



2021

Thatcham Annual Parish Meeting Annual Report APCM 29 May 2022

Parish Office
St Mary's Church
Churchgate
Thatcham
RG19 3PN

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Thatcham Parochial Church Council 2021/22

<p>Ex Officio Revd. Mark Bennet Revd Nicola Hulks Revd Brenda Harland Revd Angela Brennan</p> <p>Churchwardens Paul Bullock (2020) Colin Waters (2020) Christine Rice (2021)</p> <p>Deanery Synod Representatives (to 2023) Mary Stagg Chris Watts Tony Collie Catherine Forbes</p>	<p>Elected Lay Members John Hicks (St Barnabas) Bernadette Ellison (St Barnabas) Leanne Fowler (St Barnabas) Alison Dean (St Barnabas) Lourdes Cottam (St Barnabas)</p> <p>Simon Stagg (2021) Chris Druce (2021) Kevin Dunwell (2020) Ann Watts (2020) Viv Druce (2020) Emma Watts (2020)</p> <p>Co-options Mark Backhouse (Tower Bells) Mike Stevenson (PCC Secretary) Ann Dibble (Safeguarding) <i>Leanne Cox (Safeguarding)</i> <i>(until July 2021)</i></p>

Team Rectors Report

So what of 2021? I find myself having to think very hard, because two years seem to have melded into one, and memory seems so unreliable. Consulting my diary, I see that we had our trail of crosses outside the Church during Holy Week: we were continually on the lookout for things we could do.

I remember taking time on Zoom to show the making of the Ash Wednesday ash from palm crosses – and a zoom service for Easter on my own, bringing the Paschal Candle into St Mary's in the dark and sharing prayers – and how the internet connection didn't really reach beyond the door of the Church. We did more than the previous year, but were still improvising and trying new things out. And the ChristmasNativity in Thatcham Park school field.

I remember Leonard's final farewell – what a curious time he had with us ... and sending him on his way to serve the people of Finchampstead and California (where I grew up).

I remember Angela's first celebration of Holy Communion in "the cathedral of the great outdoors" following her ordination as a priest in an almost deserted Reading Minster.

I remember hoping that we would be able to have a positive and confident re-opening and the dent that "the delta variant" put in those plans – and simply the need to have three plans and a backup for every occasion.

I remember a glorious celebration of harvest, and supporting the Food Bank and the increasing patterns of need and a Christmas perhaps tentative, but with people joining our services from around the world.

I remember my colleagues on social media and in the outdoor spaces. I remember noticing growing and changing patterns of need for young people and families, and how the Baby Café and Muddy Church were starting to meet these needs. And the conversations about whether CAMEO could re-open.

I remember the first opportunity to get together as a team after working alone and in pairs for so much of the time. The support of Nicola and Brenda – and their dedication and skill.

I remember starting to do weddings again, and baptisms, and how different it felt from before as people came with their experiences of COVID times and their own rearranged plans and hopes.

And I remember the practical support given by so many, including the inevitable Marion, with John Coombs and Michael Harley stepping in to support and also add a richness and diversity to our worship.

I remember working with schools and changing arrangements at short notice – and different schools doing different things.

I remember live music back at St Mary's – one of the joys of life in Thatcham – and having the choir back singing.

I remember some challenging times – both personally and for others in the church, and times when it was not obvious what had to be done for the best.

I remember the support of Churchwardens and others.

I remember funerals and departures, some harder to bear than others. And I notice how – with social distancing and less meeting together – departures have been less noticed. We marked the deaths of regulars such as Flo Rye, Pam Broad. Bill Butler and familiar faces like former mayor Bob Judge – who leave significant gaps in our community. And amongst those who have moved away are former treasurer, Peter Harvey-Di-Gioia, our safeguarding lead Leanne Cox, Clare and Rhelan Clarke and Margaret Barker. And with lockdown and distancing, there have also been fewer new joiners – though encouragingly, some new faces.

And thinking about signs for the future, both Leanne Fowler and Alison Dean have been recommended for ordination and have embarked on ordination training – and rich conversations about healing and new services for new people and how Marcia, in her unusual placement with us, has been gently encouraging and supporting and enabling behind the scenes.

I remember more hard work in the hidden world of safeguarding – both in new administration requirements and in dealing with particular cases of which most people reading this will know nothing. And being thankful for Leanne's quietly confident and well organised administration and challenge, and for Ann Dibble taking on new central church systems and requirements.

I remember how our finances have held up – even though they feel more stretched than ever, we got through the year: and I notice the daunting challenge of energising ourselves to raise money for the organ, meeting room and roof alongside keeping the show on the road.

I remember a year as mixed as any other, therefore – but with more intensity and less structure, a hard and tiring year – I spent the Autumn exhausted (was it a mild version of long COVID – I'll never know). And a year in which our Church pulled together and held together, somehow, and how somehow, by the grace of God we find ourselves in shape to face the future. And I remember that prayer has continued and that God has always been there – and I give thanks for what has been

Mark Bennet

PERSONAL TESTIMONY

From Marcia Wadham

This time last year, I wrote about the experience of joining the community of St Mary's with various forms of lockdown in place. Remarkably, as I write now, it is in the knowledge that I have only a few weeks left with you before I head off for ordination and the start of my curacy in Oxford.

It has been a joy to actually meet with you all in person over the last year, after so many months of only seeing you from the shoulders upwards online! I am grateful for all the support and encouragement I've received, and the opportunities I have had to work and serve alongside you, although lockdowns have made it feel as though my time with you has been ridiculously short.

One of the highlights of the last year has been seeing 'Come and Be' develop into something completely different to what we had originally anticipated. Rather than a contemporary service, it has instead become a service focusing on prayer and reflection, and a chance to explore some more creative ways of entering into God's presence, especially since combining it with the healing service.

Other highlights have included getting to know the Mums, Dads, carers and grandparents who come along to ABC every week, finding signs of spring and new life as early as February at Muddy Church, and seeing the A4 closed off and full of people on Remembrance Sunday.

I am so thankful for all I have been able to learn in my time with you, and for the opportunities to get involved in so many areas of ministry.

Marcia Wadham

Parochial Church Council – Background and Proceedings

Thatcham PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the Team Rector and the Team Vicar in promoting in the parish the whole mission of the church – spiritual, pastoral, evangelistic and ecumenical.

The PCC met at St Mary's Church four times during 2021. The Standing Committee met twice.

Arrangements were made during 2021 for 41 baptisms (9 in 2020) and 7 (3) weddings. In addition there were 55 (59) funerals (23 with a service at St Mary's, 32 with services at a crematorium or cemetery)

Membership

Members of the PCC are either ex officio, co-opted or elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting. St Barnabas Church is represented on the PCC by up to 5 members elected by their own church meeting.

Committees

The PCC operates through a Standing Committee and working groups, which meet between full meetings of the Council. The Standing Committee is the only Committee required by law; it has power to transact business of the Council between meetings, subject to any decisions made by the PCC.

FINANCE REPORT

Report to the Accounts December 2021

St Mary's General Account (day to day running of church activities) shows a surplus of expenditure over income of £8,289. Regular giving through Standing Orders and The Parish Giving Scheme has been most welcome together with a number of significant donations but the need to attract new givers to replace those who have died or moved away is a challenge.

The St Barnabas General Account shows a positive balance of £1,909 at the end of the year.

We again managed to pay the Parish Share (our contribution to the diocese for clergy stipends, housing and pensions) in full (£94,423). However not all parishes were able to pay the full amount and this reduces the level of Diocesan rebate payable to the Newbury Deanery in 2022. The Parish Share was set at £88,869 in 2022 as the number of full time paid clergy has had to be reduced. The monthly payment due from Thatcham Parish is £7,406.

The ongoing pandemic continued to affect our ability to raise funds but income from Services and other activities improved gradually through the autumn. Work has begun on fundraising initiatives for essential building repairs and organ restoration.

Expenditure on utilities fell significantly in 2021 following reduction in the use of St Mary's because of the pandemic, warmer weather and replacement of lighting with more economic LED lighting. Resumption of pre-pandemic levels of use of St Mary's and the dramatic increases in costs of gas and electricity will increase pressure on finances in 2022 and 2023.

The need to increase Stewardship giving is critical, especially if we are to meet the running costs of both churches and pay the Parish Share again in full in 2022. If anyone is thinking of increasing their Stewardship payments during 2022 or joining the Scheme, please speak to the Treasurer or any of the Churchwardens.

A particular vote of thanks is due to the small team maintaining the books and banking the cash - Ann Watts at St Mary's and Bernie Ellison at St Barnabas – and to all who so generously support the work of the Church in this parish.

Investments and Fund Structure

There were no changes to the structure of the St Mary's PCC investment funds during 2021.

There follows a brief description of the history, management and restrictions of each of these PCC managed funds.

Curates Housing and Expenses (formerly known as the Hatherley) Fund

The capital arose from the sale of a house given to the Church in 1935 for a succession of curates to live in. The PCC has a 29.4% share of the rent after deduction of expenses on a property in Station Road which continued to be let by the Diocese as it was not required to house a curate. The income is applied for general parish purposes and so is **unrestricted**. The first call on any surplus income is the payment of curate / clergy expenses.

Thatcham Church of England Charity

The original capital arose from two-thirds of the sale proceeds of the Old Infant School in the Broadway; one-third is administered separately by the Diocesan Board of Education.

This charity is governed by a Charity Commission Scheme sealed on the 21st May 1980; the clear income from the permanent endowment is for furthering the religious and other charitable work of the Church of England in the ecclesiastical parish of St Mary's Thatcham and is therefore an **unrestricted** fund. All the income is applied in the parish.

The Church Estate Charity

Charity Commission ref – 00436

This is an ancient charity referred to in the Charity Commissioners Report of 1907; the income is to be applied to the upkeep of the church and the churchyard so this is a **restricted** fund.

Income is derived partly from investments and partly from 6/16ths of the income from Moor Meadow Charity, administered by Thatcham Parochial Charities.

The Rookery Church Fund

The small amount of income arising from the legacy by Mrs Hall who died in 1916, subject to the income being **restricted** to the fostering of the Sunday school. The Rookery was the name of the house.

Bankers: St Mary's PCC - Lloyds Bank plc & St Barnabas - HSBC

Independent Examiners: Tax Avenue, Turnfields Court,

Thatcham Investment Managers:

BlackRock Investment Managers, 12 Throgmorton Avenue London

EC2N 2DL

CCLA, Senator House, 85 Queen Victoria Street, London EC4V 4ET

A summary of the Accounts together with the Independent Examiner's Report is attached at Appendix 2.

Stewardship Secretary's Report – St Mary's.

A total of £69,553 was given through the Stewardship Scheme in 2021 (£66,606 in 2020). This included £23,455 through the Parish Giving Scheme introduced in September 2018. Giving through weekly envelopes was 6,369 and standing order payments were £24,060. In addition £15,669 was reclaimed from HMRC (£14,661 in 2020).

By the end of 2021 there were 21 donors paying by Direct Debits through the Parish Giving Scheme. 20 donors were supplied with weekly envelopes. However whilst some of the givers using envelopes continued to find ways of using them many found the lack of regular services broke the routine of regular giving. 32 donors gave through Standing Orders (a reduction of 6 since 2020).

Great thanks are due to the faithful members of the Stewardship Scheme who by regular and sacrificial levels of giving keep St Mary's and St Barnabas Churches going.

Please continue to review your giving at least annually – index linking is a principle worth considering. Occasional donations are greatly welcomed, but commitment to regular giving is essential if we are to budget for paying for our priests through the Parish Share, maintain the fabric and support sustainable growth of the church in Thatcham.

'Donate' facilities have been incorporated into the website for St Mary's.

I continue to positively recommend the Parish Giving Scheme to all regular givers. Over half the Dioceses in England have joined and together they cover the costs of the small administrative team based at Gloucester Diocese. All the remainder is paid direct to the relevant parishes by the 10th of each month and income tax is reclaimed through the GIFT AID scheme from HMRC and distributed to parishes about five days later. This significantly reduces costs and administration at the local level. Other bonuses are

- the donations can be index linked if the donors so choose, and
- the donations are paid as a single sum to the parish bank account thus avoiding the checking of multiple pages on Bank Statement entries, and
- it reduces the bank charges (currently about £28 per month) for handling cheque or cash donations.

I would again encourage everyone to make a will and to consider making a bequest to St Mary's. It is not difficult to arrange and can make a significant difference to the future of a growing church in Thatcham.

Chris Watts
Stewardship Secretary

Child Protection/Safeguarding report

This has been a short and challenging time for the Parish safeguarding team. There have been many changes within the Diocesan Safeguarding structure including the appointment of a new Head of Safeguarding at the end of January 2022. The ramifications of that are still filtering through.

At St Mary's and St Barnabas, we are fortunate in that we have a team of people prepared to take on these challenges:

- Ann Dibble is the Parish Safeguarding officer and the safeguarding training administrator.
- Sue Ball manages the safer recruitment process and maintains the records of DBS checks and other documentation associated with appointments of volunteers to specific posts of responsibility.
- Steve Rice is the ID verifier for the DBS checks.
- Cath Forbes is the children's advocate for St Barnabas
- Colin Waters provides the lay link for the safeguarding team with St Barnabas
- Brenda Harland attends our meetings and is an invaluable link with the clergy team.

The team have established a practice of meeting three times a year. At one meeting we welcomed Kathy Winrow, from St George's Newbury. She is a very experienced Safeguarding officer and was able to offer us some insight. It was interesting that her top tip was to remember that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and that we need to spread the tasks.

The Diocese has instigated a system of Parish Dashboards which aims to streamline safeguarding administration and governance. There are three levels of tasks that should be completed, and we can celebrate the fact that we are already on level 2. The foundations have been laid by previous good management of safeguarding within the parish. The dashboard shows us quite clearly the areas where we still need to make improvements. Many of these actions are for the PCC to complete. Despite having safeguarding as an agenda item at every PCC meeting, the safeguarding officer has only been able to attend one meeting during this shortened year.

There have been three safeguarding cases during the year. All have been awarded the appropriate level of confidentiality and we have received support and advice from the Diocese.

It is brilliant that we are an inclusive and welcoming parish so that people can feel comfortable entering our doors. They bring their problems with them, and we need to make sure that they receive the appropriate response while maintaining as safe an environment for everyone as we can. The safeguarding team continue to need your support in making this happen.

Ann Dibble

ABC during a pandemic!

We were delighted to get back to face to face meetings in September of 2021. We started with quite a small number of people but are now really busy. We enjoy a friendly time to chat and play and have refreshments which is followed by a short service that consists of an interactive story, singing and prayers with a blessing at the end. Jason the sheep is a great favourite of the children as he helps to tell the stories and joins in with the action songs.

Our growing team of helpers enable us to function well and they are always ready with a smile of encouragement and a hot drink. Grateful thanks to everyone who contributes to this vital ministry. Towards the end of the summer term, we hold a leavers ceremony to say goodbye to those who are going off to Primary School. They are presented with a certificate and a Scripture union book entitled 'It's your next step' which is all about going to big school for the first time. Of course, they can come to visit us during the school holidays so we do not lose touch. It was sad not to be able to hold this ceremony over past 2 years.

Here are some comments from people who currently attend the group:

ABC is a very friendly and welcoming group. The church environment allows my children the chance to explore and have fun in a safe but exciting space. All of the helpers and volunteers are very kind and helpful. I'll be sad when the boys start school and we can't come anymore!

We really enjoy coming to ABC, the staff are brilliant!

We like coming to ABC because the Church is such a wonderful place to explore and we are always made to feel so welcome, it's our favourite group of the week!

The group is held on Wednesday mornings from 10.30am until 12 noon. If you have preschool children, come and pay us a visit.

Brenda and the ABC team

Children and Young People @ St Mary's 2019

We meet on 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Sundays of the month, in the meeting room, during the 10.00am service.

We were delighted to welcome young people back to church in May, and although our numbers have not returned to pre Covid, that has not been reflected in the enthusiasm of our children or leaders.

Our aim is to provide an enjoyable atmosphere where young people can discover the teachings of the bible through a mix of craft, prayer, and games. We encourage them to develop their relationship with God at their own pace.

Going forward, we recognise the challenges ahead, and pray that more families will join us, in sharing the amazing love and grace of God.

Helen Holman

Music at St. Mary's

It's been a tricky couple of years for choir. When the Churches closed, choir didn't sing for 6 months, we had a brief hiatus in the Autumn of 2020 when we came back in small groups mainly to record hymns. Then we went into another lockdown culminating in Christmas where we were privileged to be able to sing in Church on Christmas Day.

The beginning of 2021 was a time of another national lockdown but as we came out of that it begun to look possible that we could begin again.

At this point Viv who had led us faithfully and well for many years, decided it was time to hand over the (metaphorical) baton and Chris Watts and I were told we were now leading choir. Our first service was Pentecost and it felt very good. Since then we have sung at every Sunday service apart from the low Sundays after Christmas and Easter.

At the end of September, we tried a new venture – Hymns and Pimms. This was reasonably well supported both by Church members and the community.

Christmas 2021 was as near normal as anything.

We kicked Advent off with an Advent carol service , which although not well attended, was favourably received by those who came. We sang at several Carol services including the Town Mayor's Carol Service, and 'Hymms and Pimms', a new venture . This community carol service (obviously we couldn't think of a snappy title for this one!) included the choir of Thatcham Park Primary School and ended in a spirited rendition of the 12 days of Christmas. Popular carols and some favourite Christmas anthems were sung by the choir. It was very special to sing at Midnight Mass again on Christmas Eve.

Easter seemed to come very early and we had a Service of reflection for Passiontide which, again although not well attended, was well received by those who came. This Service and the Advent carol service will stay in the calendar and I urge everyone to put dates in their diary for these.

We remain a small choir. We lost Lesley from the sopranos who decided it was time after many years to leave. She is greatly missed for her musicianship and her sense of humour but we have gained Angela in the soprano line and Mary has rejoined in the alto line. We are blessed to have excellent singers in all parts and particularly strong large bass line. We have, as always, room for more singers. It doesn't matter if you sang at school and haven't sung since, if you sung only in the bath or if you are a classically trained opera singer. If you would like to give the choir a go come along. We will welcome you with open arms! There is no requirement to read music.

I have made many mistakes in my first year of leading the choir so my first thanks must go to the choir for being so forgiving and going with the flow. I must also thank Mary Baker who stepped in to play for rehearsals for a while and Iain Davies who is playing for us now on Fridays. Massive thanks go to Tim who played for rehearsals and recordings all the way through closures and when we got back together until the end of the year, and now of course plays most Sundays. He's very good at putting me right when I have made a mistake. Massive thanks also go to Chris Watts who is always happy to step in when I have to miss a rehearsal and is a fount of wisdom. Biggest thanks must go to my friend and mentor Viv who is never backward in letting me know where I've gone wrong but also where it has been right. I have relied on her extensive knowledge of choir procedure.

Choir is in a good place and we are very much looking forward to the next year of being part of your worship.

Mary Stagg

St Barnabas Church

As we have emerged this year from the COVID-19 pandemic, it has been a pleasure to return to many of the usual activities that make St B's what it is as well as launch some new activities our community.

Services

We have continued to meet mainly at 10am at Thatcham Park School and remain hugely grateful for the warm hospitality that the school offers our community.

One of our greatest pleasure this year has been the return of the groups from the supported living communities, Kestrels and Chaffinches. We have missed them very much, their energy and joy transform our services. We are so grateful to have them back.

We have also launched a new monthly service down at Thatcham Lakes called Muddy Church. Aimed at families, we share a Bible story together and then explore it's meaning for us through play and activities in the natural world.

Our aim with Muddy Church is to give children and families some much needed time in nature and through this to draw closer to God and each other. The launch of Muddy Church has been a major highlight and joy of this past year.

Community Activities

In our report last year, we spoke of our intention to launch a Baby Café for new parents. We're pleased to announce that this group is now well established under Reverend Angela's excellent leadership. Baby café has been a place where relationships have flourished and people seem to have found genuine support and friendship. When we opened some of the babies had never met with another baby before due to the COVID-19 restrictions and parents spoke openly of their feelings of isolation. We have been proud to create a place where parents can encourage each other in all the joys and challenges of parenthood.

ABC has also reopened this year and has been extremely busy! Once more this group has offered an important place of play, meeting and family friendly worship ably led, as ever, by Reverend Brenda.

Small Group

Our online small group that formed during the pandemic has also continued to meet this year. They found that the online format made the group so accessible that they decided to simply stick with it! This year, led by Ben, the group have been studying Mark's gospel and the group remains a place for those new to faith, as well as those who want to wrestle with what faith means to them, to have fruitful and encouraging conversations.

Supporting the School

Our strong links with Thatcham Park School have also continued this year. As the school begun to open up, I have enjoyed the opportunity to return to 'in person' sessions. I have also provided weekly online assemblies for the whole school which we will continue to do until we are able to meet safely as a whole school again.

We also enjoyed our first Easter service at St Marys with the school, which was ably led by year 4 and Zoomed back to the rest of the school. We hope that before long the whole school will be able to gather back at St Marys for worship.

Looking ahead into the coming year, there is much to look forward to! It has always been the vision of St B's to serve our community and this year has been a fruitful year for us as we have built new relationships in our community.

In the coming year we will continue to be alert to God's call to go out and serve our community in Thatcham. We can't wait to see what's next!

Reverend Nicola

Deanery Synod Report

Thatcham Parish is part of the Newbury Deanery – a group of parishes in West Berkshire running as far as Hungerford and Lambourn and up to Compton and The Ridgeway. In some recent documents the Deanery has described itself briefly as follows:

Newbury Deanery covers some 105 square miles of the western part of West Berkshire. It includes the urban centres of Newbury and Thatcham, the market town of Hungerford and an extensive rural hinterland. The eleven benefices (roughly speaking groups of churches overseen by a single priest) encompass 36 parishes ranging in population from over 25,000 to under 100, together with 42 church buildings, and one church which has no building of its own.

The Deanery is an administrative unit of the Church of England which is part of its structure of “synodical government” – the way the Church makes decisions about its internal workings where they affect more than a single parish. Traditionally the Deanery has had two functions – (the money function) allocating the parish share which pays for the clergy and support costs (just under £1million for Newbury Deanery) and then collecting it; and (the people function) negotiating the deployment of clergy at a time when clergy numbers nationally have been declining. More recently the people function has been developed into a more positive mode of mission planning (The Mission Action Plan) – actively supporting parishes and their people to meet the common challenges we face.

The effects of the pandemic had meant progress on the plan had slowed. Bruce Laurie Lay Chair of Synod having reviewed the plan in 2021 found it was still wholly relevant to today's needs. It was stressed that this is the Deanery's plan to support and encourage benefices and parishes rather than to direct or impose requirements from the Diocese. Synod identified four action groups and started to put these into being. These are:

- Finance
- Schools and Education
- Lay Training
- Environment

(Consideration on new housing developments and also communities will be incorporated in due course.)

The Newbury Deanery Synod also maintains a link with the South African parish of Batlharos in the Diocese of Kimberley and Kuruman.

Deanery Synod elects representatives to Diocesan Synod – notably in 2021 our own Team Rector.

The Deanery is run by the Deanery Synod. Like the PCC this is a mixture of clergy and elected lay members, but in the Deanery case the members represent the different parishes. The Deanery Synod elects a standing committee and appoints officers to act as an executive, and to progress the various aspects of its work. It may

also receive requests from the Diocese of Oxford or from the National Church to respond to matters of interest – this happened with the legislation on women becoming bishops. The Deanery Synod can also raise matters of concern and ask for these to be addressed at a Diocesan or national level.

In aggregate the Deanery paid 91.7% of the total 'Share' requested by the diocese in 2021 - a shortfall of £78,354. This compares to the payment of 93.6% of the total requested by the diocese in 2020 a shortfall of £61,635.

22 parishes paid their share in full, and 12 parishes managed to pay part of their allocation. Unfortunately two parishes made no payments to the diocese during 2021. A consequence is that for the second year in succession, the Deanery did not qualify for the full 3% rebate on meeting its allocation in full. We did however meet 50% of our allocation in aggregate by 31st July 2021 and so qualified for rebate of 1% of payments made during the year.

The treasurer sincerely thanked all parishes that did their best to meet their 2021 share allocation.

Thank you for your support for our clergy members of Synod and our lay members Mary, Tony, Cath and myself.

Chris Watts

St. Mary's Church Bellringers

The year started with the bells not being rung due to the continuing covid restrictions. However there was a relaxation, to allow one bell to be rung half muffled following the death of HRH Prince Phillip, Duke of Edinburgh, when the tenor bell was tolled 99 times by Mark Backhouse on Saturday 10 April and again on Saturday 17 April, the day of his funeral, both in accordance with national arrangements.

In May with a slight reduction in the Covid regulations we started ringing with six of our band wearing masks, taking lateral flow tests and ringing socially distanced bells 1,3,5 7 8,10 on Sunday mornings only. As the rules became increasingly relaxed, we eventually returned to ringing eight or ten bells for the Sunday Morning Service and on practice nights. However the number of our ringers decreased. Margaret Robinson has not returned following a fall in the summer. Her husband John has not yet returned. I thank them both for their considerable contribution to the tower over many years. Then in October Bill Butler died.

We held a socially distanced, mask wearing, delayed AGM in the Church on 3 August, chaired by Revd Mark Bennet. Our Secretary/Treasurer, Janet John, did not seek re-election. She was presented with some flowers as a small token of thanks for the efficient way she had conducted her duties for the previous six years. John Kape was elected as the new Secretary/Treasurer. All other positions remain unchanged.



Presentation to Janet John

The meeting opened with prayers remembering ringer, Di Bridle, who died on 4 August 2020. Mark said it was sad that we had not yet been able to ring the bells in her memory and that we should when restrictions to ringing have been lifted. Encouraged by Mark, we arranged to ring a half muffled quarter peal, prior to the Time to Remember Service on 31 October where all the names of those who died during lockdown would be remembered, and dedicate it to Di's Memory. Soon after arranging it Bill Butler and Eddie Bennet died and we were pleased to include them in the dedication.

We were all saddened to learn of Bill Butler's death on 21 October. Bill had been an active member of the congregation and a tower member here for many years and Tower Captain for most of that time. Past and present members of the Tower met on the following evening, where Revd. Mark led us in prayer prior to us ringing half muffled touches in his memory. Bill's funeral on 11 November was attended by a large number of people including many ringers, some of whom had travelled long distances. The bells were half muffled and rung before and after the Service by our ringers and by Bill's peal ringing friends and Oxford Diocesan Guild Officers. All the ringing was of a very high standard and a fitting tribute to someone who had contributed so much to ringing here and to the Guild.



Ringing in memory of Bill Butler

Left to right : Joanne Waller, Rosemary Evans, Adrian Moon, John Durham, Richard Marshall, John Collins, Tony Smith, Sue Smith, Ben Waller, Ron Christopher, John Kape, Ros Durham

With the number of Covid 19 infections rising rapidly in December we reverted to ringing with masks, which meant that our numbers available to ring reduced again, as not all our ringers wished to ring with masks. With all restrictions lifted in 2022, we are now very short of ringers and will be seeking new recruits.

Our ringing room, like many other ringing rooms is poorly ventilated. Having followed the articles in our journal, The Ringing World, we purchased an Aranet 4 monitor to check the carbon dioxide (CO2) levels when ringing. By having the ringing room door, tower door and window open with a desk fan in the window, we have mostly achieved levels of CO2 below the recommended level of 800 ppm. This is not a long term solution and the PCC have applied for a Faculty to install permanent mechanical ventilation. The preferred contractor has since dropped out and we will be seeking a new proposal and quotation.

Our longest serving member, Ron Christopher was diagnosed with colon cancer at the beginning of November. He was fast tracked for an operation in early December. He spent a week in hospital and is now back home convalescing after a successful operation. We look forward to welcoming him back to ringing in the Spring this year.

I thank our ringers for their continuing efforts during the last difficult year and Revd Mark for conducting belfry prayers and his support and encouragement, which is appreciated by us all.

Tony Smith
(Tower Captain)

Churchwardens

If you are new to the Anglican Church you may not know that the wardens are the eyes and ears of the Bishop in the parish. They have an obligation to ensure that the Rector and Clergy are doing as they ought (and they most certainly are), that the business of the church is running satisfactorily (better than might be expected under the circumstances) and that the fabric is in good order (oh dear !). They are also tasked to keep the congregation in order !

All three of the wardens with Mark are trustees for the Thatcham Almshouse and Thatcham Relief in Need Charities, working with other agencies to help those people in our community who have fallen on hard times or with health and disability issues.

We have a faithful band of people working in the background (and in a few cases obliged to remain in post during the pandemic) as cleaners, servers, gardeners, sidespeople, coffee makers, pew removal and replacement, assisting at services, singers, little church providers, providers of home communions, hospital visitors....and many more jobs. The church would not function without them. If you feel that you would like to contribute to God's work in any way, all help is welcome regardless of how little you are able to do. Please get in touch with your Churchwardens or Ann the

Parish Administrator or indeed Sue Stevenson who maintains the rota.

Fabric

In summary the log of work by contractors and volunteers to the fabric of St Mary's includes:

- Spring and autumn clean and clear
- Monitor water/tree damaged areas to north nave wall and Pathfinders Room and the south west corner of the Meeting Room
- Test lightning conductor
- Test and service Fire Extinguishers
- Service heating boilers
- Tune and minor repairs to organ (noting the Choir manual is not operational)
- Replacement of four floodlights on the porch and nave roofs with LED lamps
- Clearing block drains and soakaways

The Revd Angela Brennan has established a small working group – Richard Foster, Christine Rice and Chris Watts and discussion has restarted with Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) and contractors for repair of the organ and blower and removal of asbestos. Potential sources of grant have also been contacted.

The PCC's architect, Christian Randall of Wantage submitted his first five yearly report on the state of the fabric in 2018. He listed the regular concerns of clearing gutters and repairs to rainwater downpipes, repairs to stonework and flint facing and ivy on the tower. In addition he noted:

- the need to address the repair of the roof and valley gutter to the western end of the north aisle and above the Pathfinders Room
- significant dampness and deterioration to the plaster on the external walls to north and south aisles,
- damaged floor tiles and 'subsidence' to the central and northern aisles
- rotting of timber thresholds to both north doors.
- a series of minor repairs to stonework

Attention to these items was recommended within 18 months. In addition improvements are required to the Meeting Room and kitchen. A specification for these works is in preparation and this will lead to applications for permissions (faculties) from the Diocese and to an Appeal for funds to cover the costs.

Thanks are again due to Chris Druce, Paul Bullock and also to Mark Backhouse for help with general repairs and lower level lamp replacements, to Marion and a team of dedicated gardeners for work on the flower borders, to Rita for polishing the brass and to all who regularly clean, arrange the flowers and maintain the equipment.

Chris Watts

Inventory

The four panels depicting the Nativity, prepared by Thatcham Park School and St Barnabas in 2020 were again displayed in a Churchyard Trail over Christmas 2021. The panels are stored on the gallery.

24 of the wooden chairs in the gallery have been sold through ebay raising a total so far of £925. Sales of a further 8 chairs are pending.

8 metal mobile storage cabinets have been donated, being redundant in their former office location, and are in use in the 'Tower Room'.

Thanks go to Paul Bullock for organising both sales of chairs and securing and installing the storage cabinets

Chris Watts

Sewing group and Flowers.

The Sewing Group has not met but continues to sew as required. As well as making linen items for use at communion we also repair items and alter the length of choir robes when the user changes or grows. We have been given lots of fabrics, lace, and other sewing items and these we use to create items for the craft sale and raffle usually in November but in 2021 at the Annual Meeting. Please feel free to visit us in the chapel at 2pm when we can get back to normal, and join in if you wish even if all you can do is tacking!

Marion and friends.

There are now a lovely group of flower arrangers with many differing talents all of which are welcomed and encouraged. Displays were created for Christmas and Easter and the rota for Sundays will restart soon.

Marion and team.

Little Churches, Home Communions.

'Little Churches'

These services have now resumed after an absence of more than a year due to Covid-19.

Faithful members of St. Mary's congregation volunteer to bring God's message of love and hope to those who, for one reason or another, do not attend the usual Sunday service.

After the requisite cuppa to get our pipes in tune, we embark on an intimate service of Holy Communion, sing hymns, read scripture, pray and generally enjoy ourselves!

My thanks to Paul Bullock who runs the Nevil Court service and is assisted by Margaret Holmes and who also provides valuable support to me at Ferndale Court in this ministry for those outside the church walls.

The service last for about 45 minutes.

Steve Rice

West Berkshire Community Hospital

This service has also recommenced after a long period of not being able to meet because of the dreaded 'C' and other infections such as Norovirus. This vital outreach means that patients can see a different face and enjoy fellowship as part of a communion service.

I would like to offer my thanks to Margaret Holmes for her previous attendance and

give thanks and welcome two new helpers – Barbara Carwardine and Margaret Goodhead, both of whom have settled in very quickly as part of the team and bolstered the presence of helpers from St. Marys.

I couldn't finish this piece without direct reference to Joan Collins who has been an amazing stalwart giving up virtually all of her Sundays to bring a smile to patients and helpers alike and who reads the message most beautifully.

This service last for about 30 minutes and is attended by up to a dozen people made up of patients and visitors.

Steve Rice

C.A.M.E.O. Come and Meet Each Other

CAMEO started in January 2014 with the aim of a weekly meeting place to bring together people in Thatcham who live on their own, who feel lonely after bereavement, or are unable to get out, to come together to make friends, and chat over homemade cake and a cuppa.

Since those early days the group grew substantially and was self funded with the introduction of a weekly raffle. Joan, Viv, Ann and myself, along with three drivers volunteered to serve the group and our reward was to see CAMEO flourish. The number of people coming rose to over 40, but they did not come every week. Cakes and tea were served during the afternoon, mostly home baked cakes, although on special occasions we buy doughnuts and they go down very well!

An appeal was launched for more drivers.

CAMEO restarted on 25th April 2022 following the lifting of pandemic restrictions

Meanwhile we continue to collect milk bottle tops for The Thames Valley Air Ambulance charity with bags of tops appearing in church from around the parish! Over £110 has been raised from milk bottle tops. **Only milk bottle tops please.**

pp Theresa Lucas

The Thatcham Parochial Charities

I wrote a report on the Charities last year, to show another way in which the church interacts with the community in Thatcham. The Thatcham Parochial Charities continued to play a significant role, both in the life of our churches and in support of those in need, last year. The rector and our three churchwardens are ex officio members of the Board of Trustees and I (Chris Druce) am currently a representative of Thatcham Town Council and Chairman of Trustees. Other members of the Board are drawn from representatives of other local councils. Covid continued to impinge on everyone's life last year and we had to tailor our responses especially in that area, in support of our local residents.

There are 2 principal charities – the 'Thatcham Parochial Almshouse Charity' and 'Thatcham Relief in Need Charity'. We cover the area of the 'Ancient Borough of Thatcham', encompassing modern Thatcham, together with Cold Ash, Midgham and

Greenham. The trustees have a wide remit of responsibility, covering various needs of our local community

The Almshouses – The first almshouses in Thatcham were established by Thomas Loundyes, in 1446 AD. Some of the present almshouse flats, in Chapel Street, are named after him. To qualify for accommodation, applicants should be 'of a certain age', a resident in the Ancient Borough and can demonstrate a housing need. All flats are currently occupied. This year has continued to call for special attention, to ensure the continuing health and well-being of all our residents. With all residents being fully vaccinated, more regular visits are now possible, but maintenance work continues to be reduced to the more essential work, with contractors continuing to wear the necessary PPE and any non-essential work put on hold. Hand sanitizer stations and additional cleaning in communal areas are still in use. Fortunately, there has been no major outbreak of virus in any of the properties.

Relief in Need Charity –

The object of this charity is to relieve, either generally or individually, persons resident in the Ancient Borough, who are in conditions of need, hardship or distress, by making grants of money or providing items or services to reduce that need.

As with the Almshouse Charity, this year had very special needs for our local community and Relief in Need was very much 'Open for Business'.

During the year, the charity made grants in excess of £10,500. Grants included a donation of £1,000 to the local 'Laptops for Learning' appeal fund which was fund matched and managed by The Good Exchange. Local schools within the charity scheme area were then able to purchase & loan laptops to some of their pupils to enable home study during enforced pandemic lockdowns. Other grants included the purchase of specialist equipment for a hearing-impaired local resident, substantial garden renovations to enable a disabled young person to access the garden & be included in outdoor family times. Working in conjunction with 2 other local charities afforded the purchase of a mobility scooter for a disabled person giving them greater independence. The more standard requests for white goods, flooring and specialist equipment continued to be received and granted.

So, you can see, it has been another eventful year.

If you know of anyone who may need a helping hand, a piece of equipment otherwise unaffordable, do, please, have a word with me, Mark, or one of the churchwardens.

Thankyou – Chris Druce

House Groups

Thursday group has not been meeting over the past year, but I think we all miss our weekly natter and look forward to meeting 'Face to Face' when we can. The dynamics of the group will change when we get back together so we will be at a good point to welcome new people who would like to give 'House Group' a go.

Julie Dunwell

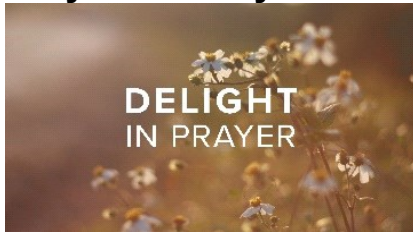
Wednesday house group has attempted a mixture of approaches, over the last months and we are hoping to return to some kind of structured learning, in May; at home or at St. Mary's.

During the last lock down we met via Zoom for informal chats and support. We had a new adventure lead by Ben Hulks, who was part of Wednesday house group. It takes place on Tuesdays at 7.30 and has all along been a structured learning/discussion time. A different day and Zoom has worked really well for this group!

Lourdes Cottam

Further details on the website or from the Parish Office

Prayer Ministry at St. Mary's



This year we have been praying in our homes, on our walks, on the phone and video calls, in fact wherever we have safely been whilst we haven't been able to pray with people in person.

Sue Stevenson.

MISSIONS



Thatcham Christian Aid Committee

In 2020-21 (our accounting year runs from October to September), despite continued difficulties with the pandemic and limited fund-raising, we managed to raise a magnificent £2487. Although this is still down from the £4000 raised in 2018/19, it does show a start in recovering from the pandemic.

As I write this (in April) we have also raised £910 since September. Much of this was from generous donations from St Mary's folk, including a very successful Good Friday Lent Lunch, so I would like to thank you all very much.

By the time of the Church Annual Meeting we will also have had this year's Christian Aid Week (May 15 th to 21 st), which hopefully will raise even more. This is obviously vitally necessary at the moment. Christian Aid has raised £2 million itself for Ukraine, and will also get about £14 million from the DEC Appeal. It's been spending this through local church partners, providing immediate food aid and shelter to refugees crossing the border into Hungary and Romania, and giving Trauma First Aid Emergency Kits directly to the Ukrainian Ministry of Health.

In future it plans to work with the Lutheran World Foundation and World Jewish Relief (supporting elderly refugees), and also Habitat for Humanity (rebuilding housing). It is also, most crucially, lobbying the government not to divert money from other humanitarian crises and long-term development funding. There are strong signs that Ukraine is 'sucking the oxygen out of the room' for other appeals, although the rest of the world is struggling even more as a result of the war in Ukraine.

The Christian Aid Week campaign this year focussed on Zimbabwean agriculture, to build earth dams to store water and storage barns to store the harvest, plus giving out drought-resistant seeds. Before climate change led to drought and famine, and before Mugabe's depredations, Zimbabwe was known as the breadbasket of Southern Africa. Now it is struggling to feed its own people.

Given that Ukraine and Russia normally grow 30% of the world's wheat, and nearly half of Ukraine's harvest was exported to Africa, it isn't hard to see what the outcome will be if we do nothing. It is expected that global wheat prices will increase by at least 10% next year, and the poorest in Africa will simply not be able to pay that.

Can I as ever urge you to give what you can, and above all to pray.
With many thanks for your generous giving to Christian Aid throughout the year.

Sarah Bennet
Chair, Thatcham Christian Aid Committee

Fairtrade and Traidcraft

Activities involving Fairtrade and Traidcraft have remained suspended since the start of the pandemic and following the departure of Clare and Relan Clarke to live in Basingstoke. Efforts are being made to recruit a successor and reinstate the Fairtrade stall after Parish Communion on one Sunday each month. Any volunteers?

The aim of FAIRTRADE is to secure a better deal for farmers and traders in 74 countries around the world. FAIRTRADE was founded by CAFOD, Christian Aid, Oxfam, Traidcraft, The World Development Movement and The National Federation of Women's Institutes. The Headquarters is in Bonn, Germany.

The key areas of activity are to:

- Provide independent certification of the trade chain for products and licensing of the FAIRTRADE mark on products
- Help in growing demand for FAIRTRADE products and empowering producers to sell to traders and retailers.
- Work with their partners to support producer organisations and their networks.
- Raise awareness of the need for FAIRTRADE with the public.

The organisation has 1,5 million farmers/workers and 1210 FAIRTRADE certified producer organisations. 25% of all FAIRTRADE workers are women. Products are sold by all 5 of major UK supermarkets and over £23 FAIRTRADE premium is generated from sales in the UK.

FACTS:

- A typical poor family in a poor country spend 70% of its income on food.
- Small holder farmers grow 70% of the world's food but make up half of the world's hungriest people.
- 1.4 billion people in the developing world live in poverty, 300 million children go to bed hungry every day.

- The richest 85 people in the world have more wealth than the poorest half of the world
- FAIRTRADE promote better education and healthcare.

Typical products include: tea, coffee, sugar, sweets, pasta, biscuits, cleaning products, home products, fashion products, toys and stationery.

Children's Society

Collecting boxes at St Mary's and St Barnabas are used to support the Children's Society in this parish. £600.28 was sent to the Society in 2021. Collecting boxes are available for anyone wanting to support the Society in its work with children.

The money goes to help the Society and its network of centres and projects to deliver specialist services for children who face disaster and danger in their daily lives; children who are unable to find the support they need elsewhere.

If anyone would like to take on the organisation of events for the Society, please speak to Ann Watts or any of the Churchwardens

Ann Watts

USPG

USPG is working with the Anglican Church in Zambia to develop healthcare and leadership programmes that will have an impact on the life and outreach of the church and community. Support was given for training of specialists at the Hospital of St Francis at Katete and other health projects in Zambia.

£1066.11 was given to US in 2021 thanks largely to Cream Teas and raffle in St Mary's.

If you would like to help, please speak to Ann Watts (864567) to arrange for a collecting Globe.

Ann Watts

West Berks Foodbank



The continuing pandemic and then cost of living increases have meant that a significant number of people used West Berks Foodbank (WBFB) during 2021 and 2022. Single adults, couples and families contacted the Crisis FoodLine for help and support.

Members of St Mary's and St Barnabas churches have continued to donate much needed basic food items to help those in food poverty. Most churches and community organisations, this church included, have seen their donations to the Foodbank reduced as both the pandemic and rising prices have affected their ability to give as they used to. However we responded generously to the Foodbank's Harvest Appeal and Reverse Advent Calendar scheme. All our efforts have been welcomed and appreciated.

As Covid restrictions have eased WBFB's Foodbank Centres have opened in Thatcham, Hungerford and Burghfield and Mortimer although a hybrid operational model is working well with food deliveries being made to clients unable to get to a Foodbank Centre.

Thank you for supporting the Foodbank – please continue to donate when you can.

Sue Stevenson

Rainbows and Rangers (Girlguiding at St. Mary's)



Both of the Girlguiding groups have begun again to meet each week at the back of St. Mary's. The Rainbows (5-7 year olds) and Rangers (14-18 year olds) continue to do all sorts of things from game and crafts to pamper evenings and escape rooms. 'Goody bags' have been sent out to the girls each term with all the craft and activity materials that they need for the online evenings.

Problems of storage of equipment and materials in the Tower Room have been eased by the installation of mobile cupboard units thanks to Paul Bullock.

If there is anyone who would like to volunteer to help with the Rainbows or Rangers please contact Julie, julie@dunwell.org or if you would like for information www.girlguiding.org.uk/

Connect

Connect, our parish magazine, is published ten times a year, double issues being December/January and July/August. Particular emphasis was made of circulating the magazine on the website and hand delivery on request. The magazine includes news, information and illustrations about services and events in St. Mary's and St. Barnabas. All of our clergy team provide a regular article but more contributors are always welcome. Any articles or adverts to be published can be sent to Steve Rice, steverice1@virginmedia.com, or Julie Dunwell, julie@dunwell.org.

Julie Dunwell

Service Rota Teams

A scaled down version of the rota has been operating during this year as we continued to negotiate what churches and their congregations were allowed to do.

Thank you to everyone who supported Sunday services, baptisms, weddings and funerals by reading, leading prayers, handing out books, making people welcome, operating IT equipment to enable those at home to participate in worship.

If you would like to join in and help, please contact me.

Sue Stevenson

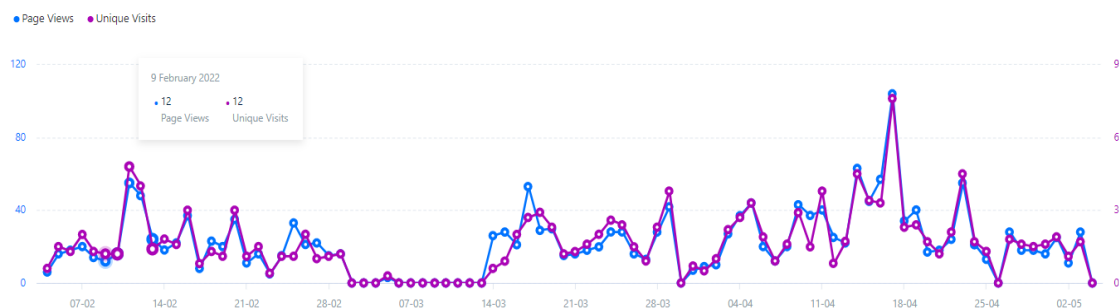
St Mary's Church Website

The interest on the web site peaked over Easter and dropped back to normal levels quite quickly. There was an instance where the web site was off-line for about a week. FastHosts who provide the domain and associated email addresses had sent an email reminding that the renewal subscription was due. Unfortunately, the administration email address that the message was destined for was no longer in use and was not monitored or forwarded. The due date for the renewal passed and the domain name was taken down. This meant that the web site although still accessible by the web master was off-line to the rest of the world. Restoring the domain name took a while as a new account had to be created and the information transferred from the old, closed domain name account to the new one.

To avoid this in the future, it has been suggested that St. Mary's has a PayPal account to allow FastHosts and similar organisations to collect payments automatically. PayPal is needed because FastHosts and many similar organisations use only debit or credit cards and PayPal. Cards are associated with an individual and these expire. PayPal does not have these restrictions.

A separate document has been produced giving the benefits, security approach and operational considerations to using PayPal.

The following chart shows the number of unique visits and the number of page views. The information that is shown seems to suggest that many visitors know what they need and go straight to the required page.



The diagram below shows the site traffic for the period of February to May 2022.



The web site is wholly reliant on its content from all participants who are directly and indirectly involved with St. Mary's and who produce information for general consumption and who organise events. The timely provision of such notices is greatly appreciated and helps to promote the church activities and as can be seen from the charts above, keeps a very wide audience well informed.

If there is an announcement to make, then it should be on the web site. Please keep the information flowing.



**Minutes of the Thatcham Annual Parish Meeting at St Mary's Church on Sunday 18th July 2021
commencing at 4.00 pm**

Attendance: Revd Mark Bennet (in Chair), Revd Nicola Hulks, Revd Brenda Harland, Revd Angela Brennan, Revd Marion Fontaine, Marcia Wadham and 30 residents of Thatcham (including 7 on ZOOM)

Apologies received from: John Hicks, John Harland, Ann and Roger Dykes

The Revd Mark Bennet opened the meeting with prayer.

01 Minutes of the meeting held on 20th October 2020 were agreed and signed as a correct record.

02 Election of Churchwardens
Paul Bullock, Colin Waters and Christine Rice were proposed and seconded and elected to serve as Churchwardens for the year 2021/2022

Mark thanked the wardens for their work in the past year and Chris Watts for his service over many years.

The meeting ended at 4.05 pm

.....Chairman

.....date

Minutes of the Thatcham Annual Parochial Church Meeting at St Mary's Church on Sunday 18th July 2021 commencing at 4.05 pm

Attendance: Revd Mark Bennet (in Chair), Revd Nicola Hulks, Revd Brenda Harland, Revd Angela Brennan, Revd Marion Fontaine, Marcia Wadham and 30 residents of Thatcham (including 7 on ZOOM)

Apologies received from: John Hicks, John Harland, Ann and Roger Dykes

Minutes of the APCM on 20th October 2020 were agreed and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

Matters arising

None

Annual Report

Proceedings of the PCC as summarised in the Report were noted.

Fabric of St Mary's and the Log Book. It was agreed that the logbook for 2020/1 and the amended Inventory be agreed and placed in the records of St Mary's.

Inventory. It was noted that 5 ground level floodlights had been replaced with LED floodlights.

The report of the activities of St Mary's and St Barnabas Churches in the past year was presented to the meeting. Clarification was sought on the term 'gaslighting' in the Safeguarding report on page 11. (see footnote 1). Following a proposal from Mark Bennet, seconded by Chris Druce, it was adopted unanimously.. Thanks were expressed to all those who contribute to the work in the parish.

It was reported that there were currently 189 names on the Electoral Roll as revised 1st July 2021.

Mark expressed thanks for the work of all those groups and the individuals responsible for the wide and varied activities recorded in the Annual Report.

In particular, he referred to the work of the Safeguarding team in dealing with the constant stream of requirements, revision to policies and guidance and in keeping up to date the certification people working with children and vulnerable adults. In particular he thanked Leanne Cox and expressed the best wishes of the congregation following her decision to move to Kent in the summer. Mark thanked Ann Dibble for taking on the Safeguarding Officer role for both Children and Young people and Vulnerable Adults.

Presentation of Accounts

Chris Watts presented the accounts as approved by the PCC and as amended following examination by the Independent Examiner, Monika Tabat of Tax Avenue. He expressed thanks for help received over the year from Peter Harvey Di Gioia, Bernadette Ellison and Ann Watts.

The financial report recorded that the Parish Share had again been paid in full and within the required timetable thus qualifying for the maximum available rebate. The General Account for St Mary's had shown a deficit of £5,800 on the General Fund in 2020 and an overall deficit of £14,140 largely as result of loss of income from collections and impact on the value of investment in what had been an extraordinary year without regular services. Income from Standing Orders and the Parish Giving Scheme had held up well together with some income from donors using envelopes and a significant response to an appeal for donations.

The change in preparation of the accounts to QuickBooks had been a challenge, particularly following the departure of the Hon Treasurer, Peter Harvey Di Gioia, to Newark.

Proposed by Mark Bennet, seconded by Mary Baker and agreed unanimously that the Accounts for 2020 be approved. The meeting thanked Bernie, Ann and Chris for their work on the Accounts.

Appointment of Independent Examiners

The Meeting accepted the recommendation that Tax Avenue Accountants of Turnfields Gate, Thatcham be appointed to examine the accounts for 2021

Election of PCC 2021

John Hicks, Leanne Fowler, Bernadette Ellison, Alison Dean and Lourdes Cottam were elected to PCC to represent St Barnabas.

The meeting accepted the nomination of Chris Druce and Simon Stagg to membership of the PCC.

In summary the PCC includes

Ex officio members,

The clergy:

Revd Mark Bennet, Revd Nicola Hulks, Revd Brenda Harland and Revd Angela Brennan

Churchwardens:

Paul Bullock, Colin Waters and Christine Rice.

Deanery Synod Representatives for the period to 2020/4.

Tony Collie, Catherine Forbes, Mary Stagg and Chris Watts

Elected Lay Members:

Viv Druce (2020), Kevin Dunwell (2020), Ann Watts (2020) and Emma Watts (2020).

Appointed by St Barnabas:

John Hicks, Leanne Fowler, Bernadette Ellison, Alison Dean and Lourdes Cottam

Co-opted members to be as agreed by PCC

Mark thanked all those who have agreed to serve on the PCC from 2021 and expressed thanks to all who had served over the last year.

Chairman's remarks:

Mark expressed his appreciation for the remarkable Ministry of the Revd Leonard Onugha during his all-too-brief period at Thatcham, his pastoral challenges at Emmer Green and his appointment as Rector of St James, Finchampstead commencing the following day 19th July 2021. He commended Leonard and his family to our prayers.

The meeting with the Grace at 4.40 pm

..... Chairman

..... Date

¹ Gaslighting is a tactic in which a person or entity, in order to gain more power, makes a victim question their reality. ... For example, in the movie Gaslight (1944), a man manipulates his wife to the point where she thinks she is losing her mind.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST. MARY'S, THATCHAM, BERKSHIRE**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER 2021**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	Total 2021 £	Total 2020 £
INCOMING RESOURCES					
Incoming resources from donors	97,742	0	0	97,742	97,391
Other voluntary incoming resources	15,432	0	0	15,432	11,059
Income from investments	2,725	0	0	2,725	2,419
Income from charitable and ancillary trading	20,882	0	0	20,882	20,957
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES	136,780	0	0	136,780	131,826
RESOURCES EXPENDED					
Grants and Special Collections	2,076	0	0	2,076	2,543
Activities relating to the work of the Church	130,695	589	0	131,284	136,459
Church Management and administration	6,312	66	0	6,378	2,155
Transfers			0	0	0
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED	139,083	655	0	139,738	141,157
NET INCOMING RESOURCES	(2,303)	(655)	0	(2,958)	(9,331)
Gains on investment assets:					
on disposal	0	0	0		0
on revaluation	(1,216)	13,161	5,470	17,415	(4,851)
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS	(3,519)	12,506	5,470	14,457	(14,182)
BALANCES B/FWD 1 JANUARY	24,657	101,595	164,065	290,319	304,501
BALANCES C/FWD 31 DECEMBER	21,138	114,101	169,535	304,776	290,319

Thatcham Team Ministry
Balance Sheet
As of 31 December 2021

4:38 PM
12/05/2022
Accrual Basis

	31 Dec 21	31 Dec 20
ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Cash at bank and in hand		
1001 · PCC Thatcham		
1002 · General Fund	(8,289)	(2,496)
1003 · Fabric	34,240	35,490
1004 · Organ (Designated)	513	(1,206)
1005 · Organ (Restricted)	140	140
1006 · Choir	(49)	61
1007 · Youth work	(495)	(495)
1008 · Curate (Hsg/Expenses)	3,809	615
1009 · Bell Maintenance	2,259	2,848
1001 · PCC Thatcham - Other	(281)	(281)
Total 1001 · PCC Thatcham	31,847	34,676
1050 · St Barnabas	1,909	541
1052 · St Barnabas - Set Up	90	90
2101 · Vicar & Churchwardens Treasurer	2,598	2,238
2102 · Vicar & Churchwardens Instant	1,010	867
Total Cash at bank and in hand	37,454	38,412
Other Current Assets		
2001 · Investment		
2005 · 47a Station Road	76,339	76,339
2010 · CBF Bell Maintenance 3	29,193	24,836
2020 · CBF Bell Maintenance 2	231	231
2030 · BLK C of E Charity COIF Perp	28,562	24,990
2050 · BLK Organ Fund (Designated)	3,493	4,901
2060 · BLK Organ Fund (Restricted)	41,908	36,668
2070 · Rookery Church Fund	114	122
2071 · Rookery Fund (Lloyds)	149	149
2090 · Thatcham Church Estate	3,156	2,964
2093 · Thatc02 BR Char UK Bond	18,085	19,815
2094 · Thatc02 BR Char UK Equity	69,168	61,968
Total 2001 · Investment	270,398	252,983
Total Other Current Assets	270,398	252,983
Total Current Assets	307,852	291,395
TOTAL ASSETS	307,852	291,395
LIABILITIES & EQUITY		
Capital and Reserves		
1010 · Share Capital Account	304,730	304,730
3200 · Unrestricted Net Assets	(13,335)	126
Profit for the Year	16,456	(13,461)
Shareholder funds	307,851	291,395
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	307,851	291,395

Thatcham Team Ministry
Profit & Loss
January through December 2021

3:41 PM
16/02/21
Accrual Basis
Jan - Dec 21

Accrual Basis
Jan - Dec 20

Ordinary Income/Expense		
Income		
3000 · General Income		
3100 · Donor income		
3110 · Service Collections		
3111 · Easyfundraising	0	31
3112 · Goodbox	518	549
3113 · Petty Cash	-26	-28
3110 · Service Collections - Other	4,586	1,895
Total 3110 · Service Collections	5,079	2,447
3120 · Stewardship		
3121 · Envelopes	6,369	9,069
3122 · PGS	23,455	21,863
3123 · Standing Orders	24,060	24,380
3124 · Tax reclaimed	15,669	14,661
3125 · Donations	9,454	11,294
3127 · Share Rebate	642	1,917
Total 3120 · Stewardship	79,650	83,184
Total 3100 · Donor income	84,729	85,632
3210 · Other voluntary Income		
3220 · Mission		
3221 · Childrens' Society	600	40
3222 · Christian Aid	0	0
3223 · USPG	1,066	719
Total 3220 · Mission	1,666	759
3230 · St Barnabas - Share	9,600	10,300
3240 · Gifts/Presentations	405	0
3250 · Grants Youth Work	762	556
3251 · Grants general	501	360
3260 · Curates Hsg Rent	3,260	3,781
Total 3210 · Other voluntary Income	16,194	15,756
3310 · Investment Income		
3315 · Investment Income	2,725	484
3310 · Investment Income - Other	0	1,962
Total 3310 · Investment Income	2,725	2,446
3410 · Charity and Trading		
3415 · BRF income	227	198
3420 · Fees		
3421 · Memorial	400	0
3422 · Funerals	12,203	11,779
3423 · Registrar	6	16
3425 · Wedding 2020	0	2,297
3426 · Wedding 2021	2,484	1,213
Total 3420 · Fees	15,093	15,305
3427 · Advertisements	80	337
3428 · Printing/Photocopying	82	0
3440 · Functions/Activities	295	0
3440 · Mast Rental	5,105	5,100
3450 · Altar Books	0	18
Total 3410 · Charity and Trading	20,882	20,957
3510 · Building / Equipment Income		
3520 · Hall Hire	650	970
3530 · Other B/E Income	606	0
3536 · Organ Appeal	5	0
Total 3510 · Building / Equipment Income	1,261	970
3610 · Choir Income		
3620 · Choir Fees	80	160
3610 · Choir Income - other	40	0
Total 3610 · Choir Income	120	160
3710 · St Barnabas income	10,870	10,073
Total 3000 · General Income	136,780	135,993

Total Income	136,780	135,993
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Expense

4001 · General Expense

4010 · Grants & Special Collection

4011 · Missions

401 Berkshire Churches Trust	10	10
4013 · Childrens' Society	600	40
4014 · USPG	1,066	719
4015 · Foodbank	0	120
4016 · Christian Aid	0	0
4017 · Bathlaros	0	100
4019 · Other grants	0	402

Total 4011 · Missions	1,676	1,391
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4201 · Presentations	400	
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Total 4010 · Grants & Special Collection	2,076	1,391
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4030 · Work of the Church

4031 · Ministry

4032 · Parish Share	94,423	95,377
4033 · Clergy Expenses	217	71
4034 · Youth work	782	727
4035 · Function & Activities	40	349
4036 · Fees (ODBF)	10,395	8,426
4037 · Bank Account Charges	330	371
4038 · BRF expenses	235	233

4041 · Curate Training		
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4042 · Curate expenses	0	1,322
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4043 · Curate Housing	66	530
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Total 4041 · Curate Training	66	1,852
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4031 Ministry other	100	0
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Total 4031 · Ministry	106,588	107,406
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4051 · Church running costs

4052 · Utilities

4053 · Electricity	1,338	1,530
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4054 · Gas	820	2,644
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4055 · Water	16	109
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4056 · Telephone / Broadband	720	799
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Total 4052 · Utilities	2,895	5,083
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4057 · Insurance	4,889	5,096
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4058 · Professional Fees	4,400	3,820
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Total 4051 · Church running costs	12,183	13,999
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4061 · Upkeep of Services

4062 · Altar	359	52
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Total 4061 · Upkeep of Services	359	52
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6510 · Choir expenses

6524 · RSCM	110	107
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6526 · CCLA Copyright	220	212
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6527 · Events	54	0
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Total 6510 · Choir expenses	384	319
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Total 4030 · Work of the Church	119,514	121,776
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4070 · Administration

4072 · Copier	836	702
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4073 · Stationery	61	145
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4074 · Subscriptions	0	0
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4076 · Audit	864	231
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4077 · Administrator	3,675	2,025
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4078 · General Admin	211	67
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Total 4070 · Administration	5,647	3,171
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Total 4001 · General Expense	127,237	126,337
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5001 · Building Expense

5010 · Repairs	90	
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5020 · Fixed Equipment

4025 · Organ tuning & minor repair	281	272
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4026 · Organ Appeal & Major Repair	0	312
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Total 5020 · Fixed Equipment	281	584
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5040 · Equipment repair & replacement	835	1,409
5070 · Projects		
5072 · Electrical - Lights	1,203	150
Total 5070 · Projects	<u>1,203</u>	<u>150</u>
Total 5001 · Building Expense	<u>2,409</u>	<u>2,144</u>
7010 · Bells		
7020 · Projects		
7021 · Air Conditioning	189	-773
7022 · Bell repair	0	3,943
Total 7020 · Projects	<u>400</u>	<u>3,169</u>
Total 7010 · Bells	<u>589</u>	<u>3,169</u>
8001 - St Barnabas payments	9,503	12,125
Total Expense	139,738	143,775
Net Ordinary Income	-2,958	-7,782
Other Income/Expense		
Other Income		
9000 · Unrealised revaluation		
2010 · CBF Bell Maintenance 3	4,357	
2020 · CBF Bell Maintenance 2	0	
9005 · BLK C of E Charity COIF Perp	3,572	
9002 · BLK Organ Fund (Designated)	-1,408	
9001 · BLK Organ Fund (Restricted)	5,240	
9004 · Rookery Church Fund	-8	
2080 · Rookery Fund (Lloyds)	0	
9003 · Thatcham Church Estate	192	
9006 · Thatc02 BR Char UK Bond	-1,730	
9007 · Thatc02 BR Char UK Equity	7,200	
Total 9000 · Unrealised revaluation	17415	
8002 - St B account correction	0	
Profit for the year	14457	

THATCHAM PCC
Year ended 31 December 2021

Unrestricted funds	Total	General	Organ	Fabric	Youth	Choir	St B
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
INCOMING RESOURCES							
Incoming resources from donors	97,742	84,729		1,261	762	120	10,870
Other voluntary incoming resources	15,432	15,432					
Income from investments	2,725	2,725					
Income from charitable and ancillary trading	20,882	20,882					
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES	136,780	123,767	0	1,261	762	120	10,870
RESOURCES EXPENDED							
Grants and Special Collections	2,076	2,076					0
Activities relating to the work of the Church	130,695	118,282		2,128	782		9,503
Church Management and administration	6,312	5,647	281			384	
Transfers	0						
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED	139,083	126,005	281	2,128	782	384	9,503
NET INCOMING RESOURCES	(2,303)	(2,238)	(281)	(867)	(20)	(264)	1,367

Restricted funds	Total	Bells	Hatherley
INCOMING RESOURCES			
Incoming resources from donors	0		
Other voluntary incoming resources	0		
Income from investments	0		
Income from charitable and ancillary trading	0		
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES	0	0	0
RESOURCES EXPENDED			
Grants and Special Collections	0		
Activities relating to the work of the Church	589		589
Church Management and administration	66		66
Transfers	0		
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED	655	0	655
NET INCOMING RESOURCES	(655)	0	(655)
TOTAL	(2,958)		

THATCHAM PCC
Year ended 31 December 2021

Assets	2,021	2020
Analysis of current account (Lloyds Bank)		
General fund	-8,289	-2,496
Organ (Designated)	34,240	35,490
Organ (Restricted)	513	-1,206
Fabric	140	140
Choir	-49	61
Youth	-495	61
Bell Maintenance	3,809	615
Curates Hsg/Expenses (formerly Hatherley)	2,259	2,848
other	-281	-281
total	31,847	35,232
St Barnabas (HSBC Acc)	1,909	541
St Barnabas (Set up - HSBC Acc)	90	90
	33,846	35,863
Assets of general funds		
Current accounts (Lloyds + HSBC)	33,846	35,863
Charishare (CBF Organ Funds)	45,401	41,568
Charishare (Blk Bell Maintenance)	28,562	24,900
CBF (Bell Maintenance 2+ 3)	29,424	25,067
Total	137,233	127,398
Endowments		
Station Road (Curate Hsg)	76,339	76,339
Charifund (Diocesan Trustees (Oxford) Ltd)	87,253	81,783
Rookery	263	271
Church Estate (Blk Bond + Equity / V&C Lloyds)	6,764	6,070
	170,619	164,463
Total assets	307,852	291,861

Reconciliation PCC Thatcham Acc at Lloyds		
QB 31/12/2021		31,847.00
less o/s credits		
cash credit 520	2,388.00	
HMRC tax reclaim	3,383.49	
Cellnex	1,275.00	
		7,046.49
plus o/s debits		
ODBF Fees	2,961.00	
Children's Society	600.28	
USPG	1,066.11	
		4,627.39
		29,427.90
Lloyds Statement 31/12/2021		29,429.24
check		1.34

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT
TO THE TRUSTEES OF
THATCHAM TEAM MINISTRY CHARITY**

I report on the accounts of the Charity for the year ended 31 December 2021.

Respective responsibilities of the Trustees and the Examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year (under section 43(2) of the Charities Act 1993 (the 1993 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 43 of the 1993 Act
- to follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners (under section 43(7)(b) of the 1993 Act); and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of the Independent Examiner's Report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity, and a comparison on the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a "true and fair view" and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

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

- 1 which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements to keep accounting records in accordance with section 41 of the 1993 Act, and to prepare accounts in accord with the accounting records and to comply with the accounting requirements of the 1993 Act have not been met; or
- 2 to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Mtabat

Mrs Monika Tabatabaian ATT MAAT
Tax Avenue
Turnfields Gate, Turnfields
Thatcham, Berkshire
RG19 4PT

Date: 6 May 2022