

# ST. MARY'S CHURCH

## ANNUAL PARISH REPORT 2025



**St. Mary's PCC, Wivenhoe**  
**Registered Charity Number 1165660**

**The Annual Parochial Church meeting will take place  
on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> May 2026 at 12.30 in church**

## **AGENDA**

- 1. Apologies for absence**
- 2. Minutes of the meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2025**
- 3. Election of two members to the Parochial Church Council**
- 4. Election of three Deanery Synod Members**
- 5. Election of Churchwardens**
- 6. The Annual Report**
- 6. Report on the changes to the Electoral Roll since the last annual Parochial Church Council meeting and the numbers entered on the Roll.**
- 7. Annual Report on the fabric, goods and ornaments of the church**
- 8. A report of the proceedings of the Deanery Synod**
- 9. Acceptance of the accounts**
- 10. Appointment of an Independent Examiner**
- 11. Any Other Business**

## Index to Contents

Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting, 11 <sup>th</sup> May 2025 .	Page...4
Electoral Roll Officers Report . . . . .	Page...5
Rectors Report . . . . .	Page...6
Deanery Synod Report . . . . .	Page..10
Fabric Report . . . . .	Page..10
Health & Safety Report . . . . .	Page..11
Safeguarding Report . . . . .	Page..11
Secretary to PCC Report . . . . .	Page..12
Communications Report . . . . .	Page..13
Treasurers' Report; Achievements & Performance; Annual Accounts	Page..14
All Together Worship . . . . .	Page..35
Bellringers Report . . . . .	Page..35
Café Chill . . . . .	Page..35
Catering Report . . . . .	Page..36
Cleaning Team Report . . . . .	Page..36
Churches Together Report . . . . .	Page..36
Environmental Report . . . . .	Page..37
Film Night . . . . .	Page..38
Flower Report . . . . .	Page..38
Friendly Club . . . . .	Page..38
Friends of St Mary's Report . . . . .	Page..39
Fundraising Report . . . . .	Page..39
Lectio Divina Report . . . . .	Page..40
Men's Group . . . . .	Page..41
Music at St Marys Report . . . . .	Page..41
Open Gardens . . . . .	Page..41
Pastoral Care Report . . . . .	Page..42
St Mary's Link with Uganda . . . . .	Page..42
St Mary's Music Society . . . . .	Page..42
Sunday Club Report . . . . .	Page..43
The Way . . . . .	Page..43
Wivenhoe Baby & Toddler Group Report . . . . .	Page..43
Worship Group Report . . . . .	Page..44

**St. Mary the Virgin, Wivenhoe**  
**Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church**  
**Meeting held on Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2025**  
**in Church**

The Meeting opened at 12.00 noon with a prayer read by the Revd. Canon Erwin Lammens. Revd. Canon Erwin Lammens in the chair welcomed the 56 people present. A PowerPoint presentation of photographs, shown on the screen, gave an overview of St Mary's activities during 2024.

1. **Apologies for absence:** Sandra Osborne; Jane and Glyn Stanway; Barry and Lyn Smith; Stella Clemesha; Margaret Allison and Bill Eborn
2. **Minutes of the meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> May 2024** shown on pages 4, 5 and 6 of the annual report were proposed by Marika Footring and seconded by Revd. Dr. Sara Batts Neale. It was agreed by those present that the minutes of the meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> May 2024 were a true record.
3. **Election of members to the Parochial Church Council**  
Erwin thanked Claudia Alsdorf, Greg Butler, Sue Jones, Eric Jakens and Jane Taylor for their time and commitment as a member of the PCC.  
The following candidates for were put forward for election to the PCC –
  - Gio Timms-Bruno was proposed by Douglas McCormick and seconded by Eric Jakens
  - Lucy Wadley was proposed by Andrew Treacher and seconded by Hilary Cook
  - Martin Lucas was proposed by Peter Terry and seconded by Mary Jakens
  - (Norman) David Harrison was proposed by Margaret Allison and seconded by Mary JakensThere being no other nominations they were confirmed in that role by those present.
4. **Election of Churchwardens**  
Erwin thanked Douglas McCormick and Mary Jakens for their work during the year. Both Douglas and Mary were prepared to stand for election again.  
The following candidates were put forward for election as Churchwardens -  
Douglas McCormick was proposed by Gary Ranford and seconded by Claudia Alsdorf  
Mary Jakens was proposed by Sandra Osborne and seconded by Jane Taylor  
There being no other nominations they were confirmed in that role by those present.
5. **The Annual Report**  
Erwin reviewed the annual report. He referred to his report and the figures which reflected on the changes which were shown to increase and decrease for certain services. For many years, a marvellous team had supported him by assisting with services, Rev. Dr. Sara Batts-Neale, Glyn Stanway, Douglas McCormick, and Helena Hughes he was extremely grateful to them. Sara was wished well in her new appointment in Sawbridgeworth. Erwin asked that those present to consider taking on a role at St Mary's as there are several areas within church life that need more volunteers. Erwin highlighted the individual reports and invited those present to speak to report writers or to him if they had any questions. He thanked all the report writers and volunteers for their contribution to the life and work of the parish and the value they brought to the congregation and wider community. He also thanked Graham Wadley and the choir for their commitment to providing music within the church. Outreach was mentioned and a need to build on foundations which the Men's Group had put in place. Erwin replied that the Annual Parish Report demonstrated a degree of engagement but there are additional options and opportunities. At present the Romans Course was in progress and the Lent Course had recently concluded, but he accepted that a more general course, such as the Alpha Course, could be run for the first steps to learning and discovery.
6. **Report on the changes to the Roll since the last annual Parochial Church Council meeting and the numbers entered on the Roll.**  
Erwin referred those present to page 6 of the Annual Report. 124 names were on the 2024 electoral roll. The new Roll contains 150 names. Mary Jakens thanked everyone for completing their forms and increasing the number of those on the roll.

## **7. Annual Report on the fabric and goods and ornaments of the church**

Erwin referred those present to page 6 of the Annual Report. The roof was currently a priority which Douglas would mention in the Acceptance of Accounts section. All other details regarding Fabric appeared within the report.

## **8. A report of the proceedings of the Deanery Synod**

Erwin referred those present to page 6 of the Annual Report. An overview had been given of the meetings which had taken place during the year.

## **9. Acceptance of accounts**

Douglas presented the accounts. He stated that St Mary's was just keeping its heads above water, thanks to the Friendly Club, Music Society, fundraising and the hire of the building. He especially appreciated the regular givers who used the envelopes or contributed via standing order - £74,000 was collected in that way, inclusive of almost £15,000 in Gift Aid. Hire of the building contributed £7,000 and was a great contributor to offset utility bills.

In 2024 our Parish Share had amounted to £77,000 and this had been paid in full. During 2024 the bill for utilities had been £13,000 and a saving of £3000 is expected in 2025 due to a change in utility provider. Tidings cost £3000 and is the main community outreach tool – the advertising revenue offset 50% of the printing bill thus reducing the total cost.

Douglas thanked Bill and Vivien for their assistance during the year which was invaluable.

Unfortunately, £100,000 is needed for the roof, £83,000 is available but more contributions are needed. Hopefully grants and public support would provide the balance.

A question was asked about the amount of money received from the QR code and SumUp machines – the answer was quite small amounts. The vast majority of the income comes from Standing Orders.

A comment was made about the accounts format – they are difficult to follow, and a simpler report would be easier to understand. Douglas agreed and a simple version will be presented in future, possibly via a PowerPoint on screen. It was accepted that using the SumUp machine at fundraising events was sometimes a difficulty but there are ways of using electronic banking and Douglas would assist those who were in need.

The acceptance of the accounts was proposed by Jane Taylor, seconded by Eric Jakens, and unanimously agreed.

## **10. Appointment of Independent Examiner**

Larking Gower having agreed to act as Independent Examiners were proposed by Douglas McCormick, seconded by Gary Ranford, and unanimously agreed they be appointed for 2025/2026 by those present.

## **11. Other matters**

There were no other matters. .

## **12. Erwin closed the meeting at 13.01 and invited everyone to join in saying The Grace.**

## **Electoral Roll**

The Church of England requires each church to compile a register of its lay members.

The name of this register is the Church Electoral Roll.

Those on the roll are entitled to vote at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting, and if elected to be members of the PCC and Deanery Synod.

Every six years the roll has to be reviewed and updated, 2025 was that year. On 31st December 2025 there were 146 on the roll.

The numbers on the roll fluctuate, some people move out of Wivenhoe, some sadly pass away. Others move to Wivenhoe and join St Mary's and are added to the roll.

Mary Jakens

## **Rector's APCM report**

### **When God calls...**

2025 has been a crucial year in turning round the many setbacks that we had experienced during and after the pandemic. This year's Sunday services statistics (see below) take us back to comparable numbers as in 2018 and 2019, a year or months before the lockdown. The current church community feels again like a family, close-knitted and open-minded in its reaching out and its inclusiveness.

In 2023 I had accepted the role of Area Dean, overseeing and supporting - where and when I can - the 24 churches in the Colchester deanery. Seven of them required my special attention in 2025 as they were vacant without an incumbent, some for over a year. I responded to God's call to help one of these vacant Parishes, one of the smaller churches in the city of Colchester. On 22 September the Bishop gave me the License as Priest-in-charge at St Barnabas, Old Heath. I continue to serve St Mary's to the best of my ability. In the same way as I serve you, I also give the best of myself to serve in other places and roles to which God calls me.

In order to facilitate this broadening ministry, we have changed some of the Sunday service times at St Mary's and have appointed an administrative assistant for a number of hours.

### **Growth or rather status quo?**

Let the figures talk now; they may not tell everything but are still a good indicator whether it is growth, status quo or decline. I had to split the 2025 column on the grid in two halves as we had changed the Sunday service times and some aspects of our pattern of worship from 1 July, exactly in the middle of the year.

Let me start with the negative trend in the number of weddings. With no weddings booked 2025 saw a record low. This trend had already started in recent years with only one wedding in 2023 and two in 2024. It may be anecdotal, but I hear that young adults in their 20s and 30s find the current times too uncertain to make arrangements for their wedding. The decline in weddings doesn't seem to be just a church problem; other wedding venues struggle too.

The rest of the picture is not so grim. Sunday evening services - Evensong and Taizé - were doing well in 2025: both services were attended by 19 people on average. That is about four times the figure of three years ago. It is my dream that 7 past 7 could attract a similar number as well.

Three clear indications of growth in 2025 are:

- 1/ a high percentage of young people (primary and secondary school age) attending church: on average 11 in attendance on Sundays which represents 15% of our congregation;
- 2/ the number of new churchgoers joining: our worshipping community grew by nine compared to the year before;
- 3/ the highest number on the electoral roll in the last 15 years: 151.

The most interesting outcome of the statistics is related to the change of times for Sunday morning services. As you remember, we moved the early Communion from 8am to 9am and the main service from 10.30am to 11.00am. It may come as a surprise (or not) that attendance went up when the times changed. 8am was attended by 5 people on average, while 9am attracts 11 people. At 10.30am 66 people joined; this total went up to 74 at 11.00am. We may conclude that the new timings have received a positive response.

## Sunday and Wednesday services

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025 1 <sup>st</sup> half	2025 2 <sup>nd</sup> half
8am	14	12	10	11	11		10	9	7	5	5	N/A
9am											N/A	11
10.30am: under 16	6	5	6	5	8		6	11	10	9	10	N/A
10.30 am: adults	76	72	72	62	67		51	52	54	57	56	N/A
11.00 am under 16											N/A	11
11.00 am adults											N/A	63
Evensong	17	14	16	12	11		N/A	5	14	20	19	19
7 past 7	12	11	12	8	8		6	7	7	6	7	6
Taizé	28	18	27	26	21		16	15	14	18	17	21

No 2020 as there were only a limited number of services held because of lockdown.

2021 figures are from June onwards when the church reopened. There were no Sunday evening services in 2021.

From 2022 there were no suspensions..

## Pastoral and initiation services

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Baptisms	18	30	20	27	14	21	18	18	9	4	6	2	13	7	8
Confirmations	4	8	0	6	8	0	6	0	8	0	0	5	1	2	0
Weddings	12	19	13	6	10	15	8	6	5	3	5	7	1	2	0
Renewal of vows	0	0	1	2	2	2	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	2
Funerals in church	21	20	18	20	20	10	14	6	10	10	8	15	12	22	12
Cremation services	8	13	9	8	4	15	10	9	16	17	9	6	8	6	5

## **Sunday Club and The Way**

A great team of leaders run our children's and youth groups. Also church attendance has seen a high percentage of children and teenagers taking part in the service. Please pray that the young and their leaders may flourish and their lives mirror God's love for them.

## **Pastoral**

It is also our calling to care for the elderly, the ill, housebound. The pastoral visitors group keeps in touch by visiting or phoning those who appreciate a visit or call. The monthly house communion is an informal communion service in the comfortable atmosphere of someone's home. If people cannot attend at church, because of mobility issues, they can ask for a visit from a priest or communion assistant to take communion to their homes. Harvest gifts are delivered by church volunteers to residents, Beacon House, Night Shelter and Foodbank. St Mary's has been hosting The Friendly Club since its foundation.

## **Vision Day follow up**

Some outcomes of the vision day that took place in the previous year are being implemented such as monthly Open the Book sessions at Millfields Primary, strengthening the link with the local schools and organising schools' ministry training.

The Vision Day asked for more Bible and faith nurture courses. As a response we organised a Bible course in 8 sessions about the letter to the Romans, an Advent course 'Why God became man' and in 2026 the Bible Society Course will be run in Lent and Eastertide. We also hosted Dr Joan Taylor's book launch about Jesus' childhood.

*Inclusivity* was another issue that was highlighted at our Vision Day and we have now joined the inclusive Churches Network 29 people attended the Welcome Course; our inclusive welcome is considered a priority. We are committed to keep working on this.

The new pattern of worship has inspired people to start new initiatives which reflect the recommendations at the Vision Away Day such as bringing together the 9am and 11am congregations during breakfast or a shared coffee/tea moment. These initiatives strengthen the cohesion of our church family.

## **The wider perspective**

It is important that we keep a broad and open view on what is happening in the surrounding world. We should never be isolated or inward looking. We have a wider perspective which is diverse.

We practice fellowship among all Christians in Wivenhoe by taking part in an active way in Churches Together. We are represented in the Colchester Deanery Synod. We are a registered charity with the Charity Commissioners and support local and international charities. We have an active link with St Andrew's in Namalemba in Uganda and the group of Christian Women there. In the global context we continue to pray and work for peace and have made a start in lowering our carbon footprint and becoming more eco-friendly. Touched by God's love, we also love and include those who seek and hopefully find their spiritual home in the caring church family of St Mary's.

## **Thank you**

In previous reports I used to thank everyone who helped building our church community in the past year. I then started to name our amazing volunteers and of course, unsurprisingly, I forgot to mention some others who also supported the church.



Dear reader, be assured that even though I don't have included your name, you are in my thoughts when writing this report and thinking of the support I have received in 2025 and the years before.

Having said this I'd like to thank all those who have submitted their reports for the Annual Parish Church Meeting, those who volunteer in several capacities, my colleagues in the ministry team, who have been so supportive and without whom I wouldn't be able to fulfil my ministry: our Assistant Curate, Reader, Authorised Local Preacher, Churchwardens, Standing Committee and PCC members.

My final thanks go to An, Jonas and Mieke, my family who are always there when I need encouragement, companionship and an understanding sounding board.

May God's blessing rest upon the many groups, committees, teams and individuals who help building our church as a family where you can be yourself, pray together, worship God, and find hope, peace and love.

*Erwin Lammens*  
8 February 2026

## Deanery Synod

Lay representatives plus clergy from all the Anglican churches in the Colchester Deanery usually meet three times per year, to hear what's going on in the Deanery, Diocese and nationally, and to discuss and share ideas about how we can work together more effectively across the churches in the Colchester Deanery. During 2025 it was decided that the Synod meeting in October would not take place, as we held our first Deanery Day instead. Please find below a short report on the Deanery Synod Meetings held during 2025.

The Deanery Synod's pastoral committee prepares the meetings' Agenda under the leadership of Revd Canon Erwin Lammens, Area Dean, Revd Hannah Cooper, Assistant Area Dean, and Miss Lynne Gettings, Lay Chair. St Mary's Parish representatives are Rick Cawley, Heather Edwards and Nick Gustard.

### **12th March 2025 – At St. Michael's Church, Myland, Colchester**

Our speaker for this Synod was Wendy Lidgate, Programme Manager for Colchester Episcopal Area. Wendy introduced herself and explained her role. She also explained the background behind the Strategic Mission and Ministry Investment Board (SMIBB) and how her role fits into it. Wendy's role is to help us all plan how each and every parish can tap into this fund.

### **18th June 2025 – At St. Peter's Church, Boxted**

Our speaker for this Synod was Sam Fowler, director of Christian Youth Outreach (CYO). Sam started by introducing himself and a little bit about what CYO does. CYO's vision and aim is for every school in the Colchester area to be regularly prayed for by at least one Colchester church, and that every Colchester Church will be regularly praying for at least one local Colchester school - at least once every term. Sam stated that at the moment an amazing 45% of schools across Colchester are prayed for by churches. They would like to get this to 100%. From September 2025 the Wivenhoe schools and university have been prayed for at St Mary's. They have been included in our weekly prayer list.

### **11th October 2025 - Deanery Day at St John's Colchester**

Open to all Synod and PCC members, youth and children's ministry leaders, committee members and other members of the congregations. An attractive and inspirational programme with several speakers and workshops has been put together thanks to the allocated grant from MOF. The day was a great success, with several inspiring speakers addressing the well-attended groups.

Richard Cawley; Heather Edwards and Nick Gustard

## Fabric Report

Throughout the year maintenance is carried out on the fabric of the church.

Annual checks have been completed on the:

Fire alarms and extinguishers.

Services on both the church and annexe boilers.

PAT testing.

Roof alarm.

Binder service (toilets).

Church Clock (Wivenhoe Town Council)

**Annexe Entrance Door:** The repair of the annexe entrance door is work in progress.

**Roof Repairs:** a roof appeal fundraising team has been formed. A period of 18 months has been identified for fund raising events. Information will be in Tidings and leaflet form. A leaflet drop will be made to all properties in Wivenhoe.

Fundraising methods will include congregational giving, community events and grants, supported by clear messaging around heritage, community use, and long-term sustainability. Interior redecoration of the church will take place when the roof repairs are completed.

**Repainting the Church Railings:** Community Payback have agreed to take this on as a project. The cost of all materials will be covered by Wivenhoe Town Council.

**Kissing Gate:** The gate will be repainted at the same time as the railings. It does need to be repaired as well but arrangements are not in place for that to take place.

**Utilities:** Yu Energy are now our utilities provider.

**First Aid Kits and Defibrillator:** The first aid kits are checked monthly and restocked as necessary. The defibrillator has had the batteries changed and new pads fitted.

**Chairs:** The blue chairs which were stored in the shed have gone to a new home in the community, 2 remain for Wivenhoe orchestra to use when they meet in the church.

**Refuse bin:** Permission was given by the PCC to Barrells café to site a refuse bin in the churchyard. We are allowed to place our refuse in the bin at no cost to us.

**Photocopier:** A donation was received from King Coel Kittens to allow us to purchase a new photocopier. The new copier is cheaper to run than the previous one.

**War Memorial:** A request had been received to add the name of Driver Cyril William Wyatt to the list on the war memorial. He died in action on 1<sup>st</sup> May 1945. Although this was approved by the PCC in June 2025 no more information has been received from Michael Smither who had made the initial approach.

**Path around the perimeter of the Annexe:** a donation of £1500 had been received from Wivenhoe Community Trust to cover the cost of installing steps outside the annexe double doors. Currently on hold. The donation will be ring fenced until a solution can be found. A path from the annexe patio to the south door has been put down by Peter Terry using material we already have.

**Churchyard:** Thanks go to Peter Terry who with the help of volunteers has done a magnificent job in the churchyard. Work started in earnest in 2024 with weeding and progressed to planting. Large areas of overgrown material were cleared and has resulted in various walls and areas on all sides of the church being opened up. Planting of bulbs, shrubs and wildflowers has been undertaken. This work is still ongoing and has made a big difference to the ambience of the churchyard. A wildflower section had been seeded and was moderately successful. It is hoped that 2026 will see a better showing of wildflowers.

An outside tap has been fixed to the south side of the annexe in order to provide convenient access to water for the gardeners.

Thanks also go to Wivenhoe Town Council team who mow the grass and carry out general maintenance during the year.

**Church Noticeboard:** The noticeboard was removed during the summer by Karl Douzier who kindly repaired and improved some elements before replacing it.

Churchwardens, Mary Jakens and Douglas McCormick

## Health & Safety

There have been no health and safety issues in the period. The Health & Safety Overview and Fire Risk Assessment were reviewed and approved by the PCC in March 2025.

## Safeguarding Report

- I have had two planned focussed face-to-face meetings with Erwin, numerous phone calls, emails and unplanned informal meetings, as always Erwin has given me much support, encouragement and advice.
- There have been one Safeguarding issue raised and dealt with this year. It demonstrated clear communication channels; prompt action with thorough and reflective outcomes. Everyone was communicated with appropriately, both electronically and verbally.
- Erwin and I have discussed on many occasions the log that the Diocese keep on individuals training. Names appear to move/disappear dependent on whether it is mine or Erwin's name that is clicked on. Erwin plans to discuss this with the Diocese Safeguarding Team this year. I have factual evidence to prove their lists are incomplete.
- Once more, we discussed the need for all PCC members to undertake Safeguarding training; this is a requirement from the Diocese. However, a much larger number of individuals have undertaken training in 2025.
- Both Erwin and myself received two emails from the Diocese Safeguarding Team alerting us to individuals (names were given) Erwin made some very subtle enquiries and was assured they had no connection to St Mary's.
- Erwin and I and on one occasion Mary have undertaken Safeguarding interviews for individuals wanting to be involved in Open the Book, The Way and Sunday Club.

- The Parish Safeguarding Dashboard was launched. This is a 'simple', tool to keep a track on Safeguarding and update local and national changes in Safeguarding requirements. A very successful meeting with Erwin, Bonnie, Mary and myself has taken place and another with Mary, Bonnie and myself will take place soon.
- I have attempted to contact the Diocese Safeguarding team by phone but a voice message alerted me to the fact communication is now by email with priority given to urgency.
- We have also discussed the Christingle Service, Children's Society and Harvest donations.

A big thank-you also to Bonnie for her knowledgeable, support and prompt answers to my enquiries.

**It is of paramount importance to remember that Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.**

Gill Black, P.S.O

## **Secretary to the PCC Report**

The PCC is a charity registered with the Charity Commission. The PCC (Powers Measure 1956) states that "the PCC is to co-operate with the Minister in promoting in the Parish the whole Mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical." The PCC is responsible for the maintenance and repair of the church building of St Mary the Virgin, and for the "movables" in the church.

Members of the PCC are either ex-officio, co-opted, appointed, or elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting in accordance with the 2020 Church Representation Rules. The following have served as members of the PCC during 2025

<b>Incumbent</b>	The Revd. Erwin Lammens Chairperson
<b>Reader</b>	Emeritus Professor Dr. Glyn Stanway
<b>Churchwardens</b>	Douglas McCormick Mary Jakens
<b>Treasurer</b>	Douglas McCormick
<b>Secretary</b>	Bonnie Hill
<b>Deanery Synod Representatives</b>	Rick Cawley Dr. Nick Gustard Heather Edwards
<b>Elected Members</b>	Hannah Cole Gary Ranford Sandra Osborne Sam Belcher David Harrison Gio Timms Bruno Martin Lucas Lucy Wadley Kerry Rooke

Since the last Annual Meeting, the PCC have met on 9 occasions. The PCC members above have worked together to ensure that St Marys Church continues to develop and grow both spiritually and within the local community.

The PCC receive monthly reports from not only the Treasurer, but also the Churchwardens, Fundraising Team, Catering Team, Fabric Group, Worship Group, our Colchester Deanery Synod representatives, Wivenhoe Churches Together, Health & Safety, Safeguarding, FOSM and information on the Children's Ministry, youth work and young adults. This gives an excellent view of what is current, what needs to be addressed and promotes discussion.

The Standing Committee meetings regularly prepare for the PCC meeting.

The PCC meeting minutes are available at the back of the Church, in a folder, or can be accessed from the St. Mary's Church website, if there are issues arising from the Minutes, or other matters, please do speak to a council member. PCC members continue to represent all those involved with Church life.

Bonnie Hill, PCC Secretary

## **Communication**

### **OUR DIGITAL PRESENCE**

#### **Communication**

Considerable changes are required to regularise the church's communication arrangements. I understand that discussion about this is scheduled for the February 2026 PCC meeting and look forward to hearing about developments at this APCM.

#### **Contactless Giving**

The contactless giving accounts with both SumUp and Give a Little are currently in my name. These should be transferred to the PCC as it should be the legal accounts holder.

Doing so will ensure future access to these account, independent of individual fortunes.

#### **GDPR**

An audit was carried out in January 2026. Returns received at the date of this report show that the requirements are well understood and observed.

#### **Licensing**

There is no change from last year.

The video licence is now better understood by those who need to know its provisions.

Marika Footring

## **TIDINGS**

Erwin and I continue to meet up in person or by telephone, depending on our circumstances.

One advertiser (Business Time) has pulled out for 2026 and FSG has agreed to take a double advertisement. Advertising costs remain the same for 2025 (£120 for ten issues), the revenue for which covers all printing costs. The four-page content has continued and the number of flyers remains buoyant. We almost always have more than enough copy to exceed four pages, but not enough for eight. An increase in pages would entail more work and an increase in costs, neither of which is currently viable.

The final tides timetable appeared in the December 2025/January 2026 issue and we would like to say a huge thank you to John Williams for compiling this without fail every issue.

We are continuing to offer an editorial space in Tidings to as many contributors as possible. If there is not enough space then we try to include a flyer within the mailing envelope. This system now seems to be working very well, as long as I give Bonnie enough advance warning.

We have also continued to produce ten, rather than 12, issues per year to enable the rector, editor and designer to take annual leave. There is usually a limited amount of news around Christmas and summer holidays so it seems sensible to take a break at these times.

In 2025 Tidings has continued to be mailed out by PCC secretary Bonnie Hill and this will be the distribution system for the foreseeable future.

Erwin, Bob (our designer) and I have a robust working pattern in place, and I am grateful that contributors now seem confident in approaching me as much as Erwin. This eases the time pressures put on Erwin, and I can always rely on Bob to achieve the impossible with some of the pictures and copy!

As always, a huge personal thank you also goes to everyone who willingly helps out with photos and contributions, which makes my job as Tidings editor as straightforward as possible, and Tidings a popular publication within St Mary's and Wivenhoe in general.

Sue Clement, Editor

# Treasurer

## REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

The full accounts, which appear on pages 18 to 34 have been prepared in accordance with the Charity Commission's Statement of Recommended Practice and have been Independently Examined by Larking Gowen LLP, Chartered Accountants. Their certificate appears on page 17. Douglas McCormick, Treasurer

### Aim and purposes

St Mary's Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of cooperating with the incumbent, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission of the church, pastoral, evangelistic, social, and ecumenical.

### Objectives and activities

The PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship at our church and to become part of our parish community at St Marys. The PCC maintains an overview of worship throughout the parish and makes suggestions on how our services can involve the many groups that live within our parish. Our services and worship put faith into practice through prayer and Scripture, music and sacrament.

When planning our activities for the year, we have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the supplementary guidance on charities for the advancement of religion. In particular, we try to enable ordinary people to live out their faith as part of our parish community through:

- Worship and prayer; teaching Scripture; developing their knowledge and trust in Jesus
- Provision of pastoral care for people living in the parish
- Outreach work.

To facilitate this work, it is important that we maintain the fabric of the church of St Marys and the environs.

### Financial review

Total receipts on unrestricted funds were £129,860 of which £87,495 was unrestricted planned voluntary donations, including a Gift Aid figure of £13,698. Restricted grants and donations of £210 were also received.

It was good to see that the use of Gift Aid envelopes continues, although much reduced and the regular giving by standing order with gift aid is consistent throughout the year.

During the year, the total fund balances decreased from £202,457 in 2024 to £200,522 in 2025, of which £22,130 is restricted.

### Reserves policy

It is PCC policy to try to maintain a balance on free reserves (net current assets) which equates to at least three months unrestricted payments. This is equivalent to £33,000. It is held to smooth out fluctuations in cash flow and to meet emergencies. The balance of the free reserves at the year end was £178,392 which is significantly higher than this target, largely due to legacies received over time. Currently £123,665 is held in the short term deposit fund with the CCLA Church of England Deposit Fund.

### Achievements and performance

The achievements and performance of the church of St Mary's is set out on pages 35 to 44 of the Annual Report

## **Structure, governance and management**

The Parochial Church Council 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 (our vicar), churchwardens, the reader and members elected by those members of the congregation who are on the electoral roll of the church. All those who attend our services/members of the congregation are encouraged to register on the electoral roll and stand for election to the PCC.

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. New members receive initial training into the workings of the PCC.

The full PCC met 9 times during the year. Given its wide responsibilities the PCC has a number of committees each dealing with a particular aspect of parish life. These committees, which include worship, mission and outreach, fabric and finance, are all responsible to the PCC and report back to it regularly, minutes of their decisions being received by the full PCC and discussed as necessary.

## **Statement of Trustees' responsibilities**

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England & Wales requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles of the Charities SORP (FRS 102);
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards (FRS 102) have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Charity will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the Charity's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the Trust deed. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

## **Administrative information**

St. Mary's Church is situated on High Street, Wivenhoe, C07 9BD. It is part of the Diocese of Chelmsford within the Church of England. Registered charity number 1165660.

PCC members who have served at any time from 1 January 2025 are as detailed on page 12 of this Annual Report.

## **Address for correspondence:**

16 Colchester Road Wivenhoe Colchester C079EU

**The PCC's bankers:**

Barclays Bank UK PLC Leicester LE87 2BB

**Independent examiner of the PCC's accounts:**

Larking Gowen LLP 1 Claydon Business Park Great Blakenham Ipswich IP6 0NL

Approved by the PCC on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2026 and signed on their behalf by the  
Reverend Canon Erwin Lammens (PCC Chairman)



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## PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF WIVENHOE

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### INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

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#### **Independent examiner's report to the members of the Parochial Church Council ('the Trustees') of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Wivenhoe ('the Charity')**

I report to the charity Trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Wivenhoe ('the Charity') for the year ended 31 December 2025, which are set out on pages 16 to 32.

#### **Responsibilities and basis of report**

As the Trustees of the Charity you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the Charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

#### **Independent examiner's statement**

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Charity as required by section 130 of the 2011 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

This report is made solely to the Charity's Trustees, as a body, in accordance with Part 4 of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008. My work has been undertaken so that I might state to the Charity's Trustees those matters I am required to state to them in an Independent examiner's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, I do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Charity and the Charity's Trustees as a body, for my work or for this report.

Signed:

Dated: 27 March 2026

Giles Kerkham FCA DChA

#### **Larking Gowen LLP**

Chartered Accountants  
1 Claydon Business Park  
Great Blakenham  
Ipswich  
IP6 0NL

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**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF WIVENHOE**

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**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025**

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	<b>Note</b>	<b>Unrestricted funds 2025 £</b>	<b>Restricted funds 2025 £</b>	<b>Total funds 2025 £</b>	<i>Total funds 2024 £</i>
<b>Incoming resources</b>					
Voluntary income	2	87,495	210	87,705	95,931
Activities for generating funds	3	20,422	1,164	21,586	20,680
Income from investments	4	3,358	-	3,358	3,400
Church activities	5	18,585	-	18,585	21,227
<b>Total incoming resources</b>		<b>129,860</b>	<b>1,374</b>	<b>131,234</b>	<i>141,238</i>
<b>Resources expended</b>					
Costs of generating voluntary income	7	9,225	-	9,225	7,706
Church activities		123,178	766	123,944	132,893
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<b>132,403</b>	<b>766</b>	<b>133,169</b>	<i>140,599</i>
<b>Net (expenditure)/income</b>		<b>(2,543)</b>	<b>608</b>	<b>(1,935)</b>	<i>639</i>
Transfers between funds	12	26,189	(26,189)	-	-
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		<b>23,646</b>	<b>(25,581)</b>	<b>(1,935)</b>	<i>639</i>
<b>Reconciliation of funds:</b>					
Total funds brought forward		154,746	47,711	202,457	201,818
Net movement in funds		23,646	(25,581)	(1,935)	639
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>		<b>178,392</b>	<b>22,130</b>	<b>200,522</b>	<i>202,457</i>

The Statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

The notes on pages 20 to 34 form part of these financial statements.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF WIVENHOE

BALANCE SHEET  
AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2025

	Note	2025 £	2024 £
		-	-
<b>Current assets</b>			
Debtors	10	15,177	13,000
FOSM Current Account		11,098	10,490
Transformation Appeal Account		6,018	5,939
PCC Current Account		38,109	102,424
Short Term Deposits		123,665	53,665
Transformation Appeal Deposit Account		9,479	19,873
<b>Cash at bank and in hand</b>		188,369	192,391
<b>Current assets</b>		203,546	205,391
<b>Current liabilities</b>			
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	11	(3,024)	(2,934)
<b>Total net assets</b>		200,522	202,457
<b>Charity funds</b>			
Restricted funds	12	22,130	47,711
Unrestricted funds	12	178,392	154,746
<b>Total funds</b>		200,522	202,457

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Trustees and signed on their behalf by:

Rev Erwin Lammens



Mary Jakens



Date: 10 March 2026

The notes on pages 20 to 34 form part of these financial statements.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

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**1. Accounting policies**

**1.1 Basis of preparation of financial statements**

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) - Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Charities Act 2011, and in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 governing the individual accounts of PCCs.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention. The financial statements include all transactions, assets and liabilities for which the PCC is responsible in law. They do not include the accounts of church groups that owe their affiliation to another body, nor those which are informal gatherings of church members. The Friends of St Mary's and Wivenhoe St. Mary's Music Society have agreed with the PCC that they produce separate financial statements.

Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Wivenhoe meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy.

**1.2 Income**

All income is recognised once the Charity has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount of income receivable can be measured reliably.

The recognition of income from legacies is dependent on establishing entitlement, the probability of receipt and the ability to estimate with sufficient accuracy the amount receivable. Evidence of entitlement to a legacy exists when the Charity has sufficient evidence that a gift has been left to them (through knowledge of the existence of a valid will and the death of the benefactor) and the executor is satisfied that the property in question will not be required to satisfy claims in the estate. Receipt of a legacy must be recognised when it is probable that it will be received and the fair value of the amount receivable, which will generally be the expected cash amount to be distributed to the Charity, can be reliably measured.

Planned giving, collections and similar donations are recognised when received. Grants are accounted for when the PCC is entitled to use of the resources, their ultimate receipts are considered reasonably certain and the amounts due are reliably quantifiable. Dividends are also accounted for when declared receivable, and interest as and when accrued by the payer. All incoming resources are accounted for gross.

Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid is recognised at the time of the donation.

Other income is recognised in the period in which it is receivable and to the extent the goods have been provided or on completion of the service.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

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**1. Accounting policies (continued)**

**1.3 Expenditure**

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified by activity. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity.

Expenditure on raising funds includes all expenditure incurred by the Charity to raise funds for its charitable purposes and includes costs of all fundraising activities events and non-charitable trading.

Expenditure on charitable activities is incurred on directly undertaking the activities which further the Charity's objectives, as well as any associated support costs.

Grants payable are charged in the year when the offer is made except in those cases where the offer is conditional, such grants being recognised as expenditure when the conditions attaching are fulfilled.

All expenditure is inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

**1.4 Interest receivable**

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the Charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the institution with whom the funds are deposited.

**1.5 Consecrated and benefice property**

In so far as consecrated and benefice property of any kind is excluded from the statutory definition of 'charity' by Section 10(2)(a) and (c) of the Charities Act 2011 such assets are not capitalised in the financial statements.

**1.6 Debtors**

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

**1.7 Cash at bank and in hand**

Cash at bank and in hand includes cash and short-term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

**1.8 Liabilities and provisions**

Liabilities are recognised when there is an obligation at the Balance sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably.

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025**

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**1. Accounting policies (continued)**

**1.9 Financial instruments**

The Charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

**1.10 Fund accounting**

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the PCC and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the Trustees for particular purposes. The aim and use of each designated fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors or which have been raised by the PCC for particular purposes. Any balance remaining unspent at the end of the year is carried forward as a balance on that fund. The aim and use of each restricted fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Investment income, gains and losses are allocated to the appropriate fund.

**2. Voluntary income**

	<b>Unrestricted funds 2025 £</b>	<b>Restricted funds 2025 £</b>	<b>Total funds 2025 £</b>
<b>Planned giving:</b>			
Gift aid donations	49,405	-	<b>49,405</b>
Income tax recoverable	13,698	-	<b>13,698</b>
Other	8	-	<b>8</b>
	<hr/> 63,111	<hr/> -	<hr/> <b>63,111</b>
Collections at all services (open plate)	7,580	-	<b>7,580</b>
Legacies	3,047	-	<b>3,047</b>
Grants	4,800	-	<b>4,800</b>
Sundry donations and appeals	8,957	210	<b>9,167</b>
	<hr/> 24,384	<hr/> 210	<hr/> <b>24,594</b>
<b>Subtotal</b>			
	<hr/> 87,495	<hr/> 210	<hr/> <b>87,705</b>
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <b>87,705</b>

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**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF WIVENHOE**

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025**

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**2. Voluntary income (continued)**

	<i>Unrestricted funds 2024 £</i>	<i>Restricted funds 2024 £</i>	<i>Total funds 2024 £</i>
<b>Planned giving:</b>			
Gift aid donations	57,828	-	57,828
Income tax recoverable	15,912	-	15,912
Other	991	-	991
	<hr/> 74,731	<hr/> -	<hr/> 74,731
Collections at all services	8,443	-	8,443
Legacies	2,246	-	2,246
Grants	941	-	941
Sundry donations and appeals	8,013	1,557	9,570
	<hr/> 94,374	<hr/> 1,557	<hr/> 95,931
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

**3. Activities for generating funds**

**Income from fundraising events**

	<b>Unrestricted funds 2025 £</b>	<b>Restricted funds 2025 £</b>	<b>Total funds 2025 £</b>
Parish magazine (advertising)	518	-	518
June and December markets	3,810	-	3,810
Fundraising	16,094	1,164	17,258
<b>Total 2025</b>	<hr/> 20,422	<hr/> 1,164	<hr/> 21,586
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

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**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF WIVENHOE**

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025**

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**3. Activities for generating funds (continued)**

**Income from fundraising events (continued)**

	<i>Unrestricted funds 2024 £</i>	<i>Restricted funds 2024 £</i>	<i>Total funds 2024 £</i>
Parish magazine (advertising)	1,385	-	1,385
June and December markets	3,706	-	3,706
Fundraising	14,489	1,100	15,589
<i>Total 2024</i>	<u>19,580</u>	<u>1,100</u>	<u>20,680</u>

**4. Investment income**

	<b>Unrestricted funds 2025 £</b>	<b>Total funds 2025 £</b>	<i>Total funds 2024 £</i>
Dividends on CBF Investment Fund	-	-	704
Bank and CBF Deposit Fund Interest	3,358	3,358	2,696
	<u>3,358</u>	<u>3,358</u>	<u>3,400</u>

**5. Income from Church activities**

	<b>Unrestricted funds 2025 £</b>	<b>Total funds 2025 £</b>
Fees from weddings and funerals	7,816	7,816
Parish Magazine (sales)	370	370
Church lettings: local community use	8,579	8,579
Chaplaincy	1,820	1,820
<b>Total 2025</b>	<u>18,585</u>	<u>18,585</u>



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PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF WIVENHOE

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

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5. Income from Church activities (continued)

	<i>Unrestricted funds 2024 £</i>	<i>Restricted funds 2024 £</i>	<i>Total funds 2024 £</i>
Fees from weddings and funerals	12,734	-	12,734
Parish Magazine (sales)	20	-	20
Church lettings: local community use	6,862	1,611	8,473
<i>Total 2024</i>	<u>19,616</u>	<u>1,611</u>	<u>21,227</u>

6. Analysis of expenditure by activities

	<b>Charitable Activities 2025 £</b>	<b>Total funds 2025 £</b>	<i>Total funds 2024 £</i>
Church Activities	118,691	<b>118,691</b>	124,922
Missionary and charitable giving - Overseas	2,229	<b>2,229</b>	5,037
Governance Costs	3,024	<b>3,024</b>	2,934
	<u>123,944</u>	<u><b>123,944</b></u>	<u>132,893</u>

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**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF WIVENHOE**

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025**

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**6. Analysis of expenditure by activities (continued)**

**Analysis of direct costs**

	<b>Church Activities 2025 £</b>	<b>Missionary and Charitable Giving Overseas 2025 £</b>	<b>Governance Costs 2025 £</b>	<b>Total funds 2025 £</b>
Relief and Development Agencies	-	820	-	820
Home Missions	-	942	-	942
Secular Charities	-	467	-	467
Ministry Costs: Diocesan Parish Share	78,401	-	-	78,401
Other Ministry Costs	2,773	-	-	2,773
Church Maintenance	6,794	-	-	6,794
Church Running Expenses	11,529	-	-	11,529
Upkeep of Services	2,433	-	-	2,433
Organ and Organists	1,297	-	-	1,297
Vergers	432	-	-	432
Parish Magazine Costs	2,579	-	-	2,579
Assigned Fees to the Diocese	4,324	-	-	4,324
Administration	7,732	-	-	7,732
Bank Charges	397	-	-	397
Independent Examiner's remuneration	-	-	3,024	3,024
	<u>118,691</u>	<u>2,229</u>	<u>3,024</u>	<u>123,944</u>

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**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF WIVENHOE**

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025**

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**6. Analysis of expenditure by activities (continued)**

**Analysis of direct costs (continued)**

	<i>Church Activities 2024 £</i>	<i>Missionary and Charitable Giving Overseas 2024 £</i>	<i>Governance Costs 2024 £</i>	<i>Total funds 2024 £</i>
Relief and Development Agencies	-	900	-	900
Home Missions	-	3,362	-	3,362
Secular Charities	-	775	-	775
Ministry Costs: Diocesan Parish Share	76,909	-	-	76,909
Other Ministry Costs	2,055	-	-	2,055
Church Maintenance	4,539	-	-	4,539
Church Running Expenses	15,659	-	-	15,659
Upkeep of Services	2,702	-	-	2,702
Organ and Organists	2,670	-	-	2,670
Vergers	690	-	-	690
Major Repairs: Structural Renewal	7,888	-	-	7,888
Parish Magazine Costs	2,785	-	-	2,785
Assigned Fees to the Diocese	4,966	-	-	4,966
Administration	3,560	-	-	3,560
Bank Charges	499	-	-	499
Including Independent Examiner's remuneration	-	-	2,934	2,934
	<u>124,922</u>	<u>5,037</u>	<u>2,934</u>	<u>132,893</u>

**7. Expenditure on raising funds**

**Generation of Voluntary Income**

	<b>Unrestricted funds 2025 £</b>	<b>Total funds 2025 £</b>	<i>Total funds 2024 £</i>
Fundraising costs	<u>9,225</u>	<u>9,225</u>	<u>7,706</u>

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PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF WIVENHOE

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

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7. Expenditure on raising funds (continued)

8. Independent examiner's remuneration

	2025 £	2024 £
Fees payable to the Charity's independent examiner for the independent examination of the Charity's annual accounts	<u>2,520</u>	<u>2,445</u>

9. Trustees' remuneration and expenses

During the year, no Trustees received any remuneration or other benefits (2024 - £NIL).

During the year ended 31 December 2025, expenses totalling £2593 were reimbursed or paid direct to 1 Trustee (2024 - £1,617 to 1 Trustee). These were in relation to the Trustees expenses incurred as their role as the incumbent.

10. Debtors

	2025 £	2024 £
<b>Debtors less than one year</b>		
Accrued income	927	-
Tax recoverable	<u>14,250</u>	<u>13,000</u>

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PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF WIVENHOE

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

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11. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2025 £	2024 £
Accruals and deferred income	<u>3,024</u>	<u>2,934</u>

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**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF WIVENHOE**

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025**

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**12. Statement of funds**

**Statement of funds - current year**

	Balance at 1 January 2025 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Balance at 31 December 2025 £
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>					
<b>Designated funds</b>					
Sunday Club	3,654	1,705	-	-	5,359
Designated legacy funds	42,246	3,047	-	(30,000)	15,293
Roof fund	-	-	-	60,000	60,000
Bell	-	-	-	12,245	12,245
Choir	-	-	-	800	800
Fabric - General	-	1,162	-	4,520	5,682
Flower	-	-	-	719	719
Maintenance	-	-	-	2,535	2,535
Organ	-	-	-	370	370
	<u>45,900</u>	<u>5,914</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>51,189</u>	<u>103,003</u>
<b>General funds</b>					
General	<u>108,846</u>	<u>123,946</u>	<u>(132,403)</u>	<u>(25,000)</u>	<u>75,389</u>
<b>Total Unrestricted funds</b>	<u>154,746</u>	<u>129,860</u>	<u>(132,403)</u>	<u>26,189</u>	<u>178,392</u>
<b>Restricted funds</b>					
Bell	12,245	-	-	(12,245)	-
Choir	800	-	-	(800)	-
Fabric - General	9,520	-	-	(9,520)	-
Fabric - Ashton Legacy	10,000	-	-	-	10,000
Flower	719	-	-	(719)	-
FOSM	10,490	1,374	(766)	-	11,098
Maintenance	2,535	-	-	(2,535)	-
Organ	370	-	-	(370)	-
Wiv St Mary's Music Society	1,032	-	-	-	1,032
	<u>47,711</u>	<u>1,374</u>	<u>(766)</u>	<u>(26,189)</u>	<u>22,130</u>

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PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF WIVENHOE

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

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12. Statement of funds (continued)

<b>Total of funds</b>	<b>202,457</b>	<b>131,234</b>	<b>(133,169)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>200,522</b>
	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>

The transfer of £26,189 from restricted funds reflects a funds review concluding that those balances have been internally earmarked to designated purposes rather than restricted.

The transfer of £60,000 to the designated roof fund reflects the Trustees decision to set aside £30,000 of legacy designated funds and £30,000 of general funds for the future roof project.

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**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF WIVENHOE**

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025**

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**12. Statement of funds (continued)**

**Statement of funds - prior year**

	<i>Balance at 1 January 2024 £</i>	<i>Income £</i>	<i>Expenditure £</i>	<i>Transfers in/out £</i>	<i>Balance at 31 December 2024 £</i>
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>					
<b>Designated funds</b>					
Designated legacy funds	40,000	2,246	-	-	42,246
Roof fund	2,779	875	-	-	3,654
	<u>42,779</u>	<u>3,121</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>45,900</u>
<b>General funds</b>					
General	<u>72,493</u>	<u>133,849</u>	<u>(140,034)</u>	<u>42,538</u>	<u>108,846</u>
<b>Total Unrestricted funds</b>	<u>115,272</u>	<u>136,970</u>	<u>(140,034)</u>	<u>42,538</u>	<u>154,746</u>
<b>Restricted funds</b>					
Bell	12,105	140	-	-	12,245
Choir	800	-	-	-	800
Fabric - General	4,964	-	-	4,556	9,520
Fabric - Ashton Legacy	10,000	-	-	-	10,000
Flower	719	-	-	-	719
FOSM	9,745	1,310	(565)	-	10,490
Maintenance	2,535	-	-	-	2,535
Transformation Project	40,663	-	-	(40,663)	-
Organ	370	-	-	-	370
Wiv St Mary's Music Society	4,645	2,818	-	(6,431)	1,032
	<u>86,546</u>	<u>4,268</u>	<u>(565)</u>	<u>(42,538)</u>	<u>47,711</u>
<b>Total of funds</b>	<u><u>201,818</u></u>	<u><u>141,238</u></u>	<u><u>(140,599)</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>202,457</u></u>



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**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF WIVENHOE**

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025**

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**13. Summary of funds**

**Summary of funds - current year**

	<b>Balance at 1 January 2025 £</b>	<b>Income £</b>	<b>Expenditure £</b>	<b>Transfers in/out £</b>	<b>Balance at 31 December 2025 £</b>
Designated funds	45,900	5,914	-	51,189	103,003
General funds	108,846	123,946	(132,403)	(25,000)	75,389
Restricted funds	47,711	1,374	(766)	(26,189)	22,130
	<u>202,457</u>	<u>131,234</u>	<u>(133,169)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>200,522</u>

**Summary of funds - prior year**

	<i>Balance at 1 January 2024 £</i>	<i>Income £</i>	<i>Expenditure £</i>	<i>Transfers in/out £</i>	<i>Balance at 31 December 2024 £</i>
Designated funds	42,779	3,121	-	-	45,900
General funds	72,493	133,849	(140,034)	42,538	108,846
Restricted funds	86,546	4,268	(565)	(42,538)	47,711
	<u>201,818</u>	<u>141,238</u>	<u>(140,599)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>202,457</u>

**14. Analysis of net assets between funds**

**Analysis of net assets between funds - current year**

	<b>Unrestricted funds 2025 £</b>	<b>Restricted funds 2025 £</b>	<b>Total funds 2025 £</b>
Current assets	181,416	22,130	203,546
Creditors due within one year	(3,024)	-	(3,024)
<b>Total</b>	<u>178,392</u>	<u>22,130</u>	<u>200,522</u>

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PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF WIVENHOE

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

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14. Analysis of net assets between funds (continued)

Analysis of net assets between funds - prior year

	<i>Unrestricted funds 2024 £</i>	<i>Restricted funds 2024 £</i>	<i>Total funds 2024 £</i>
Current assets	157,680	47,711	205,391
Creditors due within one year	(2,934)	-	(2,934)
<b>Total</b>	<b>154,746</b>	<b>47,711</b>	<b>202,457</b>

15. Related party transactions

During the year, Mary Jakens was paid fees in her role as Verger for a total of £252 (2024: £690). Rick Cawley was also paid fees in his role as Verger for a total of £60 (2024: £nil). Both Mary and Rick were Trustees during the year.

## **All Together Worship**

This year has been a busy year for the All Together team. Erwin took up his new role at St Barnabas in Od Heath so the 'All Together' team took on more of a role in leading the services. This has been a big learning curve for myself in how a service is structured and which parts can be lead by myself/or other members of the team/and young people. Erwin has been remarkably patient when I have made faux pas or misunderstood what he has wanted me to do.

Now that we have 'The Way group' this was a perfect opportunity to have more involvement with our older younger people in delivering the services. I was able to meet with 'The Way' before each of the 'All Together' services and the children could practise their part in the service as well as being able to include the Sunday club children too. I took on different roles presiding as well as preaching and reading. I have also tried to include different members of our congregation so that it is not just the young leading but an opportunity for members of the church to work together. This is something we are still developing and varies according to the focus of the service that month. Along with the All -Together services the team have lead both Harvest and Mothers' Day services which includes the involvement of the local schools. It has been wonderful to see the growing confidence and involvement in our young people who are I hope now able to feel fully part of St Mary's. The February 'All Together' Candlemas was well attended by our young people and their leaders and the congregation who fed back to me afterwards their very positive comments

Hannah Cole

## **Bellringers Report**

We have been ringing regularly for Sunday services and have held our Wednesday practice evenings each week. There has been the occasional Wednesday when the bells were silent, as several of us were away on holiday, or not available that day. We are pleased to report that bell ringing at St Mary's is still as strong and popular as ever and we have a good team of dedicated bell ringers, however we would always welcome some new faces. We do of course ring for weddings, a rather rare occurrence now, and tolling for funerals is also offered.

We have also participated in ringing for Wivenhoe community events. We rang to celebrate VE Day in May, welcomed St Nicholas to St Mary's in December, and for the great "Switching on of the Christmas Lights" ceremony as part of the Christmas Market.

During the year another returning bell ringer has joined us and is now a much valued and regular member of our team.

Our contact with the University of Essex is not as strong as last year, however the student who graduated last year is now part of our team, and she is proactive in trying to promote ringing to other students at the University.

Several of us regularly attend practices organised within our local District of bellringers, such as the Young Ringers for those aged under 25, and which facilitates progression for our younger members in their ringing career.

Some of us are also actively involved with assisting with training courses, run by the Essex Association of Change Ringers, which helps to continue the art of campanology.

It is over 25 years since the bells were restored, and there is some work that will need to be undertaken, the paintwork on the metal parts is starting to deteriorate and will need to be refreshed in the not-too-distant future. The bells themselves are not painted and are in good condition and are checked regularly for wear and tear.

Adrienne Wood

## **Café Chill**

We have been running the cafe in the annexe since 2022. It usually happens on the 3rd Sunday of the month directly following coffees after the service. We don't usually have one in March if it coincides with mothering Sunday, or December. The intention is to welcome members of the community into the annexe and provide a calm, friendly and affordable place for people to come on a Sunday afternoon. There is a book lending table with Christian themed books and CD's but

also a selection of novels and books of other interests. Music plays in the background and there are games provided for those who wish to play such as scrabble, Uno and chess. Hot drinks and cakes are on sale for £1 & £1.50. It is a warm place to come with free WiFi! All charges are technically a donation and no one will be turned away if they don't have quite enough or have forgotten their purse! The card donation machine is often used. Some days are quiet, others busy. In May we supported open gardens which was a busy one. Other than that, over the year we welcomed 78 people.

Donations of cakes are always welcome, see Teresa.

Teresa Warren

## Catering Report

This has been another successful year. In May we organised refreshments on the Saturday of Open Gardens with generous donations of cakes and again at the Summer Fair and ran a barbecue at Scruffs.

Tickets for our main events....Lammas Day Barbecue, Strawberry and Pimms Garden Party and Christmas Candlelit Supper all sold well, and it was good to see more young people attending.

A special thank you goes to the Wadley family for their very generous donation of small tea tables and for inviting us into their stunning garden for the Strawberry and Pimms event.

Another new addition to the catering calendar is breakfast, following communion on the first Sunday of the month, which is proving successful.

As always, we are in urgent need for more volunteers to help with events.

Susan Potter, Catering Team Leader

## Cleaning Team Report

The loyal members on the Church cleaning rota continue to work reliably and to a good standard. Unfortunately, owing to the loss of a number of these members throughout 2025, we have had to reduce the frequency of cleaning the Chancel to once a fortnight.

Clearly, the recruitment of more personnel would be helpful going forward.

Sandra Osborne

## Churches Together Wivenhoe

**24 March 2025**

### ***Appointment of Chairperson***

It was discussed that as it stands it is the turn of a member of the clergy to take the Chair.

Fr Erwin will contact the other Clergy by email (or raise at Ministers Fellowship Meeting) to see who would be willing to take on this role.

### ***Lent Lunch***

It was a great success, and it was felt that the more vigorous advertising paid dividends as there were lots more people attending. £200 was raised to be split between Cafod and Christian Aid

***Lent Film*** This event was also a success as those that did attend, although few in number, really did enjoy the very thought-provoking film 'The Rose of Auschwitz'

***Good Friday Walk of Witness*** - 18<sup>th</sup> April 2025 start time 10.30am.

***Good Friday Service*** at St. Monica's - 11am 18<sup>th</sup> April 2025

***Ten Commandments Artwork*** Florence Leader's artwork was displayed during Lent in St. Mary's.

***Pentecost Celebrations*** This will be held at St. Mary's in the Annex at 12noon on June 8<sup>th</sup> 2025. Cake and tea/coffee will be on offer and the CTW Covenant will be signed at this event.

***Celebration of 1700 years of the Nicene Creed*** An outdoor event was planned in the Park on 15<sup>th</sup> June in the afternoon

**Monday 19th May 2025**

***Appointment of Chairperson.*** Father Mark was appointed with Fr. Erwin willing to act as vice-Chairman if the need arises. Fr. Mark will take up this role at the next meeting.

**Why do we celebrate the Nicene Creed?** The Nicene Creed originally dates from the year 325 when it was agreed by the First Council of Nicaea. Part of the purpose of developing the creed was to give expression to the understanding of God as Trinity. This means that Christians believe in one God in three persons - Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Nicene Creed is the most widely accepted creed in the Christian faith, used by many denominations. It is a reminder of the common faith we share - both with Christians around the world today and throughout history with all those who have affirmed these words over the last seventeen centuries.

Hannah's Ordination will be at the end of June and we all extend our congratulations to her. Sara will be celebrating her last service in Wivenhoe on the 22<sup>nd</sup> June and will be Licensed to her new Parish on 22<sup>nd</sup> July and we also extend our congratulations to her.

#### **Monday 8th September 2025**

**Joint Christmas Card.** Phil Bingham agreed to coordinate the venture. It was decided that we should use the new design that Fr Erwin had been chasing for the front of the card.

It was agreed that the joint celebration held in the Annexe of St. Mary's to celebrate Pentecost was a great success bringing people together to meet existing friends and make new ones!

#### **Monday 17th November 2025**

##### **Remembrance Service**

This was a beautiful service. It was decided that next year we will have one wreath to represent Churches Together in Wivenhoe with one person chosen from the steering group to take it up flanked by representatives from each church.

It was also decided that Phil would collect donations, and we would donate to the British Legion as one. The Joint Christmas card has been printed, thanks to the hard work of Phil in collating all the information. Everyone agreed that the design of the card was beautiful and would certainly catch people's attention. It was agreed to send Lucy Wadley a thank you note.

The Guides agreed to take on the huge job of delivering the cards to each home in Wivenhoe and we all expressed our thanks. Tom had taken tubs of sweets to give the Guides as a token of our appreciation.

**Carols on the Quay** will be held on December 21<sup>st</sup> 6pm (at St Mary's if we have inclement weather!) Risk assessment and Insurance was raised, and Fr Erwin explained that this is why it is put forward as an event organised by St. Mary's in partnership with Churches Together in Wivenhoe so that it is covered by their insurance and risk assessments.

This will be preceded by an acting out of the Nativity around the town starting at 4pm

After a presentation given by Lucy Stevens about the work that the charity Growing Hope does it was enthusiastically decided to take this on as our local charity to support with the money raised at the Carols on the Quay event. It was also decided because there is much work to be done, to continue supporting Embrace the Middle East as our international charity.

#### **Dates for 2026 to note in diaries**

**Lent Lunch** - Wednesday 25th February at the Methodist Church 12 Noon

**Lent Film** - Friday 13th March 7.30pm at St. Mary's - 'Bonhoeffer'

**Bible Course** - Starts 24<sup>th</sup> February 8 sessions Tuesdays 7-9pm St. Mary's Annexe.

**Good Friday Walk of Witness** - 3<sup>rd</sup> April start time 10.30am.

**Good Friday Service** Congregational Church - 11am 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2026

**Pentecost Celebrations** - at St. Mary's in the Annexe at 12.15pm on May 24<sup>th</sup> 2026.

## **Environmental Report**

During the past year at St Marys we are working towards forming an Environmental Policy to declare the Church's commitment to engage with creation and take action to address climate change and protect the environment. The policy will be shared with the church when it has been agreed in the next few months. Within the policy are targets for the church collectively to strive towards.

The policy is the first step for St Marys to participate in the Eco Church award scheme. St Marys has registered for Eco Church which uses surveys to identify how current practices in the church support the commitment to care for and protect the Earth. The surveys are currently being

completed and St Marys is aiming to achieve the bronze award as a starting level for the Eco Church award.

Jane Taylor

## Film Night

Once a month on a Tuesday at 7pm, we host a small friendly film night in the Annexe. We ask for a small suggested donation of £2.50 towards refreshments. The film starts no later than 7.15pm. We aim to have films with subtitles. Films include a variety of themes including those about faith, true stories, inspiring films or ones to make you think, laugh or cry! In 2025 we had 56 people attending.

The films were- Fireproof, One life, Phantom of the open, The List King, Soul Surfer, Goodnight Mister Tom The Five People you meet in Heaven, Finding your feet, The Green book, and King of Kings.

Teresa Warren

## Flower Report

We have had a busy year with ambitious displays for Easter, Open Gardens, Harvest and Christmas. Because flowers are becoming increasingly expensive we aim to keep the displays going for as long as possible. It is estimated that St. Mary's has benefitted from about £800 worth of flowers over the year. This is not reflected in the Church Accounts, as significant donations of flowers have been made, some by the flower team, and on various occasions for family celebrations and in memory of loved ones.

When appropriate, flowers are purchased from Andy, at Creative Flowers, Stanley Road, Bodsworth Flowers (Lawford) and recently from a dried flower supplier, who grows them in Ardeleigh, but lives in Wivenhoe.

For two week-ends of the year we benefited from thought provoking Remembrance displays from the RBL and the WI.

The young, and the not so young, again enjoyed Hilary Wadley's imaginative displays around the font for Easter, Harvest and Christmas.

Our team is diminishing, and sadly this year, we unexpectedly said 'good-bye' to Tim, Gill's partner, who regularly supplied us with greenery from his garden and joined us in church for coffee. Gill and Carol Mitchell did some very appropriate flowers for his funeral both inside the church and in the porch, which lasted several weeks and were donated by Gill.

Sue Potter has deserted us for Lavenham and Trish is no longer able to help us on a regular basis.

As we move into 2026 with a much reduced team we hope others will join us.

Jen, Gill, Hilary W and Margaret

## Friendly Club & Café

### The Friendly Club

We celebrated the Friendly Club's 4<sup>th</sup> birthday in August. As is usual, we had about 40 paying members every week who each pay £2 per session. This is split 50/50 with half going to the Church and the other half retained by the Friendly Club towards the cost of refreshments, including biscuits, cost of paying entertainers and weekly hire of the 'Munty' bus. During the 2025 year, the Church's share of the door takings was £1,903.

There are quite a few people we expect to see every week, and then there are a lot who come every now and again. If everyone came who has ever come in the last year or so, we would have over 90 people present.



We are grateful to our wonderful team of some 30 volunteers, many of whom come every week, and who run the reception desk, or make and serve unlimited mugs of tea and coffee during our Thursday afternoons, and some who just sit at tables and encourage the chatter.

We are all extremely grateful to Morag Willis who continues to be willing to drive the 'Munty' bus for us to collect a full bus load of people each week. Sadly, Ann Hanagan felt the need to give up assisting Morag each week on health grounds, whilst a friend of Morag's, Jane Annear, or Amanda Francis, a regular volunteer, take it in turns to help her.

Jan Sinclair has now put together a small group to focus on ensuring we have some entertainment every month, as well as people like Joe from the Microgym to get everybody doing some simple exercises for half an hour every month. Margaret Miller and Stella Amos regularly help Jan Sinclair to also play the piano so that at each session we always have music.

We often have quizzes at which we generally get people who sit at the various tables to complete the questions as a team; this encourages people to talk to each other.

It is sad when someone dies, and there do seem to have been lots of people who we have lost in the last 12 months. In some ways, that is inevitable when we have so many older people who come to the Friendly Club.

We do seem to get someone new people turn up at each of our sessions which is obviously a good sign.

The Wivenhoe Dementia Support Group which, with the PCC, is a joint sponsor of the Friendly Club. It had a third attempt to become a registered charity mid-2025 but the Charity Commission pointed out that whilst we assisted people with dementia and their carers, we weren't exclusively helping those people and therefore declined to agree to our application. We have since agreed we did not want to make any changes to what we do to help people in Wivenhoe or to raise money for The Alzheimer's Society.

The Committee of the Dementia Support Group also sponsors the mobile phone costs of Diane Kilgour and Bev Strutt who have a phone that people can call to seek help or advice. Both of these ladies come to the Friendly Club sessions to get to know our members. They also vet the homes of people who call Morag wanting a lift to make sure there are no undue risks to collecting these people. They also make visits to people to offer help and advice, and in the last year have helped about 25 people.

Peter Hill, Chair, Wivenhoe Dementia Support Group, joint sponsors with St Mary's Church PCC of the Friendly Club & Café.

## **Friends of St Mary's Report**

FOSM has had another steady year of sales. We took our table to the Nearly New Sale followed by the June Market and then to Church on Regatta Day before moving on to Scruffs and finally the Christmas Market. Each event had its own flavour and was very enjoyable.

My sincere thanks to Maureen, Enid and Jane who helped. Thanks also go to Wyvern Stores who have a constant supply of FOSM goods for sale.

Vivien and Bill Eborn

## **Fundraising Report**

This past year we took on a new challenge in the spring of introducing a **PRE-LOVED EVENT** in April. This was mostly aimed at Books and Clothing. The number of items that showed up on the day was truly amazing and the feedback was good. More tables for St Mary's were needed. Can we do one for Babies and Children's Items? Therefore, at the time of writing we are working on putting together another such event for 2026, aimed at this time for items for Babies and small children Key Stage 2 (up to 12 years of age).

**THE JUNE MARKET.** 7<sup>th</sup> June. This year we had the Peter Terry doing a most excellent job of developing the Garden Stall and raised an extraordinary amount for St Mary's. We also had the town mayor in attendance, Jon Guy, who was very good at meeting and greeting the stall holders as well as the amazing folk from Wivenhoe and the surrounding villages. This was also the first

time we tried the use of Hampers instead of lots and lots of Raffle Prizes. This proved to be a big hit; and we have continued to produce some amazing Hampers at each event, thanks to the generosity of the Wivenhoe folk.

It had to happen. Rain. **LAMMAS DAY** on 19<sup>th</sup> July, but it did not damp the spirit of those attending and it turned out to be a marvelous and happy occasion. Susan Potter and her team arranged all the food and the BBQ, Nick Gustard did his traditional curry (and veg Curry) with rice which was very welcome on such a day. Umbrellas did not stay up for long. The Lammas day loaf arrived on time and was blessed by Rev Erwin. Although the event was not advertised as a fund raiser, we sold a lot of tickets for the event to have knowledge of numbers expected, this was really welcomed by the whole parish of St Mary's.

Next up came **SCRUFFS DOG EVENT** on 6<sup>th</sup> September. This too had become an annual event even before and after C19. Although the number of dogs registering was down, the footfall was down and the number of stalls promoting dog items was also down. Once we had the 'wash-up' meeting it was decided not to run this event for the following year. This gave us scope to develop a new type of fundraising event to be planned; so, ideas are still welcome please.

The very next day, 7<sup>th</sup> September, I saw the sun shining and we celebrated the end of summer with a **STRAWBERRIES AND PIMMS EVENT**. We also celebrated the notable birthday of our organist Graham Wadley. Sadly, our much-used double gazebo needed an emergency repair which was carried out on the spot to save the day; replacement parts have now been purchased. Strawberries and pimm's was a wonderful event for families and friends. This was also supported by the local Madrigal singers who sang a special song just for Graham. The Wadley family kindly allowed us to use their back garden for this amazing event, which really did pull together so many from the community as well as those who know Graham.

The annual **CHRISTMAS MARKET** was tough going as the cold dark rain loomed again. The previous two years we had faced strong winds and storms and only just survived with no injuries or damage to stock. Naturally, everyone wanted to be inside the church and Annex. Bookings were soon taken up and the waiting list developed. We did have two hardy stall holders braving the rain. The health and safety officer was keen to make sure they were secured and well lit up. They both reported good takings and worth their efforts. Inside it was very busy and trading was fast. Again, the Madrigal singers performed for us and a certain Mr Santa Claus also dropped in to receive letters from the children. The queue to enter the church was amazing and it was pleasing to see all the hard work come into fruition. The gift stall was redesigned for a faster set up and this worked very well indeed, thanks again to Peter and Sandra Terry. The total sum raised was excellent.

We have also now developed an audit of skills database for helpers; this has already proved useful and will continue to do so in the year ahead.

Heather Edwards, Fundraising Team Leader

## Lectio Divina Report

Lectio Divina is a small group meeting at 7, West Quay on the last Wednesday of each month at 7.30pm.

Those attending take it in turn monthly, and prior to the meeting ,to choose a passage of Scripture. This is then read several times at the meeting and people are invited to comment on how the passage relates to their life and what they have learnt from it. Prayer, silent or spoken, relating to comments made , closes the evening.

Erwin shares Communion with the group at Easter and Christmas. This is a joyful occasion and much appreciated.

If you are interested in joining the group please speak to Erwin.

Blessings. Ann Evershed.



## Men's Group

WATER RAIL MENS GROUP. We have had a very good year, although we have not done very much except talk. This has helped with our relationships of course. We did have one day out to bowling at Clacton which Erwin attended. It was interesting to see the reactions of the players, and notice that there was no obvious triumphalism if you know what I mean. Numbers have remained steady at six having gained one this year. We look forward to 2026 and pray for our friends, and those that might join us. As before we remain open for ideas from anyone as to things to do, let's hope for a good summer.

Chris Amos

## Music at St Mary's Report

A year of difficulty as we struggled with my health issues, but greatly supported by various people we managed to keep the music going. Special thanks to Hilary Cook and John Dowden who have been a great support and covering sometimes unpredictable requirements.

Sunday services have continued largely as normal, but with more occasional use of the piano particularly at the All Together Services. John Dowden has played the organ regularly and Hilary Cook and Geoff Osborne have covered with the piano.

Two Taize services were held with thanks to the instrumentalists who join to make these services so meaningful – Hilary, Nina, Karen and Jonny.

St Mary's Singers presented high standard programmes of music for Good Friday and Remembrance, the latter being rehearsed and conducted by Hilary Cook. John Dowden accompanied the rehearsals and the soloists were drawn from within the group. John Rippin as always accompanied on the night and added some organ pieces to the programmes.

Attendance for the Remembrance event was very poor and this needs to be considered for the SMS Autumn event in 2026.

SMS led the Carol Service which had a good mix of congregational and choir carols. Sir John Rutter, now in his 80<sup>th</sup> year, is always popular.

Inclement weather impacted on Carols on The Quay which moved to the church with still a large attendance. Geoff Osborne conducted the band and Pam Garland arranged the music with great support from the many instrumentalists who regularly form The Band.

Johnson Organ Builders did a very thorough job for their first tuning of the organ since taking over from Peter de Ville.

Thanks to everyone who supported our musical efforts through the last difficult year.

Graham Wadley, Director of Music

## Open Gardens

Open Gardens 2025 was held over the weekend of 17<sup>th</sup> /18<sup>th</sup> May. We had nice weather that weekend and in consequence we had 730 visitors go around the 33 gardens. Some of the gardeners also provided nice teas which contributed to the £1,099 made from refreshments, of which half came from the selling of refreshments by a team at the Church.

A further £660 was made from the sale of plants, books, plus commissions on paintings of £130 which Jonathan Hawkins from the Old Grocer gallery generously donated to the fund.

So, the weekend grossed £5,422 and after expenses of £422, we were able to declare a net profit of £5,000. This sum was split 50/50 with The Wivenhoe Society, which shared it with 26 Wivenhoe organisations, and the Church's Fabric Fund.

All of the money was given out at a Garden Party at Toad Hall held 10<sup>th</sup> August and attended by the organising team, many of the gardeners and organisations receiving money.

Peter Hill, Chair, Wivenhoe Open Gardens

**OPEN GARDENS 2025**

Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> May / Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> May



## Pastoral Report

Under the Guidance of Erwin Lammens and leadership of Gill Strudwick.

Supported by Volunteers Jackie Hopkins and Chris Amos. At our last meeting of the group on February 3<sup>rd</sup>. 2026, our team confirmed that they can be identified by wearing a purple lanyard when visiting people in their home. Unfortunately, since my last annual report Mary and Rosie have had to leave the group due to health reasons.

In the October Tidings an article 'Looking after Each Other' included a section about our Pastoral group and our work in the community. It highlighted that I was stepping down from my role as leader of this group but that I would be willing to support the person who volunteers. At this point in time no person has volunteered but I am still leading the group until May 2026. We are also looking for volunteers to help as part of the team.

At our meetings I share confidential information with Erwin and the group and try to keep everyone up to date with the agencies that can help vulnerable people. Many people live in our community without their family nearby to support them.

I volunteer at the Friendly Club where lonely people and those with dementia are welcome. Members of the pastoral group are also involved with other groups helping vulnerable people in our community.

Our next meeting is on Tuesday May 5<sup>th</sup> at 2.30pm at the Rectory. Please come along if you are interested in our work.

Gill Strudwick

## St Mary's Link with Uganda

St Mary's has a link with the equivalent of the Women's Institute in Namalemba. Through them those in need are identified. Rachel Butterfield and her partner Livingstone who live in Kenya are our contact point. Rachel is originally from Tiptree in Essex and Livingstone has relatives in Namalemba and so the links are strong and the accountability for all funds sent to them are impeccable.

The Christmas Charity 2024 donations from St. Mary's were sent in two amounts. The second was sent in early 2025. As a result, Livingstone took a live chicken and 2kg of maize (corn) seeds, and 2kg of bean seeds to each of the families in March 2025. This helps the beneficiaries to plant and grow a harvest over the rainy months both for subsistence and selling, as well as having the chicken to rear for eggs and meat in the future. In 2025 Namalemba was again the Christmas Charity and with the first tranche of money basins of blessings were distributed just before Christmas. The basins contained luxuries such as pasta, fresh goats meat, cooking oil, and other staples. A series of photographs showing the recipients of the food and live stock was shown to the congregation before the morning service in the March and November.

Heather Edwards was our conduit to Rachel but has recently stepped down and a replacement is sought. If anyone is interested in taking on this task please speak to The Rector or PCC Secretary.

## St Mary's Music Society

During 2025 we organised 6 concerts of a varied nature and provided a wine bar for the concert arranged by the group, Opus Anglicanum. This concert was amazing and they sold out several weeks ahead of the concert date; in the end they sold tickets for the choir stalls at half price because of the restricted view these people would get.

These varied concerts have ranged from a very successful Sea Shanty evening with three groups, to an ABBA tribute band which made a reasonable profit.

From these 6 concerts, plus profits on the sale of wines, we made a net profit of £2,066 after paying £250 fees to PRS and £167 to Making Music for public liability insurance.

The net profit is a contribution towards the Fabric Fund of the Church.

My thanks go to the team of helpers who help on the night of each concert in various ways.

Peter Hill, Chair, Wivenhoe St Mary's Music Society.



## **Sunday Club Report**

The Sunday club is supported and run by 7 volunteers. Teresa is the co-ordinator and is joined by Hannah, Ceri, Louise, Cora Marise and Sue. Marise joined the team at the end of the year and we said farewell to a previous volunteer, Heather.

The Sunday club continues to grow and we have a core group of regular children. Some new additions have filled the gaps as the older ones have started to attend The Way instead. We are gradually developing the toys and resources and introducing a variety of activities rather than only arts and crafts. Our annual Easter workshop took place and was well attended. It started with a short Easter film and plenty of activities for the children including free refreshments in the Annexe. The Nativity play was put together by Hannah and Hilary with Sue, and other volunteers supporting. It was followed by a party in the annexe where Marise took the lead on games before we served up party food. All children received a gift bag. On Sunday 28th December in the afternoon we used the large screen for a family screening of 'King of Kings'.

For the year ahead we are going to organise Sunday club by using a visual timetable with the children to help with consistency of the routine and their understanding of what we are doing. We will be having 2 young leaders helping from The Way and will be updating our toys and resources in the Sunday club corner too. To make contact or share ideas please email Teresa [wivstmaryssundayclub@gmail.com](mailto:wivstmaryssundayclub@gmail.com)

We hope for more children and volunteers to join us in 2026.

Teresa Warren

## **The Way Report**

The Way has experienced change throughout 2025 with new leaders, day and time. This has been challenging but has also led to new and exciting things to come.

Our group has a regular 7 to 12 members which we have been building on with some new members joining too.

We have been raising money for the church but also for the young people themselves to use towards activities they wish to do as a team. This has meant that they have raised enough money so far to book a laser quest party which will be arranged for early 2026!!

The members have been creative but also have had team building games to help bring them together as a whole avoiding groups who always stick together.

Looking ahead we plan to get out into the community helping with the church grounds and also litter picking within Wivenhoe.

We have introduced times to talk about what meaning of words like "faith" "worship" and "prayer" mean to the young people hoping to answer questions they have about anything to do with the church and life as a whole.

My team and the young people are looking forward to 2026 so we can expand and have a real presence on the community and the church.

Kerry Rooke

## **Wivenhoe Baby & Toddler Group Report**

The Wivenhoe Toddler Group has enjoyed another successful year, although attendance numbers have still fluctuated over the course of the year. We would like more families to join us, as rising costs mean that some weeks, we do not cover our outgoings. We have chosen again, not to increase the weekly attendance fee, as we are committed to keeping the group accessible to everyone.

Each session follows the same format. Activities include role play, construction, craft, a dedicated book corner, and baby area caters for a range of ages and interests. We continue to provide snacks for the children and hot drinks for the adults, creating a sociable and comfortable atmosphere. Sessions conclude with a singing time, which is always enjoyed by all attendees.

Our annual summer party, held in the Rectory garden, was a success and was very well attended. Similarly, our Christmas party, held in the hall, made a fitting end to the year.

In January, Judy Murray and Christine Ward joined the leadership team, which is greatly appreciated but sadly, one of our stalwart helpers, Alison Marshall has now had to leave us after many years due to work commitments, and she will be greatly missed by us all. We do have four ladies who help on a rota with the refreshments, which helps keep the group running smoothly. The group is open to everyone; it is not solely for mothers. We are pleased to welcome several grandparents who bring their grandchildren, a few fathers, and a couple of childminders, reflecting the diversity of our community.

Looking ahead, we hope that attendance numbers remain steady, as it is vital for the ongoing viability of the group. We firmly believe that the Wivenhoe Toddler Group continues to be an asset to the town, and we are committed to ensuring it remains a valued part of the community for many years to come.

Vanessa Reed

## **Worship Group Report**

Bible based preaching and teaching, liturgy, prayer and worship are in the DNA of St Mary's. A large group of volunteers support Sunday and midweek services and occasional pastoral services such as baptisms, weddings and funerals.

We have seen a growing number of young people on Sundays, from toddlers and primary school age children, to teenagers and University students. The missing generation of adults in their 30s and 40s is now represented by a small but noteworthy group who joined during the year.

Young people are catered for by the Sunday Club and The Way leaders. After the service the coffee team brews a nice cuppa or prepares breakfast on first Sundays, when we have Communion at 9am and All Together at 11am.

We continue to offer a pattern of worship with diverse services: BCP Communion and Evensong, Common Worship morning prayer (Matins) and Eucharist, All Together, midweek reflection and services at special occasions including civic and joint Churches Together services. For the Bible lessons we follow the Lectionary as much as we can and observe the major festivals in the church calendar. Prayers and readings are prepared and read by volunteers.

Our musical tradition is supported by our small but invaluable Sunday choir. Our director of music and organist Graham Wadley oversees the musical aspect of Sunday worship and organises the programme for Remembrance Sunday and Good Friday St Mary's Singers. John Dowden and Hilary Cook have occasionally covered for Graham on the organ or piano. In September we celebrated Graham's 60<sup>th</sup> year on the organ at St Mary's. This must be a record.

Because of our Rector's new appointment at St Barnabas' Old Heath as priest-in-charge our pattern and service times had to change from 1 July. Statistics show that the new times for Sunday services have attracted more people.

Worship is not just the responsibility of the Rector, Associate Priest, Reader, Authorised Local Preacher, prayer leaders at the 7 past 7, organists, pianists and choir members, churchwardens and vergers. All of us have the responsibility to create a prayerful atmosphere and a welcoming ethos at the church services.

Despite the group of volunteers, the many Sunday rotas still have a few gaps which need to be filled. We hope that in 2026 people may come forward to join one of the rotas or the choir. With everyone's help we will be able to continue to celebrate, pray and worship God in the Parish church of Wivenhoe.