Christ among the people of the parish of Wootton. We are also called to involvement with the world-wide mission of the whole church.

An Anglican church: while we welcome Christians of all backgrounds, our permanent and most visible connection is with the Church of England. We accept and uphold its founding documents (The Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion, the Book of Common Prayer, and the Ordinal) as authentic expressions of orthodox Christian belief. We are committed to supporting and encouraging biblical faith and practice in the Anglican Communion, both within and beyond the diocese of St Albans.

An evangelical church: we recognise the convictions of historic evangelicalism as crystallising and expressing the kernel of orthodox Christianity, including: the supreme authority of Scripture; the universal nature of human sin; the grace of God, seen above all in the substitutionary atoning death of Jesus Christ; and the gift of justification and new life in Christ, received and enjoyed only through repentance and faith. We value the examples, among others, of the sixteenth-century reformers, the eighteenth-century evangelists, and the nineteenth-century social reformers. We are committed to gospel partnership with evangelical mission agencies, as well as with our patron, the Martyrs' Memorial and Church of England Trust, and the Church Pastoral Aid Society.

* Vision Statement (what we aim to become)

One body of wholehearted worshipping disciples, ever more deeply rooted in the Bible & prayer, growing together in holiness and every-member ministry to become a family of:

- **loving welcome**, caring for one another with the love of Jesus Christ nurturing, teaching and training one another for lives of holiness and love
- **passionate proclamation**, committed to reaching the people of Wootton, Stewartby and beyond, with the vital good news of Jesus Christ for a lost world
- **glad service**, dedicated to being salt and light for Jesus Christ in the world
- **global heart**, BOTH prayerfully and practically engaged in the worldwide mission of the church, AND training and sending men and women into gospel ministry within and beyond the parish
- **sacrificial change**, giving generously of ourselves, our money, and our talents to realise this vision



Aims and Purposes

St Marys Church Wootton exists to glorify Almighty God through the proclamation of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ to all people, and through the pastoral care of all who call on his name. This is our mission, which we summarise as 'Knowing Jesus and making Jesus known to all', and which is our privilege and joy.

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of cooperating with the incumbent, Canon Peter Ackroyd, in promoting this mission - pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical - in the ecclesiastical parish of Wootton, which comprises the two civil parishes of Wootton and Stewartby.

Objectives and Activities

The primary objective of the Parochial Church Council is the promotion of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to the doctrine of the Church of England. To this end the PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship in the parish church, to providing opportunities for adults and young people to hear the gospel and grow in discipleship, to caring pastorally and practically for people in need, and to supporting Christian mission within and beyond the parish, indeed globally. The PCC regularly reviews the effectiveness of the church's ministry in the light of its own Mission Action Plan, and the three themes of the Living God's Love vision of the Diocese of St Albans: Going Deeper into God, Transforming Communities, and Making New Disciples. In planning and overseeing the mission of the church, the incumbent and PCC consider the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the supplementary guidance on charities for the advancement of religion.

The PCC Vision Statement continues to be:
St Mary's will be one body of wholehearted worshipping disciples, ever more deeply rooted in the Bible and prayer, growing together in holiness and every-member ministry to become a family of:

- **loving welcome**, caring for one another with the love of Jesus Christ
- **passionate proclamation**, committed to reaching the people of Wootton, Stewartby and beyond, with the vital good news of Jesus Christ for a lost world.
- **glad service**, dedicated to being salt and light for Jesus Christ in the world
- **global heart** both prayerfully and practically engaged in the worldwide mission of the church and training and sending men and women into gospel ministry within and beyond the parish
- **sacrificial change** giving generously of ourselves, our money, and our talents to realise this vision.

During 2023 the PCC continued to pursue two strategic priorities: Deeper Discipleship, and Generous Space. Deeper Discipleship relates to the need to foster confidence in the gospel and in gospel-driven life and service. Generous Space recognises that the facilities in the church building are ill-suited in many ways to the achievement of the church's mission and vision: during the year, and following consultation with the congregation, the council clarified the church's future needs and commissioned a feasibility study into how they could be met.

Jim Hignett continued to serve as licensed Reader, including significant ministry at Stewartby United Church. The council considers that with current levels of financial giving, the continued employment of a part-time youth and children's worker should take precedence over offering to train a curate. The staff team consisted of the vicar (Peter Ackroyd), part-time administrator (Diane Murray), and part-time youth and children's worker (Emma Hearn). The council also employs the staff of St Marys Preschool.

To facilitate the ministry of the church the PCC makes a priority of maintaining the fabric of both the church building and the church hall, which is on a separate site. Maintenance of the churchyards, which are closed, is the responsibility of Wootton Parish Council.

Achievements and performance

Worship and Prayer

Public worship was offered at 10am in the church building every Sunday morning, and at the monthly Sunday evening prayer meeting (which occasionally met online). Towards the end of the year, Sunday morning congregations averaged around seventy-five adults and fifteen children under sixteen.

The Sunday morning service continued to be livestreamed on the church's YouTube channel; a dial-up phone service for the weekly sermon was discontinued when it ceased to be used.

st mary's wootton

Ministry at St Mary's is founded on expository preaching of the Bible. Sermons preached during the year included series covering Mark cc9-10 (Jesus the Servant?), the passion in Matthew, 1 Samuel cc15-20 (The Coming King), the first letter of Peter, John cc 1 & 6, and Romans cc1-5. During the course of the year we welcomed as visiting preachers former associate minister Revd Shaun Atkins, retired missionary and theological educator Revd Ray Porter, and Marcus Honeysett, director of Living Leadership. Other visitors during the year included mission partners Bishop Alf & Hilary Cooper (CMS, Chile).

The Lord's Supper was celebrated monthly, and a monthly Sunday evening Prayer Gathering continued to meet in church. One child was baptised during the year, and one service of thanksgiving took place. Four weddings were celebrated in church and the vicar or Reader officiated at eleven funeral services for present or former parish residents at St Marys, Stewartby United Church, or Bedford Crematorium.

Services at Christmas were particularly well-attended, with a welcome return of a choir at the popular Carols by Candlelight service.

The parish council Act of Remembrance on Sunday 12 November at the War Memorial in Church Road, was led by the vicar and preceded by an all-age service in church.

School events in church included regular Preschool services, and a Wootton Lower School Christmas assembly.

Families, children and young people

This year we have run 2 groups on a Sunday for children between the ages of 2 and 12 using Mustard Seeds and Faith in Kids material. We have 2 leaders in each group, all who are up to date with the Diocese Safeguarding requirements. The number in the team has increased and we hope to shortly return to having 3 age groups which will enable more age targeted teaching. Some new families have joined this year and we have contact with around 40 children who attend regularly on a Sunday.

We returned to Chellington for a residential trip alongside St Peter and Paul's church in Cranfield. We had 24 children and 7 leaders. This year we weren't able to have an external speaker so the talks were split amongst leaders and we based it around Heroes Academy material from Faith in Kids. We had lots of activities including a trip to a local country park and we hired some inflatables and giant games which were a great success.

We held a Holiday Club with approximately 100 children and a team of 50 volunteers. We adapted material produced by the Good Book Company based on the book, The Garden, Curtain and the Cross and we were called Eden Explorers. The material focussed on a bible overview from creation to the cross and resurrection. This year instead of having a family BBQ in the evening on the Friday we invited families to join us for Family Fun Time and bring a picnic to enjoy after they had picked their children up. This worked well and was well attended, we had activities for the children and relationships were built with families.

Some activities during 2023 include:

- Weekly Sunday Children's groups
- Weekly JAM sessions
- Open the Book assemblies at Wootton Lower School
- Equip Training Day attended by 3 YCM leaders
- Chellington residential trip
- Holiday Club
- J@M trip to Sorted (5 young people & 2 YCM leaders)
- Christingle Service
- Wootton Lower School Visit to Church & Zoom Assembly
- Nativity service with congregational involvement
- Family Carol Service



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Discipleship, Pastoral Care and Training

The church council recognises that Christians grow in their discipleship as they engage with one another and with the Bible's teaching in a number of settings. The council accordingly aims to develop a range of 'pathways' accessible as widely as possible to support, teach and encourage this lifelong process of 'spiritual formation'.

In June around sixty church members attended a church away-day held in Harrold. The aim was to strengthen relationships with one another and study and consider, in greater depth than afforded by Sunday services, what it means to belong to a local church family. We were helped by a visiting speaker Jon Putt, of Grace Community Church, Kempston, while a group for young people was led by Sam Toseland from All Saints Riseley.

Midweek growth groups afforded members the opportunity to reflect further on Sunday sermons and apply lessons to daily discipleship. Five Growth Groups met during the year, weekly in the evening or daytime, to study the Bible, pray, and support one another. Leaders met termly to receive training and support, and to pray together. A group for some Lunch Club members met fortnightly. In the autumn, most groups used The Romans Course, new Bible Society video-based material to gain an overview of one of the most comprehensive New Testament letters.

The monthly Men's Breakfast continued to meet, and attracted up to fifteen men for mutual support and encouragement.

A number of church members attended the Bible by the Beach conference in Eastbourne during the first weekend in May.

In order to equip church members to support one another a Pastoral Care Course began to meet monthly in the autumn, led by Diane Murray using online material from Crosslands. The Pastoral Coordination Team formed during the COVID pandemic disbanded during the year, and the church council has authorised the formation of a new Pastoral Care Team to visit church members unable to attend church in person and support the pastoral care of church members.

Social events were held during the year enabling church members and their guests to build relationships and mutual support. In 2023 these included a church Sunday lunch in March, and a lunch in the vicarage garden in September which also enabled church members to celebrate the ninetieth birthday of Norma Smith, retired Reader and widow of former vicar Tony Smith (1965-75). In November a bonfire party was held for church families, and the year also included a number of social events for men and women kindly hosted by church families.

A bookstall was maintained in church. At Lent and Advent, church members and families were able to purchase and study daily devotional readings.

The PCC encourages church members, especially those with leadership responsibility, to attend relevant training events, in line with its Training Policy. During the year, staff and ministry leaders attended conferences run by Growing Young Disciples, Living Leadership, Tyndale House, Proclamation Trust and Biblical Counselling UK, as well as the Christian Resources Exhibition. Church members attended day events mainly in support of youth and children's ministry.

Mission and outreach

St Mary's mission is summarised on its publicity, website and noticeboards as 'Knowing Jesus; making Jesus known to all'. PCC continued to pursue this mission through a range of activities. At some of their meetings church council members used CPAS PCC Tonight material to consider how to develop a more effective faith-sharing culture.

In the autumn an alternative outreach and worship event, 'WILD Church' was trialled. Developed and led by Emma Hearn, this offered all ages - particularly families with young children - activities related to a theme (October: Creation; Christmas: the first coming of Christ) in an outdoor environment, based on 'forest school activities' (at the church hall or churchyard), culminating in a short act of worship. Arising initially from the desire to sustain connection with families attending the summer holiday club, these events began to attract a significant number of local families not otherwise attending church services regularly.

Enquiry courses for people exploring the Christian faith were offered throughout the year, using the Hope Explored and Christianity Explored courses.

The Lunch Club for the over 50's met monthly, preceded by a short 'thought for the day' and prayer led by team members.

Mission & Mission Partnerships

The PCC tithes its income from regular giving to support Christian mission beyond the parish, in line with its Global Mission Policy.

In 2023 the following mission agencies or partners received support from mission funds:

- Faith in Kids – resources and training for church youth and children's work
- IMPACT – Christian workers supporting local schools.
- Jude and YP Gayet - in church planting and youth ministry in Belgium.
- Bishop Alf and Hilary Cooper - supporting church planting and evangelical unity with CMS in Chile.
- Speak Life – UK evangelistic ministry (Director: Glen Scrivener)
- The Church Pastoral Aid Society
- Tearfund

PCC supported two former church members serving as volunteer Christian workers: Tom Ackroyd 2022-23 Relay Worker with UCCF, working with student Christian Unions in Newcastle and Sunderland; and Martin Teh 2023-24 ministry intern at ChristChurch Mayfair, London.

Throughout the year church members supported the work of Bedford Foodbank through a collection point in the church, and contributed to periodic 'red bucket' appeals for the relief of countries hit by natural disasters. Church members participated in the annual Operation Christmas Child (Samaritan's Purse) appeal, and at Christmas supported the SMART Prebend Centre CRIB appeal for the homeless in Bedford.

Church buildings

One of the responsibilities of the PCC is to maintain the church building, the church hall and grounds and a house which is currently rented to a member of the congregation.

2023 has seen the Generous Space Project move on and a Historical Significance survey has been carried out and initial plans have been drawn up by the architect. We are now in the process of putting together a Statement of Need and Significance. The repairs to the North Porch roof have been put on hold subject to the recommendations of the Generous Space Project.

Progress was made on issues identified in the Quinquennial Report. A Premises and Facilities Committee now oversees maintenance work at the church and the church hall. During 2023, the gutterings and fascia at the church hall were replaced and refurbished and the drainage issue was assessed. The patio area regularly floods, so work is needed to solve that issue as the Preschool are planning to erect a canopy over that area so that children can access the outside area all year round. This will be funded by the Preschool.
An electrical Fixed Wire test has been carried out at both the church and the hall.

Ecumenical Relationships

The PCC aims to strengthen Christian witness and service in the community through membership of Wootton and Stewartby Churches, though during 2023 there was no joint activity.

The vicar attended regular prayer meetings for leaders of Bedford Churches in sympathy with the doctrinal basis of the Evangelical Alliance, of which St Mary's is a corporate member.

In 2022 the church council supported the formation of the Four Counties Gospel Partnership; in 2023 this held a launch event and began to offer training days for churches in Beds, Bucks, Herts and Northants.

St Mary's Preschool

The PCC (as Registered Person) operates the St Marys Preschool which serves local families five days a week during term time from the Church Hall. The Preschool is led by the Manager, Tracey Kerins. The Preschool roll in the autumn term totalled thirty-five children. During 2023 there were eight members of staff. Staff are regularly appraised, supported to complete all required training, and encouraged to undertake professional development and progress as Preschool practitioners.

Oversight of the Preschool is undertaken on behalf of a PCC by management group comprising the Preschool Manager and the deputy manager, and three members of PCC: Peter Ackroyd (Nominated Individual), Pauline Kendall and Nina Rodrigues. The management group reviews all Preschool policies annually. Members visit the Preschool during its operating hours to observe practice and support the staff, and complete relevant Educare training modules as recommended by Bedford Borough Council.

The vicar visits weekly to lead a bible story, prayer and song. At Christmas and Easter a Preschool Service is held in church for children staff and parents.

st mary's wootton

Holywell Church of England School, Cranfield

The PCC nominates a number of governors at Holywell School. Continuing Wootton PCC Foundation Governors were: Pauline Kendall (Chair of Governors), Martin Sanders, Fiona Frossell and Isabel Turner.

The Vicar regularly met with the Head, Mike Simpson, and in partnership with Cranfield Parish Church provided support for Key Stage assemblies.

Deanery Synod

St Marys was represented on Bedford Deanery Synod by its licensed clergy and three representatives of the laity. During the year the Synod met four times. The vicar and Pauline Kendall are among the Deanery's representatives on Diocesan Synod. Regular reports of the proceedings of Deanery Synod were made to PCC.

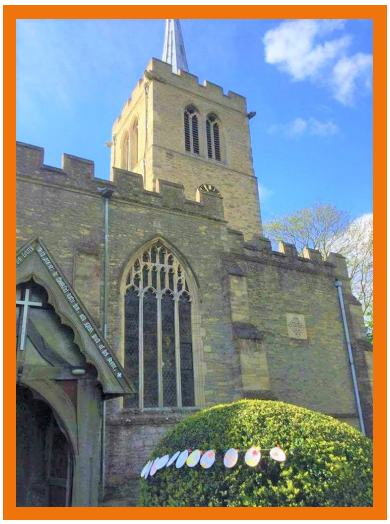
Structure, governance and management

The PCC met nine times in the year. Some of the work of the PCC is carried out through the following sub-committees: Standing, Finance, Youth Council, Preschool Management, Premises and Facilities Team, and the Generous Space Team. The Standing Committee met between PCC meetings, and is made up of the vicar, wardens, treasurer and secretary. The role of the Standing Committee is to prioritise items for the PCC meeting, discuss and make decisions on items of a confidential nature or look in more detail on matters that have been brought to the PCC. The Youth Council met four times.

Issues discussed during the year included: Prayers of Love and Faith and their consequences for St Marys and the wider Church of England; Review of our Mission Action Plan; arrangements for administering the Lords Supper; evangelism using material from CPAS PCC Tonight; Christmas ministry & outreach; ministry with children and young people; Eden Explorers summer holiday club; mission partnerships; Deeper Discipleship, including the 2023 Away Day and plans for another in 2024; Pastoral Visiting Team; the Four Counties Gospel Partnership; appointment of PCC officers & working groups following the APCM; church finances and property maintenance; 2024 PCC & Pre-school budgets; Policies including Safeguarding and Health and Safety; Joining the Leadership Commitment Scheme; the Generous Space project; Eco Church.

The safeguarding of young people and vulnerable adults was a standing item on the agenda of every meeting.

The Parish Safeguarding Officer is Kate Wilson. She was supported by Emma Hearn, Pauline Kendall (who is a Member of PCC) and Martin Sanders as deputy safeguarding officers. Training on safeguarding arranged by the Diocese has been attended by members of the PCC, as well as by leaders of young people's groups and others as required under the church's safeguarding policy and by the Church of England.



The PCC employs a part-time administrator, part-time Youth and Families Worker, the staff of the Preschool, and a church hall cleaner. Jim Hignett serves as a licensed Reader and attends regular diocesan events.

The PCC and staff work in partnership with teams of volunteer helpers, appointed by the PCC and the vicar.

The PCC and Administrator comply with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) regarding the privacy of church member's information.

Electoral Roll

A revision of the Electoral Roll took place in April 2023 Following the revision the roll numbered 135. At the end of the year, the total was 133.

Partnership with Stewartby United Church

Ministry at Stewartby United Church, a local ecumenical project, is provided under the terms of a Sharing Agreement in which the Church of England and the Methodist Church are the remaining active partners. Licensed ministers and congregation members from St Mary's continued to support Stewartby, leading the monthly Sunday morning service, speaking at the monthly T@3 service, serving on the church council and participating in other events. From January 2023 the monthly Sunday service was held on the afternoon of the first Sunday of the month, with T@3 continuing on the third Sunday.

Financial Review

Total receipts of unrestricted and designated giving and income amounted to £137,187 whilst restricted giving totalled £14,681, giving our church a total income of £151,868, which included £20,203 from Gift Aid eligible donations. As a result, our total income declined by £7,881 versus the previous year, although this decline was largely due to a one-off donation of £12,000 received into the Youth & Children's Ministry at the start of the previous year and was in line with our budgeted expectation.

Our total expenditure for the year was £159,946, this included our Parish Share contribution of £76,562 which was met in full. Our overall expenditure rose by £12,917 on the previous year, however this is largely due to one off costs in Major Works totalling £9,477 related to repairs to the fabric of the Vestry and a Heritage significance report commissioned by the PCC in support of the Generous Space project. Other costs related to Assistant Staff, Church Maintenance and Church Hall also rose on the previous year to account for the remaining increase.

Overall, the level of giving, excluding that given for specific projects, remained broadly flat on the year, however given the cost-of-living impact upon the congregation at this time this is encouraging.

For 2023 our church set a budget of £148,449 for income and expenditure and by the end of the year we were left with a deficit of £8,078, however excluding the one-off and unbudgeted Major Works costs this then improved to a modest budget surplus of £1,399 for the year. It is worth noting that interest payments for Q4 of 2023, weren't included within the accounts this year, as we have in previous years, due to delays related to account changes within CCLA, these interest payments will now be included within the 2024 accounts.

Our overall unrestricted funds, the funds we're able to utilise in our day-to-day operation and mission activities, fell on the year from £20,216 to £18,773, a reduction of £1,443 mainly due to our expenditure of unrestricted funds exceeding income. Whilst this is not an immediate cause of concern, it is noted that following on from reductions in 2021 and again in 2022 our continued ability to meet our obligations in full in coming years remains at risk.

Reserves Policy

Throughout the year we maintained our reserve fund at £10,000, this allows us to meet our obligation in terms of staff salaries and church running costs for a period of two months. Our cash reserves, excluding endowments, remain strong with a total of £259,918 on deposit at the end of the year, with £241,145 of this being funds restricted to specific expenditure. During the year we continued to operate two current accounts with our Metro Bank account as the main account while we maintain the NatWest Bank account to ensure no account has funds exceeding £85,000, the limit set under the Financial Services Compensation Scheme. In terms of a deposit account, we continue to invest in the CBF Church of England Funds through CCLA.

Safeguarding

St Mary's is committed to safeguarding all whom God has placed in its care. The PCC has complied with its duty to have 'due regard' to the House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy and Practice Guidance.

Ultimately, the PCC has overall responsibility to ensure all safeguarding requirements are fulfilled. The safeguarding and related policies are reviewed annually by the PCC as is the effectiveness of the church's safeguarding practice. Safeguarding is a standing item on all PCC agendas and the Parish Safeguarding Officer reports any matters arising. The Parish Safeguarding Dashboard, a framework that aims to support Parishes to have due regard to the House of Bishops' safeguarding policy, is being used with good effect and this is regularly reviewed by the PCC and Safeguarding Team.

The PCC have appointed a Safeguarding Team, Kate Wilson (Parish Safeguarding Officer and Lead recruiter), Emma Hearn, Pauline Kendall and Martin Sanders to ensure a good safeguarding culture is maintained at St Marys. The lead recruiter for the parish ensures all volunteers are safely recruited to their roles and they complete the relevant safeguarding training for their role. All volunteers, including PCC members and group leaders have attended the relevant training for their role. A central record of DBS checks and training is held by the lead recruiter. Contact details for the safeguarding team are prominently placed around church and details of how to contact the team can be found on the parish website (St Marys safeguarding team). Within our fortnightly bulletin, there is also a statement which highlights St Mary's commitment to safeguarding and provides web links to the safeguarding policies and the safeguarding team.

St Marys observes the third Sunday of November as Safeguarding Sunday and opportunities are taken throughout the year to mention safeguarding and issues of abuse during other services. Safeguarding matters and good practice are regularly highlighted at all church activities and meetings.

St. Mary the Virgin Parochial Church Council
Independent Examiner's Report of accounts for January to December 2023

Independent Examiner's report to the Parochial Church Council of St Mary the Virgin, Wootton, Bedford
Charity Commission no. 1150817

This report on the accounts of the PCC for the year ended **31 December 2023**, which are set out on pages 1 to 4 is in respect of an examination carried out in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 ('the Regulations') and **s.145 of the Charities Act 2011** ('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 **s.144(2)** of the Act does 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 **s.145(5)(b)** of the Act and to be found in the Church guidance, 2006 edition. 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:

i. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section **130** of the 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

ii. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed Lynden Richardson Independent Examiner – L. Richardson

Date 18/03/2024

Signed on behalf of PCC Incumbrant – P.M. Ackroyd

Date 18/3/2024

st mary's wootton

Balance Sheet to 31st December 2023

		As at 31/12/2023	As at 31/12/2022
Endowment assets			
	1509: Wootton Armstrong Fund	1,672.79	1,527.80
	1510: Wootton Church Cottages	26,900.31	24,568.62
	Total Fixed assets	**28,573.10**	**26,096.42**
Current assets			
	1501: NatWest Current	82,076.04	82,356.69
	1503: CBF Capital Fund	119,432.68	116,417.29
	1504: CBF Studley Road	1.79	1.73
	1508: Cash Book	—	—
	1511: Metro Current	58,731.01	69,759.14
	Total Current assets	**260,241.52**	**268,534.85**
Liabilities			
	1650: Loans for Stonework	—	—
	6699: Agency collections	322.90	538.17
	Total Liabilities	**322.90**	**538.17**
	Net Asset surplus (deficit)	**288,491.72**	**294,093.10**
Reserves			
	Excess / (deficit) to date	(8,078.06)	12,690.70
	Z01: Starting balances	294,093.10	284,866.77
	Z02: Other gains/(losses)	2,476.68	(3,464.37)
	Total Reserves	**288,491.72**	**294,093.10**

Represented by Funds

Unrestricted	18,773.61	20,215.95
Restricted	241,145.01	247,780.73
Endowment	28,573.10	26,096.42
Total	**288,491.72**	**294,093.10**

St Mary's Church, Wootton

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					
Donations, Legacies and similar incoming resources	115,220.50	4,160.00	—	119,380.50	129,036.18
Activities in furtherance of the charity's objects	21,967.15	—	—	21,967.15	22,319.58
Activities for generating funds	—	—	—	—	—
Investment income	—	4,493.98	—	4,493.98	2,294.60
Other incoming resources	—	6,027.00	—	6,027.00	6,100.00
Total income	**137,187.65**	**14,680.98**	**—**	**151,868.63**	**159,750.36**
Resources used					
Grants payable in furtherance of charity's objects	8,200.00	—	—	8,200.00	8,550.93
Activities in furtherance of the charity's objects	120,284.50	21,447.42	—	141,731.92	129,165.27
Support costs	7,207.54	0.22	—	7,207.76	6,696.24
Expenditure on managing-administering the charity	2,807.01	—	—	2,807.01	2,647.22
Total expenditure	**138,499.05**	**21,447.64**	**—**	**159,946.69**	**147,059.66**
Gains / losses on investment assets	—	—	2,476.68	2,476.68	(3,464.37)
Net income / (expenditure) resources before transfer	**(1,311.40)**	**(6,766.66)**	**2,476.68**	**(5,601.38)**	**9,226.33**
Transfers					
Gross transfers between funds - in	2,605.34	1,118.94	—	3,724.28	2,739.49
Gross transfers between funds - out	(2,736.28)	(988.00)	—	(3,724.28)	(2,739.49)
Other recognised gains / losses					
Gains on revaluation, fixed assets, charity's own use	—	—	—	—	—
Net movement in funds	**(1,442.34)**	**(6,635.72)**	**2,476.68**	**(5,601.38)**	**9,226.33**
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward	**20,215.95**	**247,780.73**	**26,096.42**	**294,093.10**	**284,866.77**
Total funds carried forward	**18,773.61**	**241,145.01**	**28,573.10**	**288,491.72**	**294,093.10**

Analysis of income and expenditure
01 January 2023 to 31 December 2023

Incoming resources	Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	Endowment	Total This year	Total Last year
Donations, Legacies and similar incoming resources						
101 - Gift Aided	72,089.00	—	—	—	72,089.00	69,428.00
102 - Tax recovered	19,903.01	—	300.00	—	20,203.01	21,291.06
103 - Other giving	8,335.00	—	—	—	8,335.00	10,003.44
104 - Loose Collections	5,622.54	—	—	—	5,622.54	2,265.16
105 - Gift days- Sundry giving	5,071.76	—	—	—	5,071.76	6,943.26
201 - Given for specific projects	636.53	3,562.66	3,860.00	—	8,059.19	19,105.26
Donations, Legacies and similar incoming resources Totals	111,657.84	3,562.66	4,160.00	—	119,380.50	129,036.18
Activities in furtherance of the charity's objects						
302 - Rent for church buildings	18,587.95	—	—	—	18,587.95	18,546.01
401 - Monies for books	325.20	—	—	—	325.20	790.57
404 - PCC fees Weddings/ Funerals	3,054.00	—	—	—	3,054.00	2,983.00
Activities in furtherance of the charity's objects Totals	21,967.15	—	—	—	21,967.15	22,319.58
Investment income						
301 - Interest	—	—	4,493.98	—	4,493.98	2,294.60
Investment income Totals	—	—	4,493.98	—	4,493.98	2,294.60
Other incoming resources						
106 - Wootton Charities	—	—	2,000.00	—	2,000.00	2,000.00
405 - Assigned fees	—	—	4,027.00	—	4,027.00	4,100.00
Other incoming resources Totals	—	—	6,027.00	—	6,027.00	6,100.00
Incoming resources Grand totals	133,624.99	3,562.66	14,680.98	—	151,868.63	159,750.36

Resources used

Grants payable in furtherance of charity's objects						
1001 - Overseas Mission	4,200.00	150.00	—	—	4,350.00	4,470.00
1003 - Home Mission	2,750.00	1,100.00	—	—	3,850.00	4,080.93
Grants payable in furtherance of charity's objects Totals	6,950.00	1,250.00	—	—	8,200.00	8,550.93
Activities in furtherance of the charity's objects						
2001 - Diocesan Quota	76,562.00	—	—	—	76,562.00	65,863.00
2002 - Working Expenses of Incumbent	3,254.34	—	—	—	3,254.34	3,353.88
2004 - Assistant Staff	19,722.19	127.52	6,623.74	—	26,473.45	24,397.87
2005 - Church Running expense	5,995.37	—	—	—	5,995.37	6,791.79
2006 - Church Maintenance	1,006.83	—	27.99	—	1,034.82	2,040.96
2007 - Upkeep of Services	2,632.75	—	—	—	2,632.75	1,920.22
2008 - Upkeep of Churchyard	—	—	—	—	—	141.05
2009 - Costs relating to books	425.41	—	—	—	425.41	732.59

st mary's wootton

	Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	Endowment	Total This year	Total Last year
2010 - Church hall	9,993.04	—	2,000.00	—	11,993.04	8,749.94
2012 - Major Works	—	—	9,477.69	—	9,477.69	—
2016 - Honoraria, Assigned fees	—	—	3,318.00	—	3,318.00	3,654.00
6000 - Studley Road	565.05	—	—	—	565.05	440.41
6001 - Curate Housing	—	—	—	—	—	11,079.56
Activities in furtherance of the charity's objects Totals	120,156.98	127.52	21,447.42	—	141,731.92	129,165.27
Support costs						
2017 - Support Costs	2,675.44	4,532.10	0.22	—	7,207.76	6,696.24
Support costs Totals	2,675.44	4,532.10	0.22	—	7,207.76	6,696.24
Expenditure on managing-administering the charity						
4000 - Administration	2,807.01	—	—	—	2,807.01	2,647.22
Expenditure on managing-administering the charity Totals	2,807.01	—	—	—	2,807.01	2,647.22
Resources used Grand totals	132,589.43	5,909.62	21,447.64	—	159,946.69	147,059.66

St. Mary's Pre-School
January to December 2023

EXPENDITURE January - December 2023	
Salaries January - December 2023	97796.69
Pension	4149.05
Employers National Insurance/TAX	9825.85
Church Hall Rent	6887.95
PLA Membership Fee + Ofsted	115.91
Equipment and supplies	5911.61
Milkbar	1090.48
Photo developing	431.88
Staff Training	312.00
Petty Cash	0.00
DBS	70.00
Trip	1526.51
Refund	94.50
Cash in Hand - 31 December 2023	14.05
Balance in Bank - 31 December 2023	29879.81
TOTAL	**158106.29**
INCOME January - December 2023	
Cash in Hand - 1 January 2023	14.05
Balance at Bank - 1 January 2023	16689.61
Received from Fees	21806.50
Received from Early Years Funding LEA + SEN	118852.15
Donations	13.98
Trip	730.00
TOTAL	**158106.29**

Manager/Treasurer: Tracey K ..... Date: 8.01.2024.....
TRACEY KERINS

Deputy Manager: Lina Rosato ..... Date: 8/01/2024.....
LINA ROSATO

Auditor: ..... Date: 30.01.2024
LESLEY REES



Administrative Information

St Mary's church is situated in Wootton village, Bedfordshire.
It is part of the Diocese of St Albans within the Church of England.
The correspondence address is :
The Vicarage, Church Road, Wootton, Bedford MK43 9HF.

The Registered charity number 1150817

office@stmaryswootton.org.uk

PCC members who served during the year were:
Revd Peter Ackroyd (chair), Allyson Cable (churchwarden), Tim Dillistone (churchwarden; Deanery Synod), David Baylis (Treasurer), Hazel Sanders (PCC secretary)Jim Hignett (Reader; Deanery Synod), Pauline Kendall (Diocesan Synod), Matt Hearn (Deanery Synod), Kate Wilson, Abi Holyoak, Charles Ashbrook, Ant Hall, Matt Hearn, Nicola Johnson, Jon Joy, Nina Rodrigues, Claire Brice.

Independent Examiner: Lynden Richardson

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST MARYS CHURCH WOOTTON BEDS

England & Wales - Charity number 1150817

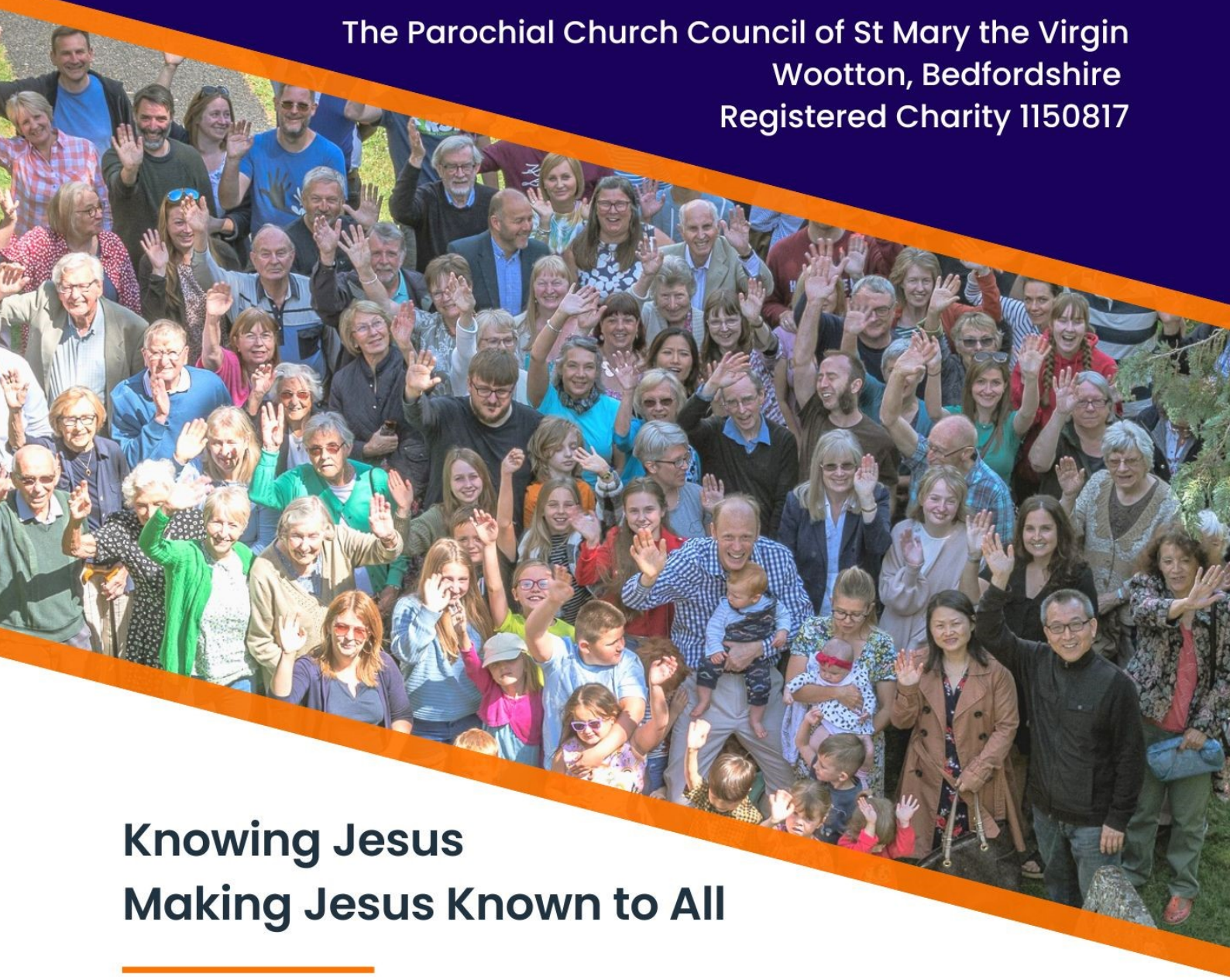
Accounts

st mary's wootton

Annual Report
& Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 Dec 2022

The Parochial Church Council of St Mary the Virgin
Wootton, Bedfordshire
Registered Charity 1150817



Knowing Jesus
Making Jesus Known to All

www.stmaryswootton.org.uk

01234 765375/768391

office@stmaryswootton.org.uk

The Vicarage, Church Rd, Wootton, Bedford, MK43 9HF

Mission Statement (what we aim to do)

Knowing Jesus; making Jesus known to all

Towards 2024 *(adopted March 2020)*



St Mary's 2020-2024:

Our vision is unchanged: to be a church family of disciples of Jesus Christ, rooted in the Bible and prayer, committed to making disciples, to holiness of life and to every-member service; a family of loving welcome, passionate proclamation, glad service, global heart and sacrificial change.*

Our five year goal is simple: to double in size

Our priority is clear: to develop our life as a church towards this goal.

Our strategy is threefold:

- to develop our facilities for growth
- to establish PCC-led teams to support ministries for growth
- to launch at least one new congregation

all in dependence on the Lord in prayer

Values Statement (what matters to us)

We believe that we are reconciled to God the Father through faith in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit, and therefore we value:

The Bible as the written word of God and our supreme authority in following Jesus in the whole of life.

Prayer as the prime expression of faith in Jesus and of our dependence on God's loving grace and sovereign power in all things.

Church as a family of wholehearted worshippers and disciples of Jesus Christ committed to mutual encouragement, care, and accountability.

Evangelism as the proclamation of the good news of God's salvation in Christ for all people

Service as a family of God's people caring for people in Wootton and Stewartby and beyond with the love of Christ.

Identity Statement



We are...

Christ's church: the church is the bride and body of Jesus Christ; it is through him alone, revealed to us by the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures, that we know God; it is through the power of the Holy Spirit that we worship and serve Christ; and it is Christ's future return which is our hope and motivation for life.

A local church: a full and authentic expression of the universal church, called into being and sustained by God's word. We have a specific responsibility to proclaim and demonstrate the love of God in Christ among the people of the parish of Wootton. We are also called to involvement with the world-wide mission of the whole church.

An Anglican church: while we welcome Christians of all backgrounds, our permanent and most visible connection is with the Church of England. We accept and uphold its founding documents (The Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion, the Book of Common Prayer, and the Ordinal) as authentic expressions of orthodox Christian belief. We are committed to supporting and encouraging biblical faith and practice in the Anglican Communion, both within and beyond the diocese of St Albans.

An evangelical church: we recognise the convictions of historic evangelicalism as crystallising and expressing the kernel of orthodox Christianity, including: the supreme authority of Scripture; the universal nature of human sin; the grace of God, seen above all in the substitutionary atoning death of Jesus Christ; and the gift of justification and new life in Christ, received and enjoyed only through repentance and faith. We value the examples, among others, of the sixteenth-century reformers, the eighteenth-century evangelists, and the nineteenth-century social reformers. We are committed to gospel partnership with evangelical mission agencies, as well as with our patron, the Martyrs' Memorial and Church of England Trust, and the Church Pastoral Aid Society.

* Vision Statement (what we aim to become)

One body of wholehearted worshipping disciples, ever more deeply rooted in the Bible & prayer, growing together in holiness and every-member ministry to become a family of:

- **loving welcome**, caring for one another with the love of Jesus Christ nurturing, teaching and training one another for lives of holiness and love
- **passionate proclamation**, committed to reaching the people of Wootton, Stewartby and beyond, with the vital good news of Jesus Christ for a lost world
- **glad service**, dedicated to being salt and light for Jesus Christ in the world
- **global heart**, BOTH prayerfully and practically engaged in the worldwide mission of the church, AND training and sending men and women into gospel ministry within and beyond the parish
- **sacrificial change**, giving generously of ourselves, our money, and our talents to realise this vision



Aims and Purposes

St Marys Church Wootton exists to glorify Almighty God through the proclamation of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ to all people, and through the pastoral care of all who call on his name. This is our mission, which we summarise as 'Knowing Jesus and making Jesus known to all', and which is our privilege and joy.

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of cooperating with the incumbent, Canon Peter Ackroyd, in promoting this mission - pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical - in the ecclesiastical parish of Wootton, which comprises the two civil parishes of Wootton and Stewartby.

Objectives and Activities

The primary objective of the Parochial Church Council is the promotion of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to the doctrine of the Church of England. To this end the PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship in the parish church, to providing opportunities for adults and young people to hear the gospel and grow in discipleship, to caring pastorally and practically for people in need, and to supporting Christian mission within and beyond the parish, indeed globally. The PCC regularly reviews the effectiveness of the church's ministry in the light of its own Mission Action Plan, and the three themes of the Living God's Love vision of the Diocese of St Albans: Going Deeper into God, Transforming Communities, and Making New Disciples. In planning and overseeing the mission of the church, the incumbent and PCC consider the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the supplementary guidance on charities for the advancement of religion.

The PCC Vision Statement continues to be:
St Mary's will be one body of wholehearted worshipping disciples, ever more deeply rooted in the Bible and prayer, growing together in holiness and every-member ministry to become a family of:

- **loving welcome**, caring for one another with the love of Jesus Christ
- **passionate proclamation**, committed to reaching the people of Wootton, Stewartby and beyond, with the vital good news of Jesus Christ for a lost world.
- **glad service**, dedicated to being salt and light for Jesus Christ in the world
- **global heart** both prayerfully and practically engaged in the worldwide mission of the church and training and sending men and women into gospel ministry within and beyond the parish
- **sacrificial change** giving generously of ourselves, our money, and our talents to realise this vision.

During 2022 the PCC recognised that the church's ministry was still recovering from the impact of the COVID pandemic, and that detailed long term planning would depend on the strength and pace of recovery. The PCC endorsed two strategic priorities for the recovery process: Deeper Discipleship, and Generous Space. Deeper Discipleship relates to the need to foster confidence in the gospel and in gospel-driven living and service. Generous Space recognises that the facilities in the church building are ill-suited in many ways to the achievement of the church's mission and vision, and in the autumn involved a comprehensive consultation process to clarify future needs and inform future work on how they might be met.

For many years Wootton has enjoyed being a training parish for newly-ordained curates. In September we said farewell to the latest of these, Revd Phillip Young, as after three years as Assistant Curate he moved with his family to take up an appointment as Rural Missioner in the deanery of Harwich (Diocese of Chelmsford), based in the village of Dedham. September also marked the end of Revd Shaun Atkins' much-appreciated ministry since 2019 in Wootton and Stewartby as self-supporting Associate Minister. The year accordingly ended with a smaller staff team of the vicar (Peter Ackroyd), part-time administrator (Di Murray), and part-time youth and children's worker (Emma Hearn), while Jim Hignett continued to serve as licensed Reader, leading services and preaching at Wootton and Stewartby United Church.

To facilitate the ministry of the church the PCC makes a priority of maintaining the fabric of both the church building and the church hall, which is on a separate site. Maintenance of the churchyards, which are closed, is the responsibility of Wootton Parish Council.

Achievements and performance

Worship and Prayer

Public worship was offered at 10am in the church building every Sunday morning, and at the monthly Sunday evening prayer meeting (which occasionally met online). During the year, numbers attending church in person stabilised following the pandemic disruption, settling at a level comparable to or slightly less than pre-pandemic total Sunday attendance.

st mary's wootton

The Sunday morning service continued to be livestreamed on the church's YouTube channel, while a dial-up phone service enabled those without internet to access the weekly sermon.

Ministry at St Mary's is founded on expository preaching of the Bible. Sermons preached during the year included series covering the Ten Commandments ('You are not your own'), the passion in Mark, resurrection in the sermons of Acts, the ministry of Elijah in 1&2 Kings, and an Advent series in Isaiah. Thematic series covered the Bible's teaching on the ascended Jesus and on 'a changing church', including Safeguarding Sunday. During the course of the year we welcomed as visiting preachers Mike Kendall (St Neots Evangelical Church) and Nathan Taylor (Mission Aviation Fellowship). Other visitors during the year included mission partners YP & Jude Gayet (Belgium), former curate Lucas Durant and family (Resurrection Church, San Tung, Hong Kong), and a long-serving Baptist pastor from Ukraine.

The Lord's Supper was celebrated monthly, with bread and wine being distributed to communicants in the pews rather than at the communion table in the chancel. Eight children were baptised during the year, plus Thanksgivings for two children. Five weddings were celebrated in church and St Mary's clergy officiated at nine funeral services for present or former parish residents at St Marys, Stewartby United Church, or Bedford Crematorium.

The lifting of COVID restrictions enabled festivals and other events to be celebrated and observed more freely than since 2019. Services at Easter and Christmas were well-attended. The churchyard was illuminated with lights and a life-size Nativity scene for the fortnight leading up to Christmas Day, inaugurated by a Sunday afternoon Carols in the Churchyard event which attracted many families. The parish council Act of Remembrance on Sunday 13 November took place at the War Memorial in Church Road, and was preceded by a service in church.

School events included regular Preschool services, and a Wootton Lower School Christmas assembly. The vicar participated in Wootton Academy Trust's online Christmas service.

On Sunday 5 June a Service of Thanksgiving was held for the reign HM Queen Elizabeth II, on the occasion of her Platinum Jubilee. Following her death on Thursday 8 September, a Book of Condolence was opened and the church was open daily for private prayer. A Service of Commemoration of the Queen's faith, life and service, attended by representatives of the Borough and Parish Councils, local schools and uniformed organisations, was held on the evening of Sunday 18th September.

Following the invasion of Ukraine by Russia in February 2022, church members participated in supporting the relief of refugees. Regular prayer for the end of hostilities and the relief of suffering was offered. St Mary's hosted an evening meeting addressed by a Baptist minister from Ukraine. In October a well-attended concert was held, with contributions from many members of church and community, to highlight the continued impact of the conflict and raise relief funds.

Families, children and young people

After 2 years of various restrictions and new ways of working due to the Covid-19 pandemic this year a sense of normality returned as we were able to resume many of our regular activities.

We were able to continue to meet inside church on a Sunday with 2 children's groups (Aged 2-Reception and Year 1-Year 8). We held monthly evening Pathfinder meetings for children in Years 5-8 with a much reduced team and unfortunately in September we took the decision to cease Pathfinders until more leaders could be recruited. J@M sessions continued with a small but faithful group.

As part of the Life22 mission we held a Family Fun afternoon with inflatables and various activities for families to take part in including a circus workshop and a final gospel juggling presentation. This event attracted approximately 150 people from the community and people were very appreciative of the opportunity to gather together.

We were able to return to Chellington for a residential trip after missing 2020 and 2021 due to the Pandemic with 20 children and 7 leaders from St Mary's and Ss Peter & Paul's church in Cranfield. We welcomed a guest speaker from The Brave Trust and had lots of activities including a trip to a local country park and
a circus workshop and gospel show which was a real highlight for all.

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We held a Holiday Club with approximately 100 children and a team of 50 volunteers. We based the club on Backpackers material from Scripture Union which focused on Holy Week using passages from Matthew. We were able to return to one hall session for all ages and we were able to host a family BBQ. A particular highlight this year was the provision before and during the week for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, our approach was much appreciated by families and it meant that we were able to create an environment that was inclusive and children could engage in their own way with most aspects of Holiday Club.

A group led by Maria Richardson visit Wootton Lower School weekly during term time, as the 'Open the Book' team, to share Bible stories with the pupils. Open the Book is a national initiative, which began in Bedford, and their aim is to enable children to hear Bible stories as local churches, like St. Mary's serve the community.

Some highlights during 2022 include:

- Sunday Children's groups inside church
- Weekly J@M sessions
- Monthly Pathfinder sessions (Jan-July)
- Equip Training Day attended by 3 YCM leaders
- Life22 Family Fun Afternoon
- Chellington residential trip
- Holiday Club
- J@M trip to Sorted (6 young people & 2 YCM leaders)
- Christingle Service
- Lower School Visit to Church & Zoom Assembly
- Lights in the Churchyard-lanterns and trail
- Nativity service with congregational involvement
- Family Carol Service



Discipleship, Pastoral Care and Training

Midweek growth groups afforded members the opportunity to reflect further on Sunday sermons and apply lessons to daily discipleship. Six Growth Groups met during the year, weekly in the evening or daytime, to study the Bible, pray, and support one another. Leaders met termly to receive training and support, and to pray together. A group for some Lunch Club members met fortnightly.

A further weekly Growth Group was formed in the autumn, led by Peter and JoJo Ackroyd, following Foundation Studies materials in Christian Discipleship and Christian Doctrine produced by Crosslands Training.

In January eighteen church members participated in a Living in Love and Faith study day run jointly with Cranfield Parish Church, using the LLF video and discussion materials.

The monthly Men's Breakfast met in person, and attracted up to twenty men for mutual support and encouragement.

A number of church members attended the Bible by the Beach conference in Eastbourne during the first weekend in May.

A Pastoral Coordination Team consisting of four members has continued to meet monthly. The aim of the team is to support the clergy in caring for church members and their families at times of sickness, hospitalisation, infirmity, isolation and the general struggles of life.

Social events were held during the year enabling church members and their guests to build relationships and mutual support. In 2022 these included a summer barbecue held in the vicarage garden, a Harvest Supper and Celebration generously hosted by a church family, and a Bonfire Night party.

An occasional bookstall was maintained in church. At Lent and Advent, a large number of church members and families purchased and studied daily devotional readings.

Mission and outreach

St Mary's mission is summarised on its publicity, website and noticeboards as 'Knowing Jesus; making Jesus known to all'. PCC continued to pursue this mission through a range of activities.

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A group led by Phillip Young worked through 2021 and early 2022 to prepare Life 22 - a series of outreach events in March, each with a speaker. Growth Groups prepared for Life 22 by using some national A Passion for Life training videos. Events included a Curry and Comedy evening in Cranfield, a Cake and Prosecco evening, and a Family Fun afternoon held on Wootton Recreation Ground. The latter attracted around 150 people of all ages. The programme concluded with an invitation service on Mothering Sunday.

Enquiry courses for people exploring the Christian faith were offered throughout the year, normally using the Hope Explored materials.

The monthly Lunch Club for the over 50's resumed during the year. Leaders have continued to offer pastoral support to members.

Mission & Mission Partnerships

The PCC tithes its income from regular giving to support Christian mission beyond the parish, according to its Global Mission Policy.

In 2022 the following partnerships received support from mission funds:

- Faith in Kids – resources and training for church youth and children's work
- Festive - working with sixth forms and further education colleges to equip Christian young people to reach friends.
- IMPACT – Christian workers supporting local schools.
- Jude and YP Gayet - in church planting and youth ministry in Belgium.
- Bishop Alf and Hilary Cooper - supporting church planting and evangelical unity with CMS in Chile.
- Speak Life – UK evangelistic ministry (Director: Glen Scrivener)
- The Church Pastoral Aid Society
- Tearfund

PCC also supported Tom Ackroyd as a 2022-23 Relay Worker with UCCF, supporting student Christian Unions in Newcastle and Sunderland.

Throughout the year church members supported the work of Bedford Foodbank through a collection point in the church, and contributed to periodic 'red bucket' appeals for the relief of countries hit by natural disasters, notably Pakistan following devastating floods. Church members participated in the annual Operation Christmas Child (Samaritan's Purse) appeal, and at Christmas supported the SMART Prebend Centre CRIB appeal for the homeless in Bedford.

Church buildings

One of the objectives of the PCC is to maintain the church, church hall and grounds as well as a house which has in past years accommodated the curate. Following several years of covid related disruption 2022 was a year for assessing needed repairs and restaffing of rotas. The repairs to the North Porch roof are planned for 2023. The leak in the flat roof over the creche needs repair, quotes were obtained and the work was completed early in 2023. The 5 yearly architects' inspection and report on the church building, the Quinquennial Report, was carried out and did not raise any substantial unknown issues. Following this a working party was held in the church to deal with several small maintenance issues. Also a new maintenance team was established for the Church Hall to deal with a number of ongoing larger maintenance needs. Once our curate left us in August we gave up the tenancy on the property we had been renting in Cranfield. We started a consultation process and needs assessment for the Generous Space project, which will help us prioritise future maintenance and building works at the church and hall.

Ecumenical Relationships

The PCC aims to strengthen Christian witness and service in the community through membership of Wootton and Stewartby Churches, though during 2022 there was little joint activity.

The vicar attended regular prayer meetings for leaders of Bedford Churches in sympathy with the doctrinal basis of the Evangelical Alliance, of which St Mary's is a corporate member.

PCC agreed to support the formation of a Four Counties Gospel Partnership, in collaboration with a number of local evangelical churches including Grace Community Church (Kempston), Cranfield Parish Church, All Saints Riseley and Kings Church, Flitwick.

St Mary's Preschool

Oversight of the Preschool is undertaken on behalf of a PCC by management group comprising the Preschool Manager Tracey Kerins and her deputy Lina Rosato, and three members of PCC: Peter Ackroyd, Pauline Kendall and Charles Ashbrook.

Holywell Church of England School, Cranfield

The PCC nominates a number of governors at Holywell School. Continuing Wootton PCC Foundation Governors were: Pauline Kendall (Chair of Governors), Martin Sanders, Fiona Frossell and Isabel Turner.

The Vicar regularly met with the Head, Mike Simpson, and in partnership with Cranfield Parish Church provided support for Key Stage and whole school assemblies.

Deanery Synod

St Marys was represented in Deanery Synod by its licensed clergy and three representatives of the laity. Pauline Kendall continued to serve as Lay Co-Chair of the Synod. During the year the Synod met four times.

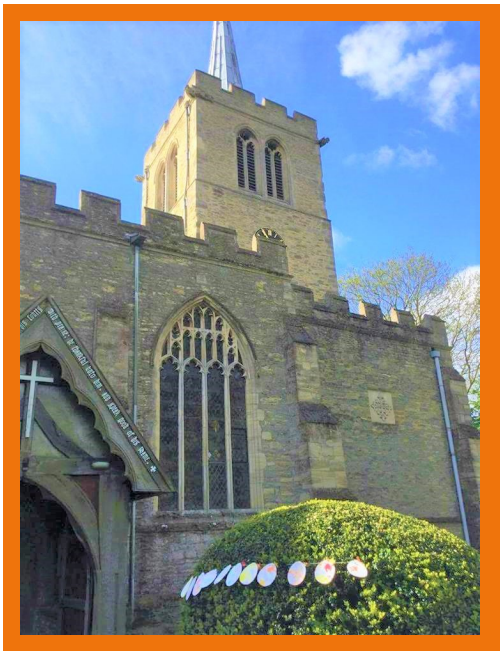
Structure, governance and management

The PCC met nine times in the year. Some of the work of the PCC is carried out through the following sub-committees: Standing, Finance, Youth Council, Preschool Management. The Standing Committee met between PCC meetings, and is made up of the vicar, wardens, treasurer and secretary. The role of the Standing Committee is to prioritise items for the PCC meeting, discuss and make decisions on items of a confidential nature or look in more detail on matters that have been brought to the PCC. The Youth Council met four times.

Issues discussed during the year included: recovery & rebuild of church life; the pattern of Sunday services; mission support; the Generous Space project; Deeper Discipleship, including proposals for a 2023 Away Day; evangelism and outreach (including A Passion for Life); ministry among young people; Living in Love and Faith; Christmas ministry & outreach; church finances and property maintenance; appointment of PCC officers & working groups following the APCM; 2023 PCC & Preschool budgets; Backpackers summer holiday club; ministry with children and young people; mission partnerships; health and safety and other policies; Stewartby United Church; relationships with other churches including the formation of the Four Counties Gospel Partnership.

The safeguarding of young people and vulnerable adults was a standing item on the agenda of every meeting.

The Parish Safeguarding Officer, Kate Wilson, is a member of PCC. She was supported by Emma Hearn and Pauline Kendall as deputy safeguarding officers. Training on safeguarding arranged by the Diocese has been attended by members of the PCC, as well as by leaders of young people's groups and others as required under the church's safeguarding policy and by the Church of England.



The PCC employs a part-time administrator, part-time Youth and Families Worker, the staff of the Preschool, and a church hall cleaner. Jim Hignett serves as a licensed Reader and attends regular diocesan events.

The PCC and staff work in partnership with teams of volunteer helpers, appointed by the PCC and the vicar.

The PCC and Administrator comply with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) regarding the privacy of church member's information.

Financial Review

Total receipts of unrestricted giving and income amounted to £133,834 whilst restricted giving totalled £25,916, giving our church a total income of £159,750, which included £21,291 from Gift Aid eligible donations. As a result, our total income grew by £10,963 versus the previous year, although this was largely due to a one-off donation of £12,000 received into the Youth & Children's Ministry at the start of the year. Our total expenditure for the year was £147,060, this included our Parish Share contribution of £65,863 which was met in full, leaving our expenditure reduced by £329 on the previous year.

Overall, the level of income remains extremely encouraging considering the continued pressures put upon the congregation following the COVID pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis that arose in the second half of 2022.

For 2022 our church set a budget of £146,734 for income and expenditure and by the end of the year we had generated a surplus of £9,226 versus that budget, however excluding the one-off donation into the Youth & Children's Ministry, this then dropped to a modest budget deficit of (£2,774) for the year.

Our overall unrestricted funds, the funds we're able to utilise in our day-to-day operation and mission activities, fell on the year from £26,389 to £20,216, a reduction of £6,173 mainly due to our expenditure of unrestricted funds exceeding income. Whilst this is not an immediate cause of concern, it is noted that following on from a reduction in 2021 our continued ability to meet our obligations in full in future years is potentially put at risk.

Reserves Policy

Throughout the year we maintained our reserve fund at £10,000, this allows us to meet our obligation in terms of staff salaries and church running costs for a period of two months. Our cash reserves, excluding endowments, remain strong with a total of £267,997 on deposit at the end of the year, with £247,780 of this being funds restricted to specific expenditure. During the year we continued to operate two current accounts with our Metro Bank account as the main account while we maintain the NatWest Bank account to ensure no account has funds exceeding £85,000, the limit set under the Financial Services Compensation Scheme. In terms of a deposit account, we continue to invest in the CBF Church of England Funds.

Safeguarding

The PCC has complied with its duty to have 'due regard' to the House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy and Practice Guidance.

Relevant safeguarding policies are reviewed annually by the safeguarding team and agreed by the PCC. In July 2022, the PCC adopted a Social Media policy and agreed their statement on the recruitment of ex-offenders. In January 2023, a revised Responding to Domestic Abuse policy was agreed by the PCC.

Safeguarding is a standing item on all PCC agendas and the Parish Safeguarding Officer reports any matters arising. The Parish Safeguarding Dashboard, a framework that aims to support Parishes to have due regard to the House of Bishops' safeguarding policy, is being used with good effect and this is regularly reviewed by the PCC and Safeguarding Team.

Ultimately, the PCC has overall responsibility to ensure all safeguarding requirements are fulfilled. The PCC have appointed a Safeguarding Team, Kate Wilson (Parish Safeguarding Officer and Lead recruiter), Emma Hearn, Pauline Kendall and Martin Sanders to ensure a good safeguarding culture is maintained at St Marys. The lead recruiter for the parish ensures all volunteers are safely recruited to their roles and they complete the relevant safeguarding training for their role. Relevant contact details for the Safeguarding Team are displayed in church and on the parish website.

St Marys was pleased to take part in the annual Safeguarding Sunday event for the first time this year. This enabled us to raise awareness of our commitment to creating a healthy safeguarding culture where everyone feels safe and looked after. Although this was an annual event, St Marys staff team, PCC and safeguarding team work hard to ensure this culture is maintained on a daily basis.

Support of Stewartby United Church

Ministry at Stewartby United Church, a local ecumenical project, is provided under the terms of a Sharing Agreement in which the Church of England and the Methodist Church are the remaining active partners. Licensed ministers and congregation members from St Mary's continued to support Stewartby, leading the monthly Sunday morning service, speaking at the monthly T@3 service, serving on the church council and participating in other events. Towards the end of the year it was agreed that the monthly Sunday service should take place on the afternoon of the first Sunday of the month, with T@3 continuing on the third Sunday.

St. Mary the Virgin Parochial Church Council
Independent Examiner's Report of accounts for January to December 2022

Independent Examiner's report to the Parochial Church Council of St Mary the Virgin, Wootton, Bedford
Charity Commission no. 1150817

This report on the accounts of the PCC for the year ended **31 December 2022**, which are set out on pages 1 to 4 is in respect of an examination carried out in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 ('the Regulations') and **s.145 of the Charities Act 2011** ('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 **s.144(2)** of the Act does 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 **s.145(5)(b)** of the Act and to be found in the Church guidance, 2006 edition. 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:

i. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section **130** of the 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

ii. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed Lynden Richardson Independent Examiner – L. Richardson

Date 20 March 2023

Signed on behalf of PCC Incumbrant – P.M. Ackroyd

Date 20 March 2023

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St Mary's Church, Wootton

Balance Sheet detailed

To 31st December 2022

		As at 31/12/2022	As at 31/12/2021
Endowment assets			
	1509: Wootton Armstrong	1,527.80	1,730.62
	Fund 1510: Wootton Church Cottages	24,568.62	27,830.17
	Total Fixed assets	26,096.42	29,560.79
Current assets			
	1501: NatWest Current	82,356.69	85,410.85
	1503: CBF Capital Fund	116,417.29	120,501.34
	1504: CBF Studley Road	1.73	1.71
	1508: Cash Book	—	—
	1511: Metro Current	69,759.14	49,780.26
	Total Current assets	268,534.85	255,694.16
Liabilities			
	1650: Loans for Stonework	—	—
	6699: Agency collections	538.17	388.18
	Total Liabilities	538.17	388.18
	Net Asset surplus (deficit)	294,093.10	284,866.77
Reserves			
	Excess / (deficit) to date	12,690.70	1,398.05
	Z01: Starting balances	284,866.77	279,752.56
	Z02: Other gains/(losses)	(3,464.37)	3,716.16
	Total Reserves	294,093.10	284,866.77

Represented by Funds		
Unrestricted	20,215.95	26,388.57
Restricted	247,780.73	228,917.41
Endowment	26,096.42	29,560.79
Total	294,093.10	284,866.77

St Mary's Church, Wootton

Statement of Financial Activities

For the period from 01 January 2022 to 31 December 2022

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Prior year total funds
Incoming resources					
Donations, Legacies and similar incoming resources	111,514.18	17,522.00	—	129,036.18	119,278.20
Activities in furtherance of the charity's objects	22,319.58	—	—	22,319.58	21,510.85
Investment income	—	2,294.60	—	2,294.60	811.05
Other incoming resources	—	6,100.00	—	6,100.00	7,187.00
Total income	**133,833.76**	**25,916.60**	**—**	**159,750.36**	**148,787.10**
Resources used					
Grants payable in furtherance of charity's objects	8,550.93	—	—	8,550.93	10,115.00
Activities in furtherance of the charity's objects	122,368.25	6,797.02	—	129,165.27	131,255.07
Support costs	6,030.24	666.00	—	6,696.24	3,261.71
Expenditure on managing-administering the charity	2,647.22	—	—	2,647.22	2,757.27
Total expenditure	**139,596.64**	**7,463.02**	**—**	**147,059.66**	**147,389.05**
Gains / losses on investment assets	—	—	(3,464.37)	(3,464.37)	3,716.16
Net income / (expenditure) resources before transfer	**(5,762.88)**	**18,453.58**	**(3,464.37)**	**9,226.33**	**5,114.21**
Transfers					
Gross transfers between funds - in	1,883.75	855.74	—	2,739.49	3,967.56
Gross transfers between funds - out	(2,293.49)	(446.00)	—	(2,739.49)	(3,967.56)
Other recognised gains / losses					
Net movement in funds	**(6,172.62)**	**18,863.32**	**(3,464.37)**	**9,226.33**	**5,114.21**
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward	**26,388.57**	**228,917.41**	**29,560.79**	**284,866.77**	**279,752.56**
Total funds carried forward	**20,215.95**	**247,780.73**	**26,096.42**	**294,093.10**	**284,866.77**

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St Mary's Church, Wootton

Analysis of income and expenditure
Selected period: 01 January 2022 to 31 December 2022

	Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	Endowment	Total This year	Total Last year
Incoming resources						
Donations, Legacies and similar incoming resources						
101 - Gift Aided	69,428.00	—	—	—	69,428.00	71,556.00
102 - Tax recovered	17,991.06	—	3,300.00	—	21,291.06	20,345.79
103 - Other giving	10,003.44	—	—	—	10,003.44	8,593.96
104 - Loose Collections	2,265.16	—	—	—	2,265.16	1,542.04
105 - Gift days- Sundry giving	6,943.26	—	—	—	6,943.26	13,786.20
201 - Given for specific projects	1,345.96	3,537.30	14,222.00	—	19,105.26	3,454.21
Donations, Legacies and similar incoming resources Totals	107,976.88	3,537.30	17,522.00	—	129,036.18	119,278.20
Activities in furtherance of the charity's objects						
302 - Rent for church buildings	18,546.01	—	—	—	18,546.01	17,938.32
401 - Monies for books	790.57	—	—	—	790.57	163.53
404 - PCC fees Weddings/ Funerals	2,983.00	—	—	—	2,983.00	3,409.00
Activities in furtherance of the charity's objects Totals	22,319.58	—	—	—	22,319.58	21,510.85
Investment income						
301 - Interest	—	—	2,294.60	—	2,294.60	811.05
Investment income Totals	—	—	2,294.60	—	2,294.60	811.05
Other incoming resources						
106 - Wootton Charities	—	—	2,000.00	—	2,000.00	2,000.00
405 - Assigned fees	—	—	4,100.00	—	4,100.00	5,187.00
Other incoming resources Totals	—	—	6,100.00	—	6,100.00	7,187.00
Incoming resources Grand totals	130,296.46	3,537.30	25,916.60	—	159,750.36	148,787.10
Resources used						
Grants payable in furtherance of charity's objects						
1001 - Overseas Mission	4,200.00	270.00	—	—	4,470.00	6,815.00
1003 - Home Mission	2,800.00	1,280.93	—	—	4,080.93	3,300.00
Grants payable in furtherance of charity's objects Totals	7,000.00	1,550.93	—	—	8,550.93	10,115.00
Activities in furtherance of the charity's objects						
2001 - Diocesan Quota	65,863.00	—	—	—	65,863.00	62,335.00
2002 - Working Expenses of Incumbent	3,353.88	—	—	—	3,353.88	2,571.24
2004 - Assistant Staff	22,617.39	—	1,780.48	—	24,397.87	23,864.03
2005 - Church Running expense	6,791.79	—	—	—	6,791.79	4,891.78
2006 - Church Maintenance	819.47	—	1,221.49	—	2,040.96	1,393.08
2007 - Upkeep of Services	1,920.22	—	—	—	1,920.22	3,127.54
2008 - Upkeep of Churchyard	—	—	141.05	—	141.05	54.21
2009 - Costs relating to books	732.59	—	—	—	732.59	377.12

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	Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	Endowment	Total This year	Total Last year
2010 - Church hall	8,749.94	—	—	—	8,749.94	8,670.64
2016 - Honoraria, Assigned fees	—	—	3,654.00	—	3,654.00	4,397.00
6000 - Studley Road	440.41	—	—	—	440.41	395.14
6001 - Curate Housing	11,079.56	—	—	—	11,079.56	19,178.29
Activities in furtherance of the charity's objects Totals	122,368.25	—	6,797.02	—	129,165.27	131,255.07
Support costs						
2017 - Support Costs	4,020.28	2,009.96	666.00	—	6,696.24	3,261.71
Support costs Totals	4,020.28	2,009.96	666.00	—	6,696.24	3,261.71
Expenditure on managing-administering the charity						
4000 - Administration	2,647.22	—	—	—	2,647.22	2,757.27
Expenditure on managing-administering the charity Totals	2,647.22	—	—	—	2,647.22	2,757.27
Resources used Grand totals	136,035.75	3,560.89	7,463.02	—	147,059.66	147,389.05

St. Mary's Pre-School
January to December 2022

EXPENDITURE January - December 2022	
Salaries January - December 2022	89257.29
Pension	4100.71
Employers National Insurance/TAX	13098.32
Church Hall Rent + Floor Donation	6846.01
PLA Membership Fee + Ofsted	182.11
Equipment and supplies	4021.95
Uniform	675.01
Milkbar	1271.80
Photo developing	178.81
Staff Training	482.00
Petty Cash	90.00
DBS	52.60
Trip	663.00
Fee refund	126.00
Cash in Hand - 31 December 2022	14.05
Balance in Bank - 31 December 2022	16689.61
TOTAL	**137749.27**
INCOME January - December 2022	
Cash in Hand - 1 January 2022	4.05
Balance at Bank - 1 January 2022	26335.05
Received from Fees	14174.75
Received from Early Years Funding LEA + SEN	94725.11
Donations	2140.31
Trip	370.00
TOTAL	**137749.27**

Manager/Treasurer: Tracey A-S Date: 19/01/2023
TRACEY KERINS

Deputy Manager: LRosato Date: 19/01/2023
LINA ROSATO

Auditor: R. Lee Date: 16.02.2023
LESLEY REES



Administrative Information

St Mary's church is situated in Wootton village, Bedfordshire.
It is part of the Diocese of St Albans within the Church of England.
The correspondence address is :
The Vicarage, Church Road, Wootton, Bedford MK43 9HF.

The Registered charity number 1150817

office@stmaryswootton.org.uk

PCC members who served during the year were:
Revd Peter Ackroyd (chair), Hazel Sanders (churchwarden), Revd Shaun Atkins, Revd Phillip Young, David Baylis (Treasurer), Jim Hignett (Reader; Deanery Synod), Pauline Kendall (Diocesan Synod), Tim Dillistone (Deanery Synod), Charles Ashbrook (Deanery Synod), Ant Hall, Amanda Newton, Jenny Roffey, Annette Hart, Matt Hearn, Abi Holyoak, Nicola Johnson, Jon Joy, Kate Wilson.

Independent Examiner: Lynden Richardson

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST MARYS CHURCH WOOTTON BEDS

England & Wales - Charity number 1150817

Accounts

st mary's wootton

Knowing Jesus;
making Jesus known to all



Annual Report and Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 December 2021

The Parochial Church Council of St Mary the Virgin, Wootton, Bedfordshire
Registered Charity 1150817

St. Mary's Church
c/o The Vicarage | Church Rd | Wootton | Bedford | MK43 9HF
01234 765375/768391 | office@stmaryswootton.org.uk | www.stmaryswootton.org.uk

Mission Statement (what we aim to do)

Knowing Jesus; making Jesus known to all

Towards 2024 *(adopted March 2020)*



St Mary's 2020-2024:

Our vision is unchanged: to be a church family of disciples of Jesus Christ, rooted in the Bible and prayer, committed to making disciples, to holiness of life and to every-member service; a family of loving welcome, passionate proclamation, glad service, global heart and sacrificial change.*

Our five year goal is simple: to double in size

Our priority is clear: to develop our life as a church towards this goal.

Our strategy is threefold:

- to develop our facilities for growth
- to establish PCC-led teams to support ministries for growth
- to launch at least one new congregation

all in dependence on the Lord in prayer

Values Statement (what matters to us)

We believe that we are reconciled to God the Father through faith in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit, and therefore we value:

The Bible as the written word of God and our supreme authority in following Jesus in the whole of life.

Prayer as the prime expression of faith in Jesus and of our dependence on God's loving grace and sovereign power in all things.

Church as a family of wholehearted worshippers and disciples of Jesus Christ committed to mutual encouragement, care, and accountability.

Evangelism as the proclamation of the good news of God's salvation in Christ for all people

Service as a family of God's people caring for people in Wootton and Stewartby and beyond with the love of Christ.

Identity Statement



We are...

Christ's church: the church is the bride and body of Jesus Christ; it is through him alone, revealed to us by the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures, that we know God; it is through the power of the Holy Spirit that we worship and serve Christ; and it is Christ's future return which is our hope and motivation for life.

A local church: a full and authentic expression of the universal church, called into being and sustained by God's word. We have a specific responsibility to proclaim and demonstrate the love of God in Christ among the people of the parish of Wootton. We are also called to involvement with the world-wide mission of the whole church.

An Anglican church: while we welcome Christians of all backgrounds, our permanent and most visible connection is with the Church of England. We accept and uphold its founding documents (The Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion, the Book of Common Prayer, and the Ordinal) as authentic expressions of orthodox Christian belief. We are committed to supporting and encouraging biblical faith and practice in the Anglican Communion, both within and beyond the diocese of St Albans.

An evangelical church: we recognise the convictions of historic evangelicalism as crystallising and expressing the kernel of orthodox Christianity, including: the supreme authority of Scripture; the universal nature of human sin; the grace of God, seen above all in the substitutionary atoning death of Jesus Christ; and the gift of justification and new life in Christ, received and enjoyed only through repentance and faith. We value the examples, among others, of the sixteenth-century reformers, the eighteenth-century evangelists, and the nineteenth-century social reformers. We are committed to gospel partnership with evangelical mission agencies, as well as with our patron, the Martyrs' Memorial and Church of England Trust, and the Church Pastoral Aid Society.

* Vision Statement (what we aim to become)



One body of wholehearted worshipping disciples, ever more deeply rooted in the Bible & prayer, growing together in holiness and every-member ministry to become a family of:

- **loving welcome**, caring for one another with the love of Jesus Christ nurturing, teaching and training one another for lives of holiness and love
- **passionate proclamation**, committed to reaching the people of Wootton, Stewartby and beyond, with the vital good news of Jesus Christ for a lost world
- **glad service**, dedicated to being salt and light for Jesus Christ in the world
- **global heart**, BOTH prayerfully and practically engaged in the worldwide mission of the church, AND training and sending men and women into gospel ministry within and beyond the parish
- **sacrificial change**, giving generously of ourselves, our money, and our talents to realise this vision

I

Aims and Purposes

St Mary's Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of cooperating with the incumbent, Canon Peter Ackroyd, in promoting the whole mission of the church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical in the ecclesiastical parish of Wootton, which comprises the two civil parishes of Wootton and Stewartby. The PCC is also responsible for maintenance of the Church, Church Hall, and an investment property.

Objectives and Activities

The primary objective of the Parochial Church Council is the promotion of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to the doctrines and practices of the Church of England. To this end the PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship in the parish church, to providing opportunities for adults and young people to hear the gospel and grow in discipleship, to caring pastorally and practically for people in need, and to supporting Christian mission within and beyond the parish, indeed globally. The PCC regularly reviews the effectiveness of the church's ministry in the light of both its own Mission Action Plan, and the three themes of the Living God's Love vision of the Diocese of St Albans: Going Deeper into God, Transforming Communities, and Making New Disciples. In planning and overseeing the mission of the church, the incumbent and PCC consider the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the supplementary guidance on charities for the advancement of religion.

As this report reveals, during 2021, the life, ministry and mission of the church continued to be hugely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Uncertainty about the impact and duration of the pandemic made medium-term planning unrealistic, and renewal of the Mission Action Plan was deferred until a time of greater stability.

The PCC Vision Statement continues to be:
St Mary's will be one body of wholehearted worshipping disciples, ever more deeply rooted in the Bible and prayer, growing together in holiness and every-member ministry to become a family of:

- **loving welcome**, caring for one another with the love of Jesus Christ
- **passionate proclamation**, committed to reaching the people of Wootton, Stewartby and beyond, with the vital good news of Jesus Christ for a lost world.
- **glad service**, dedicated to being salt and light for Jesus Christ in the world
- **global heart** both prayerfully and practically engaged in the worldwide mission of the church and training and sending men and women into gospel ministry within and beyond the parish
- **sacrificial change** giving generously of ourselves, our money, and our talents to realise this vision.

To facilitate the ministry of the church the PCC makes a priority of maintaining the fabric of both the church building and the church hall, which is on a separate site. Maintenance of the churchyards, which are closed, is the responsibility of Wootton Parish Council.

Achievements and performance

Worship and Prayer

Public worship was offered at 10am in the church building every Sunday morning with the exception of two Sundays in January when, in the light of high levels of local COVID infection and public health advice, services were held online only. During the year, numbers attending church in person steadily increased as levels of immunity from serious illness increased on account of the nationwide vaccination programme and spread of infection. Social distancing and other precautionary measures to minimise virus transmission were gradually relaxed over the course of the year, in line with government guidance, although space continued to be set aside for worshippers needing to maintain social distancing. Congregational singing was able to resume in the summer, initially while wearing face-coverings, and in the autumn refreshments after the morning service resumed.

In parallel with the main Sunday morning service, pre-recorded services were also made available on Sundays on church's YouTube channel. These were appreciated by church members unable to attend, as well as by relatives, friends and newcomers from further afield, including overseas. Following the successful installation of an over-head phone line for broadband internet access, and the commissioning of cameras and livestreaming hardware and software the pre-recorded service gave way to a livestreamed transmission of the in-person service from July 2021.

As well as expository series in Nehemiah, Malachi, Mark cc6-8 and Ruth, sermons included the topical issues of racial justice, gender and spiritual abuse, and devotional/thematic material with a series on The Heart of Christ. Midweek growth groups afforded members the opportunity to

st mary's wootton

reflect further on Sunday sermons and apply lessons to daily discipleship. During the course of the year we welcomed as visiting preachers (online and in person) Dan Gower (Open Doors UK) and Barry Funnell (UK Director, The Word for the World).

The Lord's Supper was celebrated monthly, and the morning service also began to see the resumption of baptisms. Two children were baptised during the year. Two weddings were celebrated in church and St Mary's clergy officiated at seventeen funeral services for present or former parish residents at St Marys, Stewartby United Church, or Bedford Crematorium.

Online fortnightly prayer meetings continued, towards the end of the year alternating with meetings in church. For a while over the summer, the church was open weekly for private prayer.

The trajectory of the pandemic, including the emergence of new variants of the virus, and related public health measures, with the impact of both on seating capacity in church and public confidence in mixed indoor gatherings, meant preparing for major events in the church calendar, notably Christmas, was hedged about with great uncertainty. In the event, with careful planning and prudent precautions, it proved possible to hold well-attended Christingle, Carol, Nativity and other services in church, and to offer a churchyard nativity trail which once again proved popular with families. The village Act of Remembrance on 14 November however, was held at the War Memorial rather than in church, jointly led by the Vicar and the Borough Councillor.

Jim Hignett, licensed Reader, and St Mary's clergy were regularly involved in preaching and leading services and other events at Stewartby United Church.

Families, children and young people

The Covid-19 pandemic continued to have an impact but we continued youth and children's ministry at St Mary's in a variety of different ways. There was a lockdown from January until March, churches remained open but we weren't permitted to have children's groups within church so we supported families with prepared daily reading plans, Zoom story times and other resources for use during the services and at home. From April we were able to have children's groups during the Sunday service, initially outside under a gazebo but in September we were able to move back into the church. As the year progressed we were able to move from Zoom sessions to have Pathfinders and J@M in the church or outside under Covid guidelines and then in September we resumed meeting in the Church Hall.

Some highlights during 2021/22 include::

• Weekly Church at Home resources with activities, teaching, games and prayer suggestions emailed to approximately 30 families.
• In person all age services and all age slots within the online services.
• StoryTime Zoom.
• Daily reading plan for families-Day by Day (Jesus Storybook Bible & Meals with Jesus.)
• In Search of Easter self guided trail in the church yard
• Interactive Walkabout Nativity Trail-Journey to Bethlehem.
• Nativity service with congregational involvement
• In person Sunday Children's groups, both outside and inside
•.Easter packs including books, activities and Easter eggs delivered to 35 children connected with St Mary's
• In person Holiday Club
• J@M trip to Sorted

A big highlight this year was being able to hold an in person Holiday Club for the first time in 2 years. We ran Mission21, a secret agent themed holiday club across 4 mornings and 1 afternoon using material produced by Faith in Kids. We had to adapt some things due to Covid including running 2 hall sessions and keeping groups more separate than usual plus we were unable to run a family BBQ as in previous years. We were a smaller team of around 40 but there was great fellowship and joy at being together again. We saw around 85 children over the week and there was much appreciation from families within the village.

Youth and children's ministry has continued to be delivered flexibly in a variety of ways. With many families unable to attend church and with face to face youth work restricted we continued to work creatively building on things developed in 2020 and trying new things. We have seen new families arrive at St Mary's and existing families have developed new 'Church at Home' discipleship habits.

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Discipleship, Pastoral Care and Training

During the pandemic Growth Groups continued to be the main vehicle for the pastoral support of congregation members. During the year some groups began meeting in person again each week, others continued on Zoom, or in gardens during the warmer weather. Five Growth Groups met during the year, weekly in the evening, to study the Bible, pray, and support one another. Leaders met termly to receive training and support, and to pray together. One of our groups for older members was unable to meet online, but began to meet again in person towards the end of the year, which has been a great encouragement. There is also an older members group meeting fortnightly for some of our Lunch Club members.

The PCC continued to prioritise training in the understanding and skills of Christian ministry attending Zoom training courses where possible.

The monthly Men's Breakfast met in person when permitted and on Zoom, and attracted up to twenty men for mutual support and encouragement. A number of church members attended the Bible by the Beach virtual conference during the first weekend in May.

A Pastoral Coordination Team consisting of five members has continued to meet fortnightly. The aim of the team is to support the clergy in caring for church members and their families at times of sickness, hospitalisation, infirmity, isolation and the general struggles of life. The team seeks to work towards the following vision adopted in 2019: *'The leadership of the church has been commissioned to equip the congregation in the pastoral care of each other's souls. Therefore our vision is to seek to foster a church culture in which we are all becoming increasingly more open about our struggles; where we are able to give and receive pastoral care to one another through prayer and through wise and helpful conversations that point to Jesus, reminding us that he meets and sustains us in our struggles and thereby building up the body of Christ.'*

Mission and outreach

St Mary's mission is summarised on its publicity, website and noticeboards as 'Knowing Jesus; making Jesus known to all'. PCC pursued this mission through a range of activities.

Enquiry courses for people exploring the Christian faith were offered throughout the year, using the following published resources: Essentials; Christianity Explored.

The monthly Lunch Club for the over 50's was unable to run in its usual format, but in November and December two successful afternoon teas for lunch club members were held in the church hall. Leaders have continued to offer pastoral support to members.

During the year, PCC approved the development of a programme of outreach events for March 2022, in connection with the nationwide initiative *A Passion for Life*. A team under the leadership of Phillip Young was convened to oversee this.

Mission Partnerships

The PCC tithes its income from regular giving to support Christian mission beyond the parish according to its agreed Global Mission Policy.

In 2021 the following partnerships received support from mission funds:

Faith in Kids – resources and training for church youth and childrens work
Festive - working with sixth forms and further education colleges to equip Christian young people to reach friends.
IMPACT – Christian workers supporting local schools.
Jude and YP Gayet - in church planting and youth ministry in Belgium.
Bishop Alf and Hilary Cooper - supporting church planting and evangelical unity with CMS in Chile.
Speak Life – UK evangelistic ministry (Director: Glen Scrivener)
The Church Pastoral Aid Society
Tearfund

Church members also contributed to the ministry of Operation Christmas Child at Christmas (Samaritan's Purse) and at Christmas the SMART Prebend Centre for the homeless in Bedford. Throughout the year church members supported the work of Bedford Foodbank through a collection point in the church.

Church buildings



One of the objectives of the PCC is to maintain the church, church hall and grounds as well as a house which has in past years accommodated the curate.

Many works were required again this year to ensure the church and church hall remained Covid safe.

Progress towards the restoration of the North Porch, was still delayed. A bat survey was carried out. The quotation for the works and the faculty needed to be updated. Works are hoped to commence in late 2022 at a suitable time for the bats and when the contractor has availability.

The PCC-owned property at 9 Studley Road was let for this year in order to support the renting of a more suitable property for the curate and his family. The curate had to be relocated to a second rental property in August when the previous landlord chose to give them notice.

An overhead phone line was installed into the church in June at no cost to the church. This enabled live streaming of services to begin in late July.

Ecumenical Relationships

The PCC aims to strengthen Christian witness and service in the community through membership of Wootton and Stewartby Churches. During Lent, weekly online joint lunchtime prayer meetings were held.

The vicar attended monthly prayer meetings for leaders of Bedford Churches in sympathy with the doctrinal basis of the Evangelical Alliance, of which St Marys is a corporate member.

St Mary's Preschool

Oversight of the Preschool is undertaken on behalf of PCC by management group comprising the Preschool Manager Tracey Kerins and her deputy Lina Rosato, and three members of PCC: Peter Ackroyd, Pauline Kendall and Amanda Newton.

Holywell Church of England School, Cranfield

The PCC nominates a number of governors at Holywell School. Continuing Wootton PCC Foundation Governors were: Pauline Kendall (Chair of Governors), Martin Sanders, Fiona Frossell and Isabel Turner.

The Vicar regularly met with the Head, Mike Simpson, and in partnership with Cranfield Parish Church provided support for Key Stage and whole school assemblies, mostly online.

Deanery Synod

St Marys was represented in Deanery Synod by its licensed clergy and three representatives of the laity. Pauline Kendall continued to serve as Lay Co-Chair of the Synod. During the year the Synod met four times.

Structure, governance and management

The PCC met eight times in the year. Some of the work of the PCC is carried out through the following sub-committees: Standing, Finance, Youth Council, PreSchool Management. The Standing Committee meets once a month, between PCC meetings, and is made up of the vicar, wardens, treasurer and secretary. The role of the Standing Committee is to prioritise items for the PCC meeting, discuss and make decisions on items of a confidential nature or look in more detail on matters that have been brought to the PCC. The Youth Council met four times. In the second half of the year, PCC meetings in person resumed.

Issues discussed during the year included: recovery & rebuild of church life; the pattern of Sunday services; mission support; evangelism and outreach (including *A Passion for Life)*; church leadership culture in the light of reports into spiritual abuse in churches in the UK and beyond; strategic priorities for staff appointments; *Living in Love and Faith* – Church of England resources concerning relationships marriage and sexuality; Christmas ministry & outreach; church finances and property; appointment of PCC officers & working groups following the APCM; 2022 PCC & Pre-school budgets; Secret Agents summer holiday club; ministry with children and young people; mission partnerships (including a new partnership with *Faith in Kids);* health and safety; Stewartby United Church.

In addition the safeguarding of young people and vulnerable adults was a standing item on the agenda of every meeting.

The Parish Safeguarding Officer, Kate Wilson, is currently a member of PCC. She is supported by Emma Hearn and Pauline Kendall as deputy safeguarding officers. Training on safeguarding arranged by the Diocese has been attended by members of the PCC, as well as by leaders of young people's groups and others as required under the church's safeguarding policy and by the Church of England.

Some PCC members also attended an online training session run by CPAS, *PCC Tonight.*

The PCC employs a part-time administrator, part-time Youth and Families Worker, the staff of the Preschool, and a church hall cleaner. The PCC and staff work in partnership with teams of volunteer helpers, appointed by the PCC and the vicar.

St Mary's continued to have responsibility within the diocese of St Albans as a training parish for first–post curates. Revd Phillip Young, with his wife Louise and sons Teddy, Wilfie & Rupert, is the current curate in training.

Jim Hignett serves as a licensed Reader and attends regular diocesan events.

The PCC and Administrator comply with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) regarding the privacy of church member's information.

Financial Review

Total receipts of unrestricted giving and income amounted to £137,700 and restricted giving totalled £10,473. We were able to reclaim £20,345 from Gift Aid eligible donations. These combined with other receipts gave the church a total income of £148,787. This was £12,273 less than in 2020 but this was largely due to a one-off donation of £11,000 received into the Choir & Organ Fund in 2020. The level of income remained extremely encouraging bearing in mind the continued pressures put upon the congregation because of the COVID pandemic.

Approximately £105,000 was spent on the Christian ministry at St. Mary's which includes £62,335 in Parish Share which was paid in full and pays for clergy salaries, pensions and housing costs as well as supporting the mission of the diocese. Our total expenditure for the year totalled £147,389, a decrease of £3,902 from the previous year.

For 2021 the church set a budget of £141,600 for income and expenditure and by the end of the year we had generated a modest surplus of income over expenditure of £1,398 which was achieved as our income exceeded our budget by £7,187 and whilst our expenditure was also up it was only ahead of budget by £5,789.

Reserves Policy

Throughout 2021 we maintained our reserve fund at £10,000. This allows us to meet our obligations in terms of staff salaries and church running costs for a period of three months. Our cash reserves remain strong with a total of £255,694 on deposit at the end of 2021, with approximately £203,000 of this being restricted to expenditure on the fabric of the church building. During 2021 we have continued to operate two current accounts with our Metro account becoming the main account while we continue to maintain the NatWest account to ensure no account has funds exceeding £85,000 (Financial Services Compensation Scheme limit). In terms of a deposit account we continue to invest in the CBF Church of England Funds.







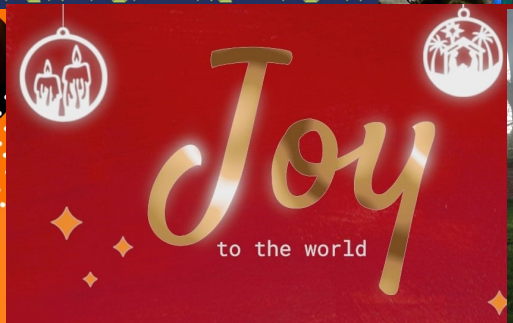














Safeguarding

The PCC has complied with their duty to have 'due regard' to the House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy and Practice Guidance. The safeguarding policy is reviewed annually by the Parish Safeguarding Officer and agreed by the PCC. Safeguarding is also standing item on all PCC meeting agendas where any matters arising are discussed. The safeguarding team, Kate Wilson, Emma Hearn and Pauline Kendall, are working on behalf of the PCC to ensure all safeguarding requirements are fulfilled. This includes ensuring safer recruitment and that all volunteers are compliant with the new safeguarding training framework, which came into effect in January 2022. Following national reviews relating to safeguarding in churches, a review of St Mary's safeguarding culture took place. The safeguarding team, on behalf of the PCC, are working to implement recommendations made.

Support of Stewartby United Church

Ministry at Stewartby United Church, a local ecumenical project, is provided under the terms of a Sharing Agreement in which the Church of England and the Methodist Church are the remaining active partners. Licensed ministers and congregation members from St Mary's have continued to support Stewartby in leading services when Stewartby church has been able to meet in person during 2021. Towards the end of the year, SU Church Council resolved, on account of the limited numbers of members able to serve actively, to reduce the number of Sunday meetings to one service on the first Sunday of each month, and a monthly T@3 Café Church.





EXPENDITURE January - December 2021	
Salaries January - December 2020	88483.83
Pension	3422.88
Employers National Insurance/TAX	8060.62
Church Hall Rent + Floor Donation	5037.51
PLA Membership Fee + Ofsted	252.25
Equipment and supplies	5127.14
Uniform	324.57
Milkbar	1053.09
Photo developing	282.48
Staff Training	576.37
Petty Cash	105.00
DBS	398.70
Trip	818.50
Cash in Hand - 31 December 2021	4.05
Balance in Bank - 31 December 2021	26335.05
TOTAL	140282.04
INCOME January - December 2020	
Cash in Hand - 1 January 2021	9.05
Balance at Bank - 1 January 2021	28839.84
Received from Fees	15465.50
Received from Early Years Funding LEA + SEN	94883.26
Government Grant	576.98
Donations	37.41
Trip	470.00
TOTAL	140282.04

Manager/Treasurer: Tracey A-S Date: 04/01/2022
TRACEY KERINS

Deputy Manager: Lina Rosato Date: 07/01/2022
LINA ROSATO

Auditor: R. Rees Date: 16.2.2022
LESLEY REES

St. Mary the Virgin Parochial Church Council
Independent Examiner's Report of accounts
for January to December 2021

Independent Examiner's report to the Parochial Church Council
of St Mary the Virgin, Wootton, Bedford
Charity Commission no. 1150817

This report on the accounts of the PCC for the year ended **31 December 2021**, which are set out on pages 1 to 4 is in respect of an examination carried out in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 ('the Regulations') and **s.145 of the Charities Act 2011** ('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 **s.144(2)** of the Act does 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 **s.145(5)(b)** of the Act and to be found in the Church guidance, 2006 edition. 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:

i. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section **130** of the 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

ii. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed Lynda Richardson Independent Examiner – L. Richardson

Date 7th March 2022

Signed on behalf of PCC Incumbrant – P.M. Ackroyd

Date 14 March 2022

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St Mary's Church, Wootton

Balance Sheet detailed

To 31st December 2021

		As at 31/12/2021	As at 31/12/2020
Endowment assets			
	1509: Wootton Armstrong Fund	1,730.62	1,513.06
	1510: Wootton Church Cottages	27,830.17	24,331.57
	Total Fixed assets	**29,560.79**	**25,844.63**
Current assets			
	1501: NatWest Current	85,410.85	117,884.30
	1503: CBF Capital Fund	120,501.34	124,095.69
	1504: CBF Studley Road	1.71	1.71
	1508: Cash Book	—	—
	1511: Metro Current	49,780.26	12,123.73
	Total Current assets	**255,694.16**	**254,105.43**
Liabilities			
	1650: Loans for Stonework	—	—
	6699: Agency collections	388.18	197.50
	Total Liabilities	**388.18**	**197.50**
	Net Asset surplus (deficit)	**284,866.77**	**279,752.56**
Reserves			
	Excess / (deficit) to date	1,398.05	9,769.41
	Z01: Starting balances	279,752.56	268,313.78
	Z02: Gains/(losses) on investment assets	3,716.16	1,669.37
	Total Reserves	**284,866.77**	**279,752.56**

Represented by Funds		
Unrestricted	26,388.57	29,835.39
Restricted	228,917.41	224,072.54
Endowment	29,560.79	25,844.63
Total	**284,866.77**	**279,752.56**

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St Mary's Church, Wootton

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
Incoming resources					
Donations, Legacies and similar incoming resources	116,802.33	2,475.87	—	119,278.20	135,086.45
Activities in furtherance of the charity's objects	21,510.85	—	—	21,510.85	19,088.25
Investment income	—	811.05	—	811.05	1,203.88
Other incoming resources	—	7,187.00	—	7,187.00	5,682.33
Total income	**138,313.18**	**10,473.92**	**—**	**148,787.10**	**161,060.91**
Resources used					
Grants payable in furtherance of charity's objects	10,115.00	—	—	10,115.00	9,720.00
Activities in furtherance of the charity's objects	125,766.82	5,488.25	—	131,255.07	135,539.65
Support costs	2,720.17	541.54	—	3,261.71	3,210.06
Expenditure on managing-administering the charity	2,757.27	—	—	2,757.27	2,821.79
Total expenditure	**141,359.26**	**6,029.79**	**—**	**147,389.05**	**151,291.50**
Net income / (expenditure) resources before transfer	**(3,046.08)**	**4,444.13**	**—**	**1,398.05**	**9,769.41**
Transfers					
Gross transfers between funds - in	2,776.82	1,190.74	—	3,967.56	16,211.95
Gross transfers between funds - out	(3,177.56)	(790.00)	—	(3,967.56)	(16,211.95)
Other recognised gains / losses					
Gains / losses on investment assets	—	—	3,716.16	3,716.16	1,669.37
Net movement in funds	**(3,446.82)**	**4,844.87**	**3,716.16**	**5,114.21**	**11,438.78**
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward	**29,835.39**	**224,072.54**	**25,844.63**	**279,752.56**	**268,313.78**
Total funds carried forward	**26,388.57**	**228,917.41**	**29,560.79**	**284,866.77**	**279,752.56**

st mary's wootton

St Mary's Church, Wootton

Analysis of income and expenditure
Selected period: 01 January 2021 to 31 December 2021

	Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	Endowment	Total This year	Total Last year
Incoming resources						
Donations, Legacies and similar incoming resources						
101 - Gift Aided	71,556.00	—	—	—	71,556.00	79,910.00
102 - Tax recovered	20,045.79	—	300.00	—	20,345.79	21,763.62
103 - Other giving	8,593.96	—	—	—	8,593.96	8,322.48
104 - Loose Collections	1,542.04	—	—	—	1,542.04	1,462.76
105 - Gift days- Sundry giving	13,786.20	—	—	—	13,786.20	7,319.25
201 - Given for specific projects	665.79	612.55	2,175.87	—	3,454.21	16,308.34
Donations, Legacies and similar incoming resources Totals	116,189.78	612.55	2,475.87	—	119,278.20	135,086.45
Activities in furtherance of the charity's objects						
302 - Rent for church buildings	17,938.32	—	—	—	17,938.32	16,918.25
401 - Monies for books	163.53	—	—	—	163.53	252.00
404 - PCC fees Weddings/ Funerals	3,409.00	—	—	—	3,409.00	1,918.00
Activities in furtherance of the charity's objects Totals	21,510.85	—	—	—	21,510.85	19,088.25
Investment income						
301 - Interest	—	—	811.05	—	811.05	1,203.88
Investment income Totals	—	—	811.05	—	811.05	1,203.88
Other incoming resources						
106 - Wootton Charities	—	—	2,000.00	—	2,000.00	2,000.00
405 - Assigned fees	—	—	5,187.00	—	5,187.00	3,682.33
Other incoming resources Totals	—	—	7,187.00	—	7,187.00	5,682.33
Incoming resources Grand totals	137,700.63	612.55	10,473.92	—	148,787.10	161,060.91
Resources used						
Grants payable in furtherance of charity's objects						
1001 - Overseas Mission	4,200.00	2,615.00	—	—	6,815.00	5,200.00
1003 - Home Mission	2,800.00	500.00	—	—	3,300.00	4,520.00
Grants payable in furtherance of charity's objects Totals	7,000.00	3,115.00	—	—	10,115.00	9,720.00
Activities in furtherance of the charity's objects						
2001 - Diocesan Quota	62,335.00	—	—	—	62,335.00	62,647.00
2002 - Working Expenses of Incumbent	2,571.24	—	—	—	2,571.24	2,361.15
2004 - Assistant Staff	22,918.99	—	945.04	—	23,864.03	24,354.86
2005 - Church Running expense	4,891.78	—	—	—	4,891.78	4,729.49
2006 - Church Maintenance	1,301.08	—	92.00	—	1,393.08	1,897.12
2007 - Upkeep of Services	3,127.54	—	—	—	3,127.54	6,700.54
2008 - Upkeep of Churchyard	—	—	54.21	—	54.21	—
2009 - Costs relating to books	377.12	—	—	—	377.12	505.93

	Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	Endowment	Total This year	Total Last year
2010 - Church hall	8,670.64	—	—	—	8,670.64	10,341.98
2016 - Honoraria, Assigned fees	—	—	4,397.00	—	4,397.00	3,542.28
6000 - Studley Road	395.14	—	—	—	395.14	672.64
6001 - Curate Housing	19,178.29	—	—	—	19,178.29	17,786.66
Activities in furtherance of the charity's objects Totals	125,766.82	—	5,488.25	—	131,255.07	135,539.65
Support costs						
2017 - Support Costs	2,308.99	411.18	541.54	—	3,261.71	3,210.06
Support costs Totals	2,308.99	411.18	541.54	—	3,261.71	3,210.06
Expenditure on managing-administering the charity						
4000 - Administration	2,757.27	—	—	—	2,757.27	2,821.79
Expenditure on managing-administering the charity Totals	2,757.27	—	—	—	2,757.27	2,821.79
Resources used Grand totals	137,833.08	3,526.18	6,029.79	—	147,389.05	151,291.50



'You also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.'
1 Peter 2: 4-5

Administrative Information

St Mary's church is situated in Wootton village, Bedfordshire. It is part of the Diocese of St Albans within the Church of England. The correspondence address is : The Vicarage, Church Road, Wootton, Bedford MK43 9HF.

The Registered charity number 1150817

office@stmaryswootton.org.uk

PCC members who served during the year were:
Revd Peter Ackroyd (chair), Hazel Sanders (churchwarden), Ant Hall (churchwarden), Revd Shaun Atkins, Revd Phillip Young, David Baylis (Treasurer), Jim Hignett (Reader; Deanery Synod), Pauline Kendall (Diocesan Synod), Tim Dillistone (Deanery Synod), Charles Ashbrook (Deanery Synod), Amanda Newton, Jenny Roffey, Annette Hart, Matt Hearn, Abi Holyoak, Nicola Johnson, Jon Joy, Kate Wilson.

Independent Examiner: Lynden Richardson

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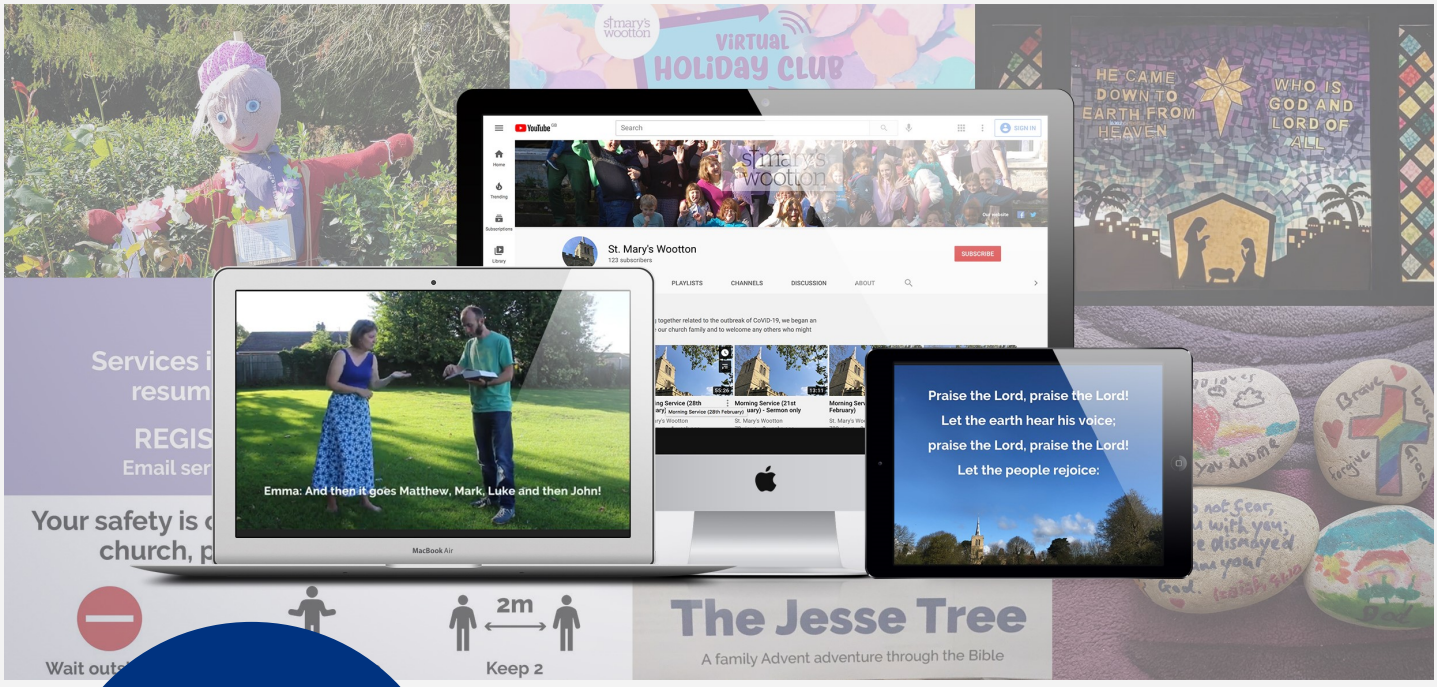
THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST MARYS CHURCH WOOTTON BEDS

England & Wales - Charity number 1150817

Accounts

st mary's wootton

Knowing Jesus;
making Jesus known to all



Annual Report and Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 December 2020

The Parochial Church Council of St Mary the Virgin, Wootton, Bedfordshire
Registered Charity 1150817

St. Mary's Church
c/o The Vicarage | Church Rd | Wootton | Bedford | MK43 9HF
01234 765375/768391 | office@stmaryswootton.org.uk | www.stmaryswootton.org.uk

Mission Statement (what we aim to do)

Knowing Jesus; making Jesus known to all

Towards 2024 *(adopted March 2020)*



St Mary's 2020-2024:

Our vision is unchanged: to be a church family of disciples of Jesus Christ, rooted in the Bible and prayer, committed to making disciples, to holiness of life and to every-member service; a family of loving welcome, passionate proclamation, glad service, global heart and sacrificial change.*

Our five year goal is simple: to double in size

Our priority is clear: to develop our life as a church towards this goal.

Our strategy is threefold:

- to develop our facilities for growth
- to establish PCC-led teams to support ministries for growth
- to launch at least one new congregation

all in dependence on the Lord in prayer

Values Statement (what matters to us)

We believe that we are reconciled to God the Father through faith in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit, and therefore we value:

The Bible as the written word of God and our supreme authority in following Jesus in the whole of life.

Prayer as the prime expression of faith in Jesus and of our dependence on God's loving grace and sovereign power in all things.

Church as a family of wholehearted worshippers and disciples of Jesus Christ committed to mutual encouragement, care, and accountability.

Evangelism as the proclamation of the good news of God's salvation in Christ for all people

Service as a family of God's people caring for people in Wootton and Stewartby and beyond with the love of Christ.

Identity Statement



We are...

Christ's church: the church is the bride and body of Jesus Christ; it is through him alone, revealed to us by the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures, that we know God; it is through the power of the Holy Spirit that we worship and serve Christ; and it is Christ's future return which is our hope and motivation for life.

A local church: a full and authentic expression of the universal church, called into being and sustained by God's word. We have a specific responsibility to proclaim and demonstrate the love of God in Christ among the people of the parish of Wootton. We are also called to involvement with the world-wide mission of the whole church.

An Anglican church: while we welcome Christians of all backgrounds, our permanent and most visible connection is with the Church of England. We accept and uphold its founding documents (The Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion, the Book of Common Prayer, and the Ordinal) as authentic expressions of orthodox Christian belief. We are committed to supporting and encouraging biblical faith and practice in the Anglican Communion, both within and beyond the diocese of St Albans.

An evangelical church: we recognise the convictions of historic evangelicalism as crystallising and expressing the kernel of orthodox Christianity, including: the supreme authority of Scripture; the universal nature of human sin; the grace of God, seen above all in the substitutionary atoning death of Jesus Christ; and the gift of justification and new life in Christ, received and enjoyed only through repentance and faith. We value the examples, among others, of the sixteenth-century reformers, the eighteenth-century evangelists, and the nineteenth-century social reformers. We are committed to gospel partnership with evangelical mission agencies, as well as with our patron, the Martyrs' Memorial and Church of England Trust, and the Church Pastoral Aid Society.

* Vision Statement (what we aim to become)



One body of wholehearted worshipping disciples, ever more deeply rooted in the Bible & prayer, growing together in holiness and every-member ministry to become a family of:

- **loving welcome**, caring for one another with the love of Jesus Christ nurturing, teaching and training one another for lives of holiness and love
- **passionate proclamation**, committed to reaching the people of Wootton, Stewartby and beyond, with the vital good news of Jesus Christ for a lost world
- **glad service**, dedicated to being salt and light for Jesus Christ in the world
- **global heart**, BOTH prayerfully and practically engaged in the worldwide mission of the church, AND training and sending men and women into gospel ministry within and beyond the parish
- **sacrificial change**, giving generously of ourselves, our money, and our talents to realise this vision

I

Aims and Purposes

St Mary's Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of cooperating with the incumbent, Canon Peter Ackroyd, in promoting the whole mission of the church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical in the ecclesiastical parish of Wootton, which comprises the two civil parishes of Wootton and Stewartby. The PCC is also responsible for maintenance of the Church, Church Hall, and an investment property.

Objectives and Activities

The primary objective of the Parochial Church Council is the promotion of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to the doctrines and practices of the Church of England. To this end the PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship in the parish church, to providing opportunities for adults and young people to hear the gospel and grow in discipleship, to caring pastorally and practically for people in need, and to supporting Christian mission within and beyond the parish, indeed globally. The PCC regularly reviews the effectiveness of the church's ministry in the light of both its own Mission Action Plan, and the three themes of the Living God's Love vision of the Diocese of St Albans: Going Deeper into God, Transforming Communities, and Making New Disciples. In planning and overseeing the mission of the church, the incumbent and PCC consider the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the supplementary guidance on charities for the advancement of religion.

As the pages of this report record, the shape of the life and mission of the church during 2020 was dramatically altered by the coronavirus pandemic. At the beginning of the year, the PCC had anticipated renewing its Mission Action Plan for a further five years, with a prayerful aspiration to see a doubling in the size of our worshipping congregations. The impact of the pandemic on every area of church life quickly made apparent the need to pivot to supporting members of the church and community through the isolation and trauma of a public health emergency which dramatically curtailed both individual freedoms and communal life, including public worship. In the circumstances, MAP renewal was deferred until long-term planning could sensibly resume.

The PCC Vision Statement continues to be:
St Mary's will be one body of wholehearted worshipping disciples, ever more deeply rooted in the Bible and prayer, growing together in holiness and every-member ministry to become a family of:

- **loving welcome**, caring for one another with the love of Jesus Christ
- **passionate proclamation**, committed to reaching the people of Wootton, Stewartby and beyond, with the vital good news of Jesus Christ for a lost world.
- **glad service**, dedicated to being salt and light for Jesus Christ in the world
- **global heart** both prayerfully and practically engaged in the worldwide mission of the church and training and sending men and women into gospel ministry within and beyond the parish
- **sacrificial change** giving generously of ourselves, our money, and our talents to realise this vision.

To facilitate the ministry of the church the PCC makes a priority of maintaining the fabric of both the church building and the church hall, which is on a separate site. Maintenance of the churchyards, which are closed, is the responsibility of Wootton Parish Council.

Achievements and performance

Worship and Prayer

At the outset of 2020 the church offered two Sunday morning services, at 9am and at 10.30am, and a monthly Sunday evening Prayer Service.

Following the announcement of a national lockdown in early March, public worship in church buildings – including weddings and funerals - was prohibited by law. From Sunday 22 March, a weekly recorded service was broadcast on YouTube. Public worship was permitted to restart in July and on 16 July a weekly morning service resumed, including a monthly observance of the Lord's Supper, subject to significant limitations on numbers and activity in order to comply with government and Church of England guidance on 'social distancing' and infection control. Although congregational singing was not permitted, refreshments could not be served, and space did not permit youth and children's activities within the church building, the autumn saw up to around fifty attending church in person. Online recorded services continued each week, and once again became the sole opportunity to share in local worship during a further month-long lockdown in November.

Sunday ministry online also included 'Zoom Coffee' at 11.30am weekly and a regular evening online Prayer Gathering, initially weekly and then fortnightly.

st mary's wootton

Newcomers to church continued to be welcomed both physically and online. And though large-scale services in person were precluded by the need for social-distancing, with Christmas and other significant events such as Harvest and Remembrance hence significantly reduced in scale, opportunities to connect in new ways were devised. In the autumn, a Harvest Scarecrow Trail in the church yard enabled families safely to view display and poems by church members, while at Christmas a Churchyard Nativity Trail was provided. A further much appreciated community venture was Christmas Windows, with over sixty households across the village of Wootton volunteering to decorate and illuminate a window of their home with inspiration from the words of Christmas songs and carols.

Zero adults and two children were baptised during the year. Two weddings were celebrated in church and St Mary's clergy officiated at seventeen funeral services for present or former parish residents at St Marys, Stewartby United Church, or Bedford Crematorium.

For a while over the summer, the church was open weekly for private prayer.

Families, children and young people

From March to September face-to-face children and youth work, either in church or mid week groups, was not permitted due to Covid-19 but the PCC oversaw several other initiatives. Restrictions were eased slightly from September meaning some face to face activities could resume.

Initiatives during 2020/21:

- Weekly Church at Home resources with activities, teaching, game and prayer suggestions emailed to approximately 30 families.
- All age online services and all age slots within the online services.
- Virtual Holiday Club including aerobics, memory verse, prayer crafts, songs, jokes and frolics, bedtime stories with 3 videos a day averaging 90 views per day plus a Facebook group
- Special event services online for Good Friday and Christingle.
- Jesse Tree family devotion.
- Zoom Pathfinders, J@M and Sunday groups.
- StoryTime Zoom.
- Daily reading plan for families-Day by Day (Jesus Storybook Bible & Meals with Jesus.)
- Offered 1:1 Bible Study to young people.
- Scarecrow Trail in the Churchyard.
- Interactive Walkabout Nativity Trail-Journey to Bethlehem.
- In person socially distanced Pathfinders and J@M in the church.
- In person Sunday Children's groups, socially distanced, Explorers & Pathfinders together outside.
- Weekly email to families with encouragement, signposting to resources and material for families to use.
- Church at Home YouTube playlist for all age worship songs.
- Encouraged engagement with outside events such as Sorted Nano & Sorted, Keswick Convention, Getty Family Hymn Sing, Worship for Everyone-Family at 4 and Virtual Ventures.



Youth and children's ministry has been delivered flexibly in a variety of ways. With many families unable to attend church and face to face youth work not permitted, we developed Church at Home and encouraged and equipped parents in discipling their children. Technology was utilised in new ways such as Zoom for virtual mid-week and Sunday groups, pre-recorded videos for a virtual Holiday Club presenting different elements of our usual Holiday Club. At Christmas a walkabout interactive nativity was held in the churchyard bringing the nativity story to families in the community in a very different way.

Discipleship, Pastoral Care and Training

During the pandemic Growth Groups continued to be the main vehicle for the pastoral support of congregation members, meeting on Zoom. Five Growth Groups met during the year, weekly in the evening, to study the Bible, pray, and support one another. Leaders met termly to receive training and support, and to pray together. One of our groups for older members was unable to meet online, but a small group of people have kept weekly contact by telephone.

The PCC continued to prioritise training in the understanding and skills of Christian ministry attending Zoom training courses where possible.

The monthly Men's Breakfast met in person when permitted and on Zoom, and regularly attracted up to eight men for mutual support and encouragement.

st mary's wootton

A number of church members attended the Virtually Keswick Convention in July.

A Pastoral Coordination Team was set up early in 2020 and consists of five members. This group has met fortnightly to support the clergy in caring for church members and their families at times of sickness, hospitalisation, infirmity and isolation particularly during the pandemic, when we have been unable to meet as a congregation face to face.

Mission and outreach

St Mary's mission is summarised on its publicity, website and noticeboards as 'Knowing Jesus; making Jesus known to all'. PCC pursued this mission through a range of activities.

Since March we have been producing YouTube weekly Sunday services which regularly attract an average of two hundred views. At Remembrance there were three hundred and seventy views, as the community was unable to remember together in person. At Christmas, again, an average of two hundred viewed our online Christingle, Carols by Candlelight & Christmas Eve Family Carol services. We have sought to keep in touch with the village through social media and at Christmas we saw increased traffic due to our 'Christmas Windows' Facebook page.

Our monthly Lunch Club for the over 50's was unable to run from March. However, Norma Smith and Jenny Roffey have continued to keep in touch with members.

Other outreach events that took place in 2020 included a virtual summer holiday club and a Harvest scarecrow trail. We were also able to provide a bedtime Christmas story video 'The Christmas Promise' by Alison Mitchell to Wootton Lower School read by our Youth and Children's Worker, Emma Hearn.

Mission Partnerships

The PCC tithes its income from regular giving to support Christian mission beyond the parish according to its agreed Global Mission Policy.

In 2020 mission funding was given to:

- Festive - for the ministry of Karen Jones working with sixth forms and further education colleges to spread the gospel.
- IMPACT – Christian workers supporting local schools.
- Jude and YP Gayet involved in church planting and youth ministry in Belgium.
- Bishop Alf and Hilary Cooper with CMS in Chile.
- Speak Life – UK evangelistic ministry (Director: Glen Scrivener)
- The Church Pastoral Aid Society

A donation of £1000 was made to Open Doors (UK) in support of it's work with the persecuted church. Church members contributed to the ministry of Operation Christmas Child at Christmas (Samaritan's Purse) and donations were encouraged for SMART Prebend Centre for the homeless. Throughout the year church members supported the work of Bedford Foodbank through a collection point in the church.

Church buildings

One of the objectives of the PCC is to maintain the church, church hall and grounds as well as a house which has in past years accommodated the curate.

Many works were required this year to ensure the church and church hall remained safe when being reopened after closure, and when open to ensure they were Covid safe.



Equipment was installed in church to enable live streaming of church services. Approval was sought for installing a phone line into the church for a broadband connection. It is hoped this will be installed in 2021.

Progress towards the restoration of the North Porch, was further delayed awaiting a bat survey, this was a condition of the faculty and could not be completed due to Covid restrictions. Works are hoped to commence in 2021.

The PCC-owned property at 9 Studley Road was let for this year in order to support the renting of a more suitable property for the curate and his family.

st mary's wootton

Ecumenical Relationships

The PCC aims to strengthen Christian witness and service in the community through membership of Wootton and Stewartby Churches. A Lenten Prayer service was hosted by St Mary's on the 8th March.

Clergy attend bi-monthly prayer meetings for leaders of Bedford Churches in sympathy with the doctrinal basis of the Evangelical Alliance, of which St Marys is a corporate member.

St Mary's Preschool

On account of the coronavirus pandemic, 2020 proved to be one of the most challenging of the more than fifty years since the PCC opened a daily Play Group (now Preschool) to serve the local community.

The Preschool opened the year with forty children on the roll. Following the introduction of a national lockdown towards the end of March, Preschool closed and most staff were furloughed (under the UK Government Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme). Support for families and children was maintained through email and social media. Educational provision restarted on site on 16 June, and continued in the autumn, with an initial thirty-five children attending. The Preschool manager is Tracey Kerins. Oversight of the Preschool is delegated to a management group was appointed by PCC comprising the Preschool Manager and her deputy Lina Rosato, and three members of PCC: Peter Ackroyd, Pauline Kendall and Dorothy Teh. In October, Amanda Newton succeeded Dorothy Teh as a PCC member on this group.

Holywell Church of England School, Cranfield

The PCC nominates a number of governors at Holywell School. Continuing Wootton PCC Foundation Governors were: Pauline Kendall (Chair of Governors), Martin Sanders, Fiona Frossell and Isabel Turner.

Deanery Synod

St Marys was represented in Deanery Synod by its licensed clergy and three representatives of the laity. Pauline Kendall served throughout the year as Lay Co-Chair of the Synod. During the year the Synod met four times; except for its February meeting, all these were held online. As well as reviewing progress in implementing the Deanery Mission Action Plan, and engaging with proposals for the re-organisation of ministry in the south of the deanery, Synod heard presentations from external speakers on the following topics: Modern Slavery (Kevin Wollmer, priest-missioner St Peter de Merton & Bedford Town Centre), Supporting Christians in FE & VI Form colleges (Karen Jones, Festive), and Faith and Artificial Intelligence (Canon Tim Bull, Director of Ministry and Diocesan Director of Ordinands). Reports were given on the proceedings of the Diocesan Board of Finance and Diocesan and General Synods. During the year Canon Richard Hibbert's second term of office as Area Dean came to an end; he was succeeded by Revd Sam Cappleman. Ann Mason stood down after many years service as Secretary to the Synod; her successor is Kathryn Hughes.

Volunteers

The PCC would like to record its thanks to all those who serve in the church as volunteers in different capacities in particular, including the church wardens Hazel Sanders and Ant Hall who have worked tirelessly in serving the congregation in the last twelve months. The PCC would also like to thank the Treasurer Phil Wainwright for his financial advice to the PCC and ably supported by Alison Reed Thomsett the Book Keeper. The ability of the PCC to offer a varied programme of activities to meet a diverse range of people is only achieved by the generous giving of time, talents and funds from many members of the congregation.

Structure, governance and management

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is a corporate body established by the Church of England. The PCC operates under the Parochial Church Council Powers Measure. The PCC is a registered charity. The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. At St Mary's the membership of the PCC consists of the incumbent (the vicar), licensed clergy, church wardens, the reader and members elected by those members of the congregation who are on the Electoral Roll of the church and stand for election to the PCC. A revision of the Electoral Roll took place in September 2020. Following the revision the roll numbered 124. At the end of the year, the total was 123.

The PCC members are responsible for making decisions on all matters of general concern and importance to the parish, including deciding on how the funds of the PCC are to be spent. The Treasurer (Phil Wainwright) gives a monthly update on the current finances. New members receive initial training into the workings of the PCC.

The PCC met 9 times in the year. Sub committees are formed that deal with particular aspects of parish life. Training on safeguarding arranged by the Diocese have been attended by members of the PCC, as well as by leaders of young people's groups and others as required under the church's safeguarding policy and by the Church of England.

During 2020 Tomira Nawrocka retired as Parish Safeguarding Officer and Kate Wilson took over the role, with Emma Hearn and Pauline Kendall as deputy safeguarding officers. Safeguarding is a standing item on each PCC agenda.

The Standing Committee meets once a month this is made up of the vicar, wardens, treasurer and secretary. The role of the Standing Committee is to prioritise items for the PCC meeting, discuss and make decisions on items of a confidential nature or look in more detail on matters that have been brought to the PCC.

The PCC employs a part-time administrator, part-time Youth and Families Worker, the staff of the Preschool, and a church hall cleaner. The PCC and staff work in partnership with teams of volunteer helpers, appointed by the PCC and the vicar.

St Mary's continued to have responsibility within the diocese of St Albans as a training parish for first–post curates. Revd Phillip Young, with his wife Louise and sons Teddy and Wilfie, is the current curate in training.

Jim Hignett serves as a licensed Reader and attends regular diocesan events.

The PCC and Administrator comply with the recent General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) regarding the privacy of church member's information.

Financial Review

Total receipts of unrestricted giving and income amounted to £138,751 and restricted giving totalled £22,309. We were able to reclaim £21,764 from Gift Aid eligible donations. These combined with other receipts gave the church a total income of £161,061. This was approximately £35,000 less than in 2019 but this was largely due to a large one off donation (£45,000) received in 2019. The level of income was extremely encouraging bearing in mind the pressures put upon the congregation as a result of the Covid19 pandemic.

Approximately £106,000 was spent on the Christian ministry at St. Mary's. This figure includes £62,335 in Parish Share which was paid in full and which pays for clergy salaries, pensions and housing costs as well as supporting the mission of the diocese. Our total expenditure for the year totalled £151,292, a decrease of just over £20,000 from the previous year.

Overall, the church finished 2020 with a surplus of income over expenditure of £9,769. This surplus was made possible by a receipt of £11,000 restricted income into the Choir & Organ Fund. Our income exceeded our budget and our expenditure was close to the 2020 budget of £150,600. Some savings were made possible as a result of the pandemic and this enabled us to invest in the infrastructure to facilitate the future live streaming of church services.

Reserves Policy

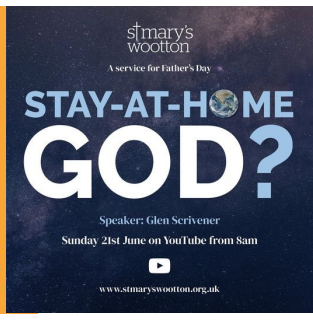
Throughout 2020 we maintained our reserve fund at £10,000. This allows us to meet our obligations in terms of staff salaries and church running costs for a period of three months. Our cash reserves remain strong with a total of £254,105 on deposit at the end of 2020, with approximately £195,000 of this being restricted to expenditure on the fabric of the church building. During 2020 we have continued to operate two current accounts with our Metro account becoming the main account while we continue to maintain the NatWest account to ensure no account has funds exceeding £85,000 (Financial Services Compensation Scheme limit). In terms of a deposit account we continue to invest in the CBF Church of England Funds.











Parochial Church Council

The PCC met nine times, including online meetings using the Zoom platform for most of the year. Some of the work of the PCC is carried out through the following sub-committees: Standing, Finance, Youth Council, Pre-School Management.

Following the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic, PCC oversaw the substantial challenges which this brought to mission and ministry. Decisions made in online meetings were subsequently ratified by electronic correspondence.

In addition to PCC finances and maintenance and development of church buildings, the safeguarding of young people and vulnerable adults was a standing item on the agenda of every meeting. The Parish Safeguarding Officer has the right to attend whenever they deem it necessary, and is invited to attend at least three meetings every year as a matter of course.

Issues discussed during the year included: Vision for Growth 2019-2020; evangelism & outreach; administration of the communion cup by growth group leaders; proceedings of deanery and diocesan synods, and meetings of PCC committees; support for mission partners, mission and relief agencies, and the persecuted church; a bi-monthly church family magazine; attendance at training and other events including a ReNew St Albans meeting hosted by St Marys on 8 March; the relaunch of bell-ringing; arrangements including risk assessments for the opening of church for private prayer (June) and resumption of in-person services in July; provision of equipment and broadband access to enable services to be livestreamed; recovery from coronavirus restrictions; pastoral support for isolating congregation and community members; establishment of a hardship fund; re-organisation of the prayer chain; Christmas ministry & outreach; appointment of PCC officers & working groups following the APCM; 2021 PCC & Preschool budgets.

PCC policies reviewed during the year included: Safeguarding, Health and Safety; Livestreaming; Global Missions

The revision of the church's detailed Mission Action Plan, including the establishment of PCC ministry teams, and consideration of launching further services/congregations was suspended.

Support of Stewartby United Church

Ministry at Stewartby United Church, a local ecumenical project, is provided under the terms of a Sharing Agreement in which the Church of England and the Methodist Church are the remaining active partners. Licensed ministers and congregation members from St Mary's have continued to support Stewartby in leading services when Stewartby church has been able to meet in person during 2020. At Christmas two Carols by Candlelight services where held on successive weekends led by Peter Ackroyd & Phillip Young.





St. Mary's Playgroup
Income and Expenditure
January to December 2020

EXPENDITURE January - December 2020	
Salaries January - December 2020	72081.26
Pension	3021.48
Employers National Insurance/TAX	12370.99
Church Hall Rent + Floor Donation	5281.25
PLA Membership Fee + Ofsted	35.00
Equipment and supplies	3372.16
Uniform	1044.41
Milkbar	671.22
Photo developing	195.92
Staff Training	63.00
Petty Cash	1.50
DBS	52.60
Fee refunds	534.00
Cash in Hand - 31 December 2020	9.05
Balance in Bank - 31 December 2020	28839.84
TOTAL	**127573.68**
INCOME January - December 2020	
Cash in Hand - 1 January 2020	10.55
Balance at Bank - 1 January 2020	26048.83
Received from Fees	11897.45
Received from Early Years Funding LEA + SEN	82981.46
Government Grant	6419.83
Donations	215.56
TOTAL	**127573.68**

Manager/Treasurer: Tracey A L S Date: 24|01|2021
TRACEY KERINS

Deputy Manager: Rosato Date: 24|01|2021
LINA ROSATO

Auditor: L. Rees Date: 1.2.2021
LESLEY REES

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St. Mary the Virgin Parochial Church Council
Independent Examiner's Report of accounts for January to December 2020

Independent Examiner's report to the Parochial Church Council of St Mary the Virgin, Wootton, Bedford
Charity Commission no. 1150817

This report on the accounts of the PCC for the year ended **31 December 2020**, which are set out on pages 1 to 4 is in respect of an examination carried out in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 ('the Regulations') and **s.145 of the Charities Act 2011** ('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 **s.144(2)** of the Act does 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 **s.145(5)(b)** of the Act and to be found in the Church guidance, 2006 edition. 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:

i. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section **130** of the 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

ii. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed Lynden Richardson Independent Examiner – L. Richardson FCCA

Date _____

Signed on behalf of PCC _____ Incumbrant – P.M. Ackroyd

Date 15/3/21

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Balance Sheet detailed
To 31st December 2020

		As at 31/12/2020	As at 31/12/2019
Endowment assets			
	1509: Wootton Armstrong Fund	1,513.06	1,415.32
	1510: Wootton Church Cottages	24,331.57	22,759.94
	Total Fixed assets	**25,844.63**	**24,175.26**
Current assets			
	1501: NatWest Current	117,884.30	119,687.42
	1503: CBF Capital Fund	124,095.69	111,853.60
	1504: CBF Studley Road	1.71	1.71
	1508: Cash Book	—	—
	1511: Metro Current	12,123.73	12,744.38
	Total Current assets	**254,105.43**	**244,287.11**
Liabilities			
	1650: Loans for Stonework	—	—
	6699: Agency collections	197.50	148.59
	Total Liabilities	**197.50**	**148.59**
	Net Asset surplus (deficit)	**279,752.56**	**268,313.78**
Reserves			
	Excess / (deficit) to date	9,769.41	23,899.90
	Z01: Starting balances	268,313.78	240,601.15
	Z02: Gains/(losses) on investment assets	1,669.37	3,812.73
	Total Reserves	**279,752.56**	**268,313.78**

Represented by Funds		
Unrestricted	29,835.39	35,611.69
Restricted	224,072.54	208,508.11
Endowment	25,844.63	24,175.26
Total	**279,752.56**	**268,313.78**

St Mary's Church, Wootton

Statement of Financial Activities

For the period from 01 January 2020 to 31 December 2020

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Prior year total funds
Incoming resources					
Donations, Legacies and similar incoming resources	119,699.55	15,386.90	—	135,086.45	169,341.66
Activities in furtherance of the charity's objects	19,088.25	—	—	19,088.25	17,331.12
Activities for generating funds	—	—	—	—	—
Investment income	—	1,203.88	—	1,203.88	1,507.84
Other incoming resources	(36.00)	5,718.33	—	5,682.33	7,611.50
Total income	**138,751.80**	**22,309.11**	**—**	**161,060.91**	**195,792.12**
Resources used					
Grants payable in furtherance of charity's objects	9,720.00	—	—	9,720.00	11,000.00
Activities in furtherance of the charity's objects	128,477.12	7,062.53	—	135,539.65	145,864.84
Support costs	3,210.06	—	—	3,210.06	12,344.00
Expenditure on managing-administering the charity	2,821.79	—	—	2,821.79	2,683.38
Total expenditure	**144,228.97**	**7,062.53**	**—**	**151,291.50**	**171,892.22**
Net income / (expenditure) resources before transfer	**(5,477.17)**	**15,246.58**	**—**	**9,769.41**	**23,899.90**
Transfers					
Gross transfers between funds - in	9,369.77	6,842.18	—	16,211.95	32,032.04
Gross transfers between funds - out	(9,687.62)	(6,524.33)	—	(16,211.95)	(32,032.04)
Other recognised gains / losses					
Gains / losses on investment assets	—	—	1,669.37	1,669.37	3,812.73
Gains on revaluation, fixed assets, charity's own use	—	—	—	—	—
Net movement in funds	**(5,795.02)**	**15,564.43**	**1,669.37**	**11,438.78**	**27,712.63**
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward	**35,630.41**	**208,508.11**	**24,175.26**	**268,313.78**	**240,601.15**
Total funds carried forward	**29,835.39**	**224,072.54**	**25,844.63**	**279,752.56**	**268,313.78**

Analysis of income and expenditure
Selected period: 01 January 2020 to 31 December 2020

	Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	Endowment	Total This year	Total Last year
Incoming resources						
Donations, Legacies and similar incoming resources						
101 - Gift Aided	79,910.00	—	—	—	79,910.00	70,814.56
102 - Tax recovered	21,606.12	—	157.50	—	21,763.62	28,299.37
103 - Other giving	8,322.48	—	—	—	8,322.48	11,001.00
104 - Loose Collections	1,462.76	—	—	—	1,462.76	2,150.73
105 - Gift days- Sundry giving	7,319.25	—	—	—	7,319.25	42,133.82
201 - Given for specific projects	334.30	744.64	15,229.40	—	16,308.34	14,942.18
Donations, Legacies and similar incoming resources Totals	118,954.91	744.64	15,386.90	—	135,086.45	169,341.66
Activities in furtherance of the charity's objects						
302 - Rent for church buildings	16,918.25	—	—	—	16,918.25	13,176.60
401 - Monies for books	252.00	—	—	—	252.00	489.52
404 - PCC fees Weddings/ Funerals	1,918.00	—	—	—	1,918.00	3,665.00
Activities in furtherance of the charity's objects Totals	19,088.25	—	—	—	19,088.25	17,331.12
Investment income						
301 - Interest	—	—	1,203.88	—	1,203.88	1,507.84
Investment income Totals	—	—	1,203.88	—	1,203.88	1,507.84
Other incoming resources						
106 - Wootton Charities	—	—	2,000.00	—	2,000.00	2,000.00
405 - Assigned fees	(36.00)	—	3,718.33	—	3,682.33	5,111.50
601 - Insurance claims	—	—	—	—	—	500.00
Other incoming resources Totals	(36.00)	—	5,718.33	—	5,682.33	7,611.50
Incoming resources Grand totals	138,007.16	744.64	22,309.11	—	161,060.91	195,792.12
Resources used						
Grants payable in furtherance of charity's objects						
1001 - Overseas Mission	4,200.00	1,000.00	—	—	5,200.00	6,100.00
1003 - Home Mission	3,400.00	1,120.00	—	—	4,520.00	4,900.00
Grants payable in furtherance of charity's objects Totals	7,600.00	2,120.00	—	—	9,720.00	11,000.00
Activities in furtherance of the charity's objects						
2001 - Diocesan Quota	62,647.00	—	—	—	62,647.00	64,441.00
2002 - Working Expenses of Incumbent	2,361.15	—	—	—	2,361.15	4,613.80
2004 - Assistant Staff	23,417.66	—	937.20	—	24,354.86	35,487.25
2005 - Church Running expense	4,729.49	—	—	—	4,729.49	5,785.65
2006 - Church Maintenance	1,897.12	—	—	—	1,897.12	741.26
2007 - Upkeep of Services	5,904.38	596.16	200.00	—	6,700.54	1,445.18
2008 - Upkeep of Churchyard	—	—	—	—	—	152.00

	Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	Endowment	Total This year	Total Last year
2009 - Costs relating to books	505.93	—	—	—	505.93	807.54
2010 - Church hall	7,841.98	—	2,500.00	—	10,341.98	7,471.57
2012 - Major Works	—	—	—	—	—	4,323.55
2016 - Honoraria, Assigned fees	116.95	—	3,425.33	—	3,542.28	5,122.04
6000 - Studley Road	672.64	—	—	—	672.64	4,274.00
6001 - Folkes Road	17,786.66	—	—	—	17,786.66	11,200.00
Activities in furtherance of the charity's objects Totals	127,880.96	596.16	7,062.53	—	135,539.65	145,864.84
Support costs						
2017 - Support Costs	2,186.03	1,024.03	—	—	3,210.06	12,344.00
Support costs Totals	2,186.03	1,024.03	—	—	3,210.06	12,344.00
Expenditure on managing-administering the charity						
4000 - Administration	2,821.79	—	—	—	2,821.79	2,683.38
Expenditure on managing-administering the charity Totals	2,821.79	—	—	—	2,821.79	2,683.38
Resources used Grand totals	140,488.78	3,740.19	7,062.53	—	151,291.50	171,892.22



‘You are living stones’
1 Peter 2:5

Administrative Information

St Mary’s church is situated in Wootton village, Bedfordshire. It is part of the Diocese of St Albans within the Church of England. The correspondence address is : The Vicarage, Church Road, Wootton, Bedford MK43 9HF.

The Registered charity number 1150817

office@stmaryswootton.org.uk

PCC members who served during the year were:
Revd Peter Ackroyd (chair), Hazel Sanders (churchwarden), Ant Hall (churchwarden), Revd Shaun Atkins, Revd Phillip Young, Philip Wainwright (Treasurer), Dorothy Teh (PCC Secretary), Jim Hignett (Reader; Deanery Synod), Pauline Kendall (Deanery Synod), Tim Dillistone (Deanery Synod), Charles Ashbrook (Deanery Synod), Rob Hamilton, Amanda Newton, Jenny Yang, Jenny Roffey, Annette Hart, Derrick Lowe (retired Sept 2020), Margaret Greenhalgh (retired Sept 2020), Allyson Cable (Electoral Roll Officer) (retired Sept 2020), Matt Hearn (elected Sept 2020), Abi Holyoak (elected Sept 2020)

Independent Examiner: Lynden Richardson

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