



ST MARY WITH ST LEONARD, BROOMFIELD ANNUAL REVIEW 2021

The Annual Parochial Church Meeting is scheduled to take place on Sunday 20th March 2022.

It is planned that the meeting will take place following the 9.30am service.
The Vestry Meeting (for the election of Wardens) will be followed by the APCM.

Whether these can go ahead as planned will depend upon COVID guidelines in place at the time.

CONTENTS:

- Annual Report of the Parochial Church Council
- Financial Review
- Vicar's Report
- Church Fabric Report
- Electoral Roll Report
- NCMMP Report
- Deanery Synod Report
- Worship & Ministry Reports
- Supporting Worship Reports
- The Wider Church Reports

Whereas every effort has been made to include all the activities in the life of St. Mary's Church within this Annual Review, there may be some omissions. We apologise for these and they are in no way deliberate. However, we hope that you will agree that this review gives a flavour of the many diverse groups that are active within the parish to promote our worship of God and to proclaim the Good News in the wider community.

Carol Knott
(PCC Secretary)

Contents

		Page Number
1	PCC report	3
2	Financial report	14
3	Independent Examiner's report	22
4	Vicar's report	23
5	Churchwardens' report	24
6	Electoral Roll report	25
7	NCMMP report	26
8	Deanery Synod report	26
9	Associate Priest's report	28
10	Curate's report	28
11	Authorised Local Preacher's report	29
12	Servers	30
13	Intercessions Group	30
14	Pastoral Care and Visiting Team	30
15	Rutherford Project	31
16	Eco Church	32
17	Wednesday Bible Group (1)	32
18	Wednesday Bible Group (2)	33
19	Little Lambs	33
20	Friends with Faith	33
21	Puppet Crew	34
22	Church Music	34
23	St. Mary's Bell Ringers	35
24	Bible Reading Fellowship	35
25	Church Website	36
26	Safeguarding	36
27	Film and Lunch Club	37
28	Lunch and Laughter	37
29	Beetle Drive	37
30	Tuesday Churchyard Working Party	38
31	St. Mary's Ladies Group	39
32	Children's Society	39
33	Christian Aid	40
34	Flower Arrangers	40
35	Round Tower	41

Annual Report of the Parochial Church Council
for the year ended 31 December 2021

1. Administrative Information

St. Mary with St. Leonard is a parish church and part of the Diocese of Chelmsford, within the Church of England. The correspondence address is The Vicarage, 10 Butlers Close, Chelmsford, CM1 7BE. St. Mary with St. Leonard is part of the North Chelmsford Mission and Ministry Partnership (NCMMP). The NCMMP was formed in 2016 to enable its member churches to work together and support each other in mission and ministry to every community in the Partnership area. The Partnership comprises 11 churches across 8 benefices within the Diocese of Chelmsford: Boreham, Broomfield, Great Leighs, Little Leighs and Little Waltham, Great Waltham with Ford End, the Chignalls with Mashbury, North Springfield, Pleshey and Springfield All Saints. More about the NCMMP is contained in the North Chelmsford Mission & Ministry Report included later in this Annual Review.

As from 23rd May 2017 St. Mary's PCC became a charity in its own right under the title "The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of St. Mary with St. Leonard, Broomfield" with the charity number of 1173143.

PCC members who have served from 1 January 2021 are:

<i>Incumbent:</i>	Rev'd. Carolyn Tibbott	(Chair)
<i>Associate Priests:</i>	Rev'd. Diana Garfield	
<i>Curate:</i>	Rev'd. Dawn Butcher	(From September 2021)
<i>Authorised Local Preacher:</i>	Andrew Mussell	(From February 2021)
<i>Wardens:</i>	Susan Garwood	(Re-elected March 2021)
	Andrew Mussell	(Elected March 2021)
<i>Representatives on the Deanery Synod:</i>	Ros Mercer	
	Kathy Rouse	
	Jill Readings	(Lay Co-Chair of Deanery Synod)
<i>Other PCC members:</i>	Sue Browning	
	Rachel Butterworth	
	Sarah Clark	(Press Officer)
	Lis Hardy	(Parish Safeguarding Representative; and NCMMP Representative from April 2021)
	Carol Knott	(Hon. Secretary)
	Alun Powell	(Hon. Treasurer)
	Trudy Stevens	(Minutes Secretary)
	Jim Tibbott	
	Karen Paxton	
	Yvonne Heaver	
	Charlotte Dodsworth	(Elected March 2021)

2. 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 method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. All church attendees are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and may stand for election to the PCC. As St. Mary with St. Leonard's Church has Charity Status, all PCC members become Trustees.

The PCC generally meets bi-monthly and members are responsible for making decisions on all matters of general concern and importance to the parish, including deciding how the funds of the PCC are to be spent. The PCC has a Standing Committee to progress decisions agreed by the PCC.

There is a funding group responsible for reporting back to the PCC and referring to it for any decisions that need to be approved. The Funding Group is a small group of PCC members that focuses on fundraising and applying for grants for repairs to the fabric of the church and the grounds. It is composed of: Rev'd. Diana Garfield, Alun Powell, Rachel Butterworth and Trudy Stevens. The work on the organ to be fully re-leathered and cleaned began on 28th December 2021. Details of the funding for this are contained in the Treasurer's Financial Report. In November 2021 we received the exciting news of a grant offered by the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) awarded for the conservation of the Rutherford fresco as centrepiece to a heritage project for learning, conservation and well-being. The fresco is a wall painting of considerable significance by the war-time artist Rosemary Rutherford, situated in the ringing chamber of the tower. This money, together with money from a bequest and fundraising efforts, means we have sufficient promised funds to begin the project in April 2022. More details about the funding of the project are contained in the Treasurer's Financial Report and more details about what the project entails can be found in the separate Rutherford Project report later in this review.

The full PCC met seven times during the year, during the first half of the year these meetings took place online via Zoom and then in person from October, with an average level of attendance of 78%; a slight decrease of 10% on 2020. The Standing Committee met on five occasions, again via Zoom during the first half of the year and in-person from September 2021.

During 2021 the majority of PCC time was spent discussing and making decisions on: how we could continue to serve the community whilst adhering to Church of England guidelines and Government legislation and guidance on Covid-19 restrictions and ensuring that St Mary's remained Covid-safe; ensuring compliance with regulations and guidance from the Diocese; finances; making decisions on repairs and maintenance of the church building and grounds; funding for the works required to the organ and the Rutherford project which includes repairs to the spire and tower; becoming an Eco church; and considering ideas for future mission and ministry within the NCMMP (North Chelmsford Mission and Ministry Partnership).

3. Aims and purposes

St. Mary with St. Leonard's PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent, the Rev'd. Carolyn Tibbott, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. The PCC is also specifically responsible for the maintenance of St. Mary's Church; St. Leonard's Hall attached to the Church; and Broomfield Churchyard.

4. 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. Mary's. The PCC maintains an overview of worship and contributes to discussions on how our services, groups and activities can involve and meet the needs of the diverse

groups of people that live within our parish. We are always looking for new opportunities to worship God and build fellowship in this Church.

In particular, we try to enable ordinary people to live out their faith as part of our parish community through:

- Worship and prayer, learning about the gospel, developing their knowledge and trust in Jesus;
- Provision of pastoral care for people living in the parish;
- Missionary and outreach work.

To facilitate this work, it is important that we maintain the fabric of the church of St. Mary's and its associated buildings and land.

Many of the groups and activities usually undertaken at St Mary's which were affected by the Covid-19 pandemic managed to re-commence in September 2021. During the year we continued to seek innovative ways to continue offering worship, prayer, pastoral support and to maintain our church fellowship despite the challenges. The following reports demonstrate what was achieved.

5. Achievements and performance

Worship and prayer

Since Rev'd. Carolyn and Rev'd. Diana were licensed as Associate Priests to neighbouring parishes in April 2021, to assist other churches within the North Chelmsford Mission & Ministry Partnership (NCMMP), it has been necessary to make changes to some of our worship provision. We offer a range of services, both on Sundays and during the week. A calendar of all services and other events is made available in the Round Tower parish magazine, on St. Mary's website, and advertised on our Facebook page.

Our regular Sunday worship usually follows the pattern: a 9.30am service in church, mostly these are Parish Eucharist services; one Sunday a month there is an 8am BCP Holy Communion service in church, followed by a 9.30am Family service; one Sunday a month there is a 5.30pm sung Evening Prayer service in church, with Evening Prayer online on the other Sundays.

Our regular weekday pattern of worship includes: 9am Morning Prayer in church on Tuesdays and Thursdays; a weekly Thursday morning Thanksgiving Eucharist and on one Wednesday a month a 10.30am mid-week Eucharist in church. However, repair works to the organ began on 28th December 2021 and will be ongoing until Easter 2022 and whilst this work is ongoing Tuesday and Thursday Morning Prayer are not always able to be held in church. Wednesday mid-week Eucharist will be held in St. Leonard's Hall. Thursday mid-week Eucharist has been suspended until Easter.

Worship was regularly uploaded to our website and our Facebook page throughout 2021 and this will continue for the foreseeable future.

We usually have two bible classes weekly, both on Wednesdays. One, entitled 'Baffled by the Bible', is run by Rev'd. Diana at 1.45pm in St. Leonard's Hall. The other is held at a church family member's house or garden. Our Friends with Faith group is a bible study group catering for parents and carers of children of all ages. These did manage to carry on, or re-commence, in one form or another during 2021 and a report from each is included later in this review.

The electoral roll numbers declined slightly during 2021. The estimated number of people in our 'worshipping community' as at the end of 2021 was as follows (the numbers in brackets show the figures as at 2020, for comparison): Total 147 (173); Children age 0-10 yrs: 23 (22); young people age 11-17

yrs: 11 (4); Adults aged 18-69 yrs: 38 (55); and adults age 70+: 75 (92). Happily, there were 18 Baptisms and 3 couples married in church during 2021.

St Mary's offers Festival and other special services at various times through the year including Holy Week, Easter, Harvest Festival, at Christmas and Christingle. We take opportunities to share worship with other organisations, including the local Primary School, and partner with the uniformed organisations on Remembrance Sunday.

We usually include in this report statistics on average Sunday attendance during the year and numbers attending Easter and Advent services; and in the past have shown comparisons with the previous year. Because both 2020 and 2021 were extraordinary years, owing to the pandemic, such comparisons are not appropriate. Social distancing rules restricted numbers who could attend services during 2021 and some of our church members and village residents remain cautious of being in an inside environment with others. Nevertheless, some in-person services were held at Easter and Advent in 2021. The total number of people attending worship at Easter was 56. The number attending for special services from Advent Sunday until 23rd December, e.g. the village Carol service and school nativity services, was 262. The total number of people attending worship on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day was 196.

Ecumenical relationships

St. Mary's has a Covenant with Broomfield Methodist Church with whom we would usually share some ministry and meet with about three times a year to plan our work together. The Lutheran Church have not met here since the Covid Pandemic began. It is unlikely to resume meeting here since the sad death of Michael Jones who used to host the Lutheran Church Services here.

Gracie has been a member of the Diocesan Youth Synod since it began. She has faithfully served the church and shown a level of commitment and wisdom beyond her years. However, as Gracie is now starting her GCSE's she has decided to take a break from the Youth Synod. We would like to thank Gracie for all she has done for the Youth across the churches in the Diocese.

Mission and evangelism

Our aim as a Christian Church in this community is to make Christ's love known to everyone. We enable this through teaching, worship, bible study and discipleship groups; through baptisms; services and groups for parents with babies and young children; and through groups that give opportunities for fellowship for young and older people alike.

Many of our fellowship groups were able to start up again and meet in person during 2021: St. Mary's Ladies Group, the Film & Lunch Club, the Lunch & Laughter group and the Beetle Drive group are all held once a month. All the meetings, when they are running, are listed in the Round Tower parish magazine and on the church website. You will find reports from these groups contained in this review.

As the country was in lockdown for the first months of 2021 and the Diocese guided us to take our worship online it was not possible to offer our usual Lent Bible Study series. The Diocesan online lent courses were advertised in the parish Round Tower magazine. The 'Baffled by the Bible' group, led by Rev'd. Diana spent time during Lent studying and appreciating the Book of Psalms.

With respect to St. Mary's work with children, families and young people, there is a family service one Sunday a month. Fortnightly Fun Faith sessions via Zoom, a kind of 'Sunday School at home' were started in January 2021 at 4pm on Tuesdays and ran until end of May when demand dried up as children went back to school. It gave young families an opportunity to sing together, pray together and learn more about the Christian faith together; work sheets and colouring sheets were sent out via email. Rev'd. Carolyn has continued to include Fun Faith activity sheets in her regular E-pistle newsletter emails. Our Friends with Faith group, catering for parents and carers of children of all ages, continued meeting

throughout 2021: via Zoom for the early part of the year and then from September were able to meet again in person - a report from this group is included later in this review. From June our Little Lambs support group for parents/grandparents/carers with pre-school aged children began meeting weekly again on Thursday mornings in St Leonard's Hall. The Puppet Crew re-started in September, meeting on Wednesday evenings at 7pm in St. Leonard's Hall - they perform at some family services and on other special occasions. Again, reports from these two groups can be found later in this review. It is always a joy to have children worshipping with us and we aim to find ways to teach our children the Christian Faith.

St. Mary's joins with the NCMMP for youth-focused provision, led by members of the Clergy along with people who work with young people across the MMP. The Light Group is a group for 8-15 year olds who would like to find out more about the Christian Faith; preparing young people (aged 7-11) to receive Communion before Confirmation, or to be Confirmed (age 11+). This group was planned to start meeting again, once a month, from November 2021, however there were limited acceptances of the invitation for the November session and the Ministry Team is considering plans for this group for the future.

Other organisations that use the St. Leonard's Hall are: Friends of Broomfield Hospital and Chelmsford & District club of Soroptimists International.

This year we were pleased to be awarded a Bronze in the Eco-Church initiative and thanks go to Rachel Butterworth and her team who worked on this and continue to work towards achieving the next level award. You can read more about this in Rachel's report later in this review.

Review of the year

In terms of variety of services and social events, 2021 was again an unusual year due to the ongoing pandemic.

Worship:

In January the Diocese recommended that all churches in this area take their worship back online, as the incidence of Covid-19 had risen sharply. A 9.30am Eucharist service and 5.30pm BCP Evening Prayer were live-streamed each Sunday via Facebook. People were invited to join a Zoom Coffee Morning after the Sunday morning service – a good opportunity to catch up with other members of the church family and have a relaxed hour of sharing news and supporting one another – anybody not online could phone in using a dedicated phone number and passcode. Responding to requests, Zoom Eucharists were offered on two Monday evenings - instead of a sermon, there was an opportunity to discuss the bible readings and sermons which had been preached the previous day. Videos of the Sunday services and for daily Morning and Evening Prayer, with Hymns, were uploaded to our Facebook page and St. Mary's website. Rev'd. Carolyn started fortnightly Fun Faith sessions via zoom at 4pm on a Tuesday. Weekly E-pistle newsletters were sent out by email with details of how to join in online worship and zoom sessions.

Posters were sent out via email with details of how to join in the week of Christian Unity, from 18th-25th January - a week set aside as a week of prayer for reconciliation and unity in the Church and the human family; every day the prayer was led by a different church across the City of Chelmsford. The link was also made available on St. Mary's website.

On 31st January at 10.30am our Christingle Family Service was held online using Zoom, followed by a Zoom coffee morning, with donations to The Children's Society. People were given a 'shopping list' in advance for items to gather in order to make their Christingles and, as an alternative, a picture of a Christingle to colour, and encouraged to share these during the service.

In February, all worship remained online. The fortnightly Fun Faith Zoom sessions continued. There was another Monday evening Zoom Eucharist on 8th February, giving thanks to God for his amazing creation and thinking about how we can protect it. Following his approval as an Authorised Local Preacher, Andy Mussell gave his first reading, sermon and intercession online on 14th February. There was an evening Zoom Eucharist on Ash Wednesday, with Imposition of Ashes. The service on Sunday 28th February was a Zoom Family Service.

In March a Zoom Eucharist was held on Monday 1st March, St. David's Day. Fun Faith by Zoom sessions continued. On Sunday 7th March the morning Eucharist and Evening prayer were posted online and worksheets for families sent out via email. On the same day, our 2021 APCM was held using Zoom – 34 people attended.

Following advice from Essex health leaders that churches could re-open, with mitigations put in place to stop the spread of Covid, the PCC agreed to re-open church for congregational worship from Mothering Sunday, 14th March, with booking required for all in-church services.

So, after a deep clean of the church and review of risk assessments, Mothering Sunday saw our first congregational worship since the start of the third lockdown. It was a short half an hour 9.30am service, live-streamed, with a maximum of 29 people at least two metres apart wearing face coverings. In addition, a Zoom Mothering Sunday service with a blessing of flowers was held at 10.30am. Our friends from the parishes of Great Waltham & Ford End, the Chignals with Mashbury, Great & Little Leighs and Little Waltham, were invited to join. From 12noon posies of flowers in a basket were left by the church porch for people to collect for mums, grandmothers and for anyone who may have felt isolated – neighbours or those who had been unable to attend church.

On 21st March there was a short morning worship service in church (not live-streamed) plus an online Eucharist (with an invitation to people at Ford End, Chignal Smealy and Great Waltham to join), plus a Zoom coffee morning. On Palm Sunday, 28th March there was a short service in church. A cross was erected outside the church porch and palm crosses made available in a box for people to collect. During the online worship there was a blessing for the palm crosses, plus a blessing of crosses at the regular 10.30am Sunday Coffee Morning. Daily Morning and Evening Prayer continued to be posted online throughout March.

During Holy Week, Reflections using Zoom were held on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday evenings; and a Zoom Eucharist on the evening of Maundy Thursday. On Good Friday the church was opened for two hours in the afternoon for private prayer, with booking required - Rev'd. Carolyn and Rev'd. Diana read the Passion readings during that time, with plenty of space in between for silence and individual prayer. On Easter Sunday, 4th April, a 6.30am sunrise service was held in the churchyard – a full risk assessment for outdoor worship having been completed and approved by the PCC – it was a lovely opportunity for those still unsure about attending congregational worship inside church to come together. Later that day, at 9.30am, our first in-church Parish Eucharist Service was held, with communion bread taken to individuals whilst seated, the service was live-streamed, followed by a Zoom coffee morning; and a BCP Evening Prayer was held in church the same day. The Eucharist service and Evening Prayer were also uploaded online for those who still did not feel able to return to the church building.

A short Eucharist service in church was held the following Sunday, 11th April, followed by the now usual Zoom coffee morning. Rev'd. Carolyn and Rev'd. Diana were licensed as Associate Priests to neighbouring parishes on 18th April. There was a Monday evening Zoom Eucharist on 19th April; and on 25th April a 9.30am Eucharist online, followed by a Zoom Family worship for St. George's Day.

The pattern of worship was reviewed at the 10th May PCC meeting, following the government briefing that the release from lockdown roadmap was going according to plan. Rev'd. Carolyn requested the

PCC's permission to have the church deep cleaned again and then to open up the church keeping a one metre plus distance between people and also to move the soft furnishings back into church, on the seats not being used, to enable the hall and outside space to be used. This would enable in-person coffee mornings in the courtyard. This was unanimously approved. Regular uploading of worship to our website and Facebook Page would continue.

So, at the beginning of May, Sunday Eucharist services were held in church at 9.30am, these continued to be live-streamed, followed by Zoom coffee mornings. Evening Prayer remained online. On 13th May, Ascension Day, Rev'd. Diana led a Spiritual Communion on Zoom in the evening. From Sunday 16th May we were able to have 'in-person' coffee mornings outside in the courtyard instead of on Zoom. A Confirmation course on Zoom began on 17th May on Monday evenings running through until 26th July. On Sunday 23rd May, Pentecost, following a further deep clean, more seats were offered almost doubling the maximum number of people who could attend a service to 60. The Fun Faith Zoom sessions continued until the demand for these dried up once children went back to school.

During Christian Aid week in May, there were no door-to-door collections, however there was an opportunity to donate via a JustGiving page and details were included in Rev'd. Carolyn's weekly email, a link on our Facebook page and a notice in the Round Tower parish magazine.

It was agreed at the May PCC meeting to add the following to the pattern of worship from June: Sunday Evening Prayer in church once a month; for the choir to re-start (six members at a time); for one Mid-week Communion service in church once a month; and for a Songs of Praise service in the churchyard on 27th June; booking would still be required for any gathered worship. They also agreed that the hall could be used for limited numbers of people.

So June saw the return of a small choir at our Sunday services. The first mid-week Communion in-person in church was held and these would continue one Wednesday a month. Our first Sunday Evening Prayer in-person in church was held, with them remaining online on the other Sundays. The Little Lambs group on a Thursday morning was able to re-start in St. Leonard's Hall with booking required. A Monday evening Zoom Eucharist once a month was continued.

During the Songs of Praise service in the churchyard on 27th June, Andy Mussell was welcomed as an Authorised Local Preacher. On the same day, earlier in the afternoon, Dawn Butcher was licensed as a Lay Worker to St. Mary's, thus enabling her to begin ministry as our Curate, before her Ordination to the Diaconate in September.

With the final step of the Governments roadmap for moving out of lockdown happening on 19th July, the government said that church leaders were best placed to know their own communities, surroundings and context. So we were able to move forward without set legal restrictions and to decide how best to manage the risk to ourselves and others. The PCC agreed that the Church would be cleaned once a week; pre-booking of a place at a service would continue; before each service the church doors would be opened for half an hour and left open during the service to ensure adequate ventilation; hand sanitiser would remain in place; we would ask people to continue to use face coverings whilst inside church and when moving around close to others; and to continue to share the peace in a non-contact way. Also, we began congregational singing again, however for the time being congregations would be invited to sing only the offertory hymn and those who would prefer not to be close to others who are singing were invited to use the pews at the back of the church; 'please give me space' cards were also made available. Communion would continue to be offered in one kind only.

So, during July, a cautious and careful approach was maintained and the pattern of worship continued much the same as for June: a 9.30am Sunday Eucharist service in church, live-streamed, followed by coffee in the courtyard; weekly Sunday Reflective Evening Prayer online, with BCP Evening Prayer in

church once a month; and one mid-week Eucharist in church once a month, followed by coffee in the courtyard. Sunday 4th July was designated Climate Sunday and St. Mary's, along with other churches in the NCMMP, held a special Climate Change service to raise the issue of climate change and encourage Christian people to commit to positive actions for reducing carbon emissions and protecting the natural world. On Sunday 25th July an 8am BCP Holy Communion in church was held, followed by a 9.30am Eucharist and this was the first time the congregation were able to sing. There was also a 5.30pm outdoor evening service, this enabled people who still felt uncomfortable being inside church to join in congregational worship.

In August the pattern of worship remained much the same and now that the Zoom Confirmation Course had concluded, a 7pm Monday Zoom Eucharist once a month re-commenced. At the Eucharist service on 10th August the church bells were rung for the first time for a service since 15th March 2020! In order to achieve this, particular thanks go to Andy Mussell and Chris Marcus who had to don full PPE to undertake a massive clean and safety check of the bells and surrounding area as so much debris had accumulated from birds, squirrels and other creatures getting in through the woodpecker holes in the shingles whilst the bells were unable to be rung. Other members of the ringing band including David Marcus, Richard Lodge, Marc Parish, Carol and Andrew Knott undertook the cleaning of the ringing chamber. So thanks to them all, the bells were ringing out once again.

On Sunday 29th August, Evening Prayer was held outside in the churchyard – a Celebration of Creation – a short act of worship appropriate for families with young children and we are hoping to hold more services like this in the future as we engage more with Eco-church.

From the first Sunday in September the main altar and the pulpit began to be used during worship. The Eucharist continued to be received in one kind only, with no sharing of the common cup, and was served to individuals one at a time at the altar rail. We returned to a sung service with the congregation singing four hymns and a full choir. We could continue to offer BCP Holy Communion once a month at 8am, generally on the third Sunday of every month, followed by a 9.30am Family Service; and Evening Prayer at 5.30pm generally on the second Sunday each month. During the week, Morning Prayer, held in the choir stalls, at 9am on Tuesdays and Thursdays was added to the pattern of worship, along with a Thanksgiving Eucharist on a Thursday at 9.30am in the Lady Chapel. The requirement to pre-book a place at services was removed. A Zoom Eucharist once a month was continued.

The bells at St. Mary's, along with other churches in the Chelmsford Diocese, were rung on Saturday 4th September to welcome Bishop Guli as she began her work among us as the Bishop of Chelmsford. On 11th September our Curate Dawn was Ordained at the Cathedral and on 12th September an Afternoon Tea was held to celebrate. On 19th September the First Family Service in church since lockdowns began was held and this was Dawn's first time assisting with service since her ordination. On Sunday 26th September we were once again able to hold a pet service, this time in the churchyard.

On Sunday 3rd October Bishop John led a Confirmation service confirming two candidates: Katie and Charlotte. At the Eucharist service on Sunday 10th October items were collected for the Afghan refugee children, with nappies, books, colouring pencils and glue sticks being the items most needed at that time. The service was not live-streamed as we moved to a different pattern, where worship would be live-streamed once a month and on special occasions. This year's Harvest Festival service was held on Sunday 17th October, a Family Service, after which the gifts were made up into hampers that were delivered around the village, with the surplus given to Chelmsford Foodbank. The church was decorated with Autumn flowers, fruit and vegetables and the children and families of Broomfield Primary School donated 100 boxes of tea bags!

On 12th October Rev'd. Carolyn led a Hospital Chaplain's retreat day. On October 15th at 7.30pm St Mary's hosted a *Wave of Light* service for parents bereaved during their childbearing experience; this was part of the annual national week of remembrance for stillbirth and neonatal loss.

During the October half-term, there was a Holy Pumpkin Trail in the churchyard; the pumpkins were carved with crosses and Christian symbols with a light shining from them reminding us all that Jesus Christ is the light of the world, light overcoming darkness.

This year's Bereavement service was held on 7th November - a 'Time to Remember' service. Rev'd. Carolyn led the Armistice Day service at the War Memorial on Church Green on the 11th. Andy Mussell led the Service of Remembrance on Sunday 14th November at St. Mary's, which was well attended. Rev'd. Carolyn led the service at Great Waltham.

Four evenings of reflections were held in church on Tuesdays throughout Advent: a quiet hour of led prayer and reflection to prepare for the coming of the child Christ into the world.

A 'Carols around a campfire' event was planned to take place in the churchyard on Sunday 5th December with hot chocolate and cookies but sadly this had to be cancelled at the last minute due to the very cold and wet weather. Broomfield Primary School had two Nativity services in church on the morning of Friday 17th December. The Village Carol Service was held on Sunday 19th December - whilst it was lovely to be able to gather to sing Carols in church once again this year it was sad to see the church not as full as it usually had been prior to the pandemic.

Instead of the usual 'crib' services on Christmas Eve, the ministry team made the decision to hold a 'Christmas Story' Service outside as it was not thought sensible to have so many people gathered inside on Christmas Eve. The event started at 3pm on the path and grounds outside the hall where people could watch the puppets perform from inside the Link inviting everyone to 'Come and Join the Celebration'. Then there was a nativity story outside the front of the church; as usual children were asked to come dressed as nativity characters and take part. The event concluded at the side of the church, on the footpath, where the nativity stained glass window was lit up and favourite Carols and Christmas songs were sung.

There was a service of Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve; a Family focussed Eucharist on Christmas morning and a quiet morning Eucharist service on Boxing Day. Material was posted online so those that did not feel able to join us in-person could find some comfort in watching our Christmas Worship online.

The above shows just how much work by our Clergy team went into providing a variety of ways in which people could engage in worship and prayer to meet the needs of our church family and all in the community, whether in-person inside church, outdoors, or online.

Social events:

We usually hold a number of social events throughout the year which aim to offer opportunities for social interaction and to raise funds for the church and other charitable organisations. Not so many were possible in 2021, but we did manage a few.

30th March was Rev'd. Carolyn's 10th Anniversary of being Vicar here at St. Mary's and the occasion was marked by a bouquet of flowers delivered on behalf of the PCC and the church family to thank her for all her valued work with us.

In May, the Save Our Spire fundraising campaign was launched with an article in the May Round Tower magazine, posters and a 'Just Giving' page set up for online donations to help raise funds for the urgent

repair of the spire roof to preserve and restore this iconic tower landmark. As part of the launch, Terry Miles was invited to come and play the piano and organ at St. Mary's. Terry is a pianist and songwriter who specialises in boogie-woogie piano and he travels the country playing in public places such as train stations, airports, shopping centres, churches and cathedrals. Unfortunately, no audience was able to be present for his visit to St. Mary's, due to Covid restrictions, but the video of him playing our piano and organ was uploaded to YouTube – the video was seen by an American in Atlanta Georgia who donated \$250 to us as a result! There are two videos of Terry playing at St. Mary's, do watch them, Terry is a fun, entertaining and talented performer and thanks go to Andy Mussell for organising his visit to us.

At the May PCC meeting it was approved that the hall could be used with limited numbers. Therefore, the Little Lambs support group for parents with pre-school aged children was able to re-commence in June for the first time since the pandemic began, using a booking system, following the risk assessment and limiting numbers to 12 adults (children under 5 are not counted).

On 7th August Ros Mercer opened her garden to raise funds for the organ and spire repair projects.

Many of our fellowship groups were able to re-start in September including: the Film Club; Beetle Drives; Lunch & Laughter; the Puppet Crew; and the re-commencement of Little Lambs after the summer break.

The Afternoon Tea, held in the courtyard on 12th September, to celebrate Dawn's ordination, was a joyful event with music in the background, tables and chairs set out and Dawn's family and friends from other churches able to join us.

A MacMillan Coffee Morning was hosted by Trudy on Saturday 25th September, on behalf of the church, raising £750. On the same day we were able to hold one of our first real fundraising events since the pandemic hit: a limited numbers Quiz Night in St. Leonard's Hall organised by Kathy Rouse which raised around £212 for the spire.

On Saturday 9th October, Malcolm Taylor held a coffee morning in St. Leonard's Hall at which he spoke about his walk, this time over 100 miles on the Peddars Way and along the North Norfolk Coast, raising money for the spire. The coffee morning alone raised over £200 and other donations were made online via the JustGiving page. We thank Malcolm for his efforts and sponsorship once again.

In November a Bring & Buy sale was held. Although the footfall was not as high as similar events in previous years, over £700 was raised for the spire repairs – a fantastic achievement in the circumstances - and thanks go to Trudy Stevens for all her hard work in organising this and to those who manned stalls and helped on the day.

For the second year our Broomfield Village Advent Window Trail began on 1st December. 23 homes and businesses volunteered to decorate and light a window, so every day until Christmas Eve a new window opened telling the whole Nativity story. The address of each window was put up on our website each day and on Facebook. A letter of the alphabet was displayed in each window so that children could note the letters as they went around and at the end, after collecting all the letters, discover they spelt out the first song they would hear at the Christmas Story service in the churchyard on Christmas Eve.

St. Mary's continued to support various charities throughout 2021: collection of empty crisp packets, printer cartridges and other items for the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association continued, with items being dropped off at Glynis' door instead of at church. It was not possible to collect shoeboxes in church for Operation Christmas Child 2021 but the opportunity to 'build a shoebox' online was advertised in the Round Tower magazine. Once again this year St. Mary's supported the Angel Tree project with our donated gifts allowing parents in prison to send a personalised gift to their child – the Ladies Group

organised the collection of appropriate gifts and they were gathered and blessed at our morning service on 5th December. St Mary's continues to support donations to the Foodbank.

Acknowledgements:

As a PCC we are very pleased to be able to support the Clergy. We give thanks for Rev'd. Diana who put a lot of hard work and energy into leading on the bid application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund whilst at the same time assisting with ministry as Associate Priest in the Chignals. We give thanks for Dawn Butcher joining us as Curate and Andy Mussell for stepping forward to become an Authorised Local Preacher. We thank all the Ministry team for their hard work and dedication in providing worship and support during another difficult year. Also, we thank the Pastoral Assistants who continued to support people, especially those living alone, or without internet access, to help alleviate isolation.

The PCC is very grateful to all the committed volunteers who continue to work tirelessly in the background. As well as Rev'd. Diana, a big thank you to the other members of the fundraising team: Alun, Rachel and Trudy, for all their work and perseverance in obtaining grants for the organ work and of course the wonderful grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund. The Churchyard Working Party continued to maintain our churchyard to a high standard throughout most of 2021. The churchyard is an outdoor space much valued by the community, even more so during the pandemic. We thank David Marcus and all the Working Party, which consists of members of the congregation and the wider community, for all their hard work. And we look forward to being able to hold more worship outside in our beautiful churchyard and meadow area and embrace Eco-church initiatives.

We thank our Church Wardens and Treasurer for all their hard work. Sadly Michael Jones, who stepped down from serving as Assistant Church Warden in March 2020 passed away early in 2021 and is much missed. We are fortunate that Susan Garwood and Andy Mussell have stepped forward as Church Wardens and we continue to pray for another to come forward to share the work. Alun Powell, our faithful Treasurer for many years now, has continued to provide a great service to us in very difficult circumstances. Alun spends very many hours working on our finances and we are fortunate indeed to have him steer us through some difficult decisions.

Particular thanks, of course, go to our vicar, Rev'd. Carolyn Tibbott for all her support and guidance throughout another remarkable and tiring year and for her unwavering dedication and enthusiasm despite having to share her time supporting ministry in other churches.

Carol Knott
Hon. Secretary to the PCC

Financial Report

Summary

The Parish has benefited enormously over the last five years from bequests and large donations. Between 2017 and 2021, the Parish received, on average, over £43,000 a year in legacies and over £12,000 a year in donations. In 2017, when we had no bequest, donations added £20,000 boosted by a single donation of £10,000! That has been marvellous for the Parish's finances, of course, and we are extremely grateful for the generosity of those members of our congregation whose final thoughts were to support their local church. It has allowed us to double the financial assets in our general fund as well as help build up our spire fund in advance of the work which will be carried out in 2022.

The downside is, however, that when those bequests falter, as they did in 2021, then we struggle to keep our accounts in surplus. In 2021 bequest monies amounted to £23,084, £20,000 short of the five-year average. The situation was not helped by the continuing effect of the pandemic on money raising events and collections at services which, although an improvement on 2020, were still well down on pre-pandemic years. The money raising that did take place was also channelled towards the need to build up the spire and organ funds rather than general funds. Similarly, although donations were relatively strong in 2021, more than a half was destined for the spire and organ rather than the general running of the church.

The net effect of these factors is that, overall, the Parish posted a slight deficit of £4,368 in 2021 but with the general fund showing a deficit of £11,266 and the restricted funds a surplus of £6,897.

Unrestricted funds

Income

Planned giving through both the standing order and the envelope scheme has continued to hold up considering the problems caused by Covid and we are grateful to all our planned givers who ensured that their regular giving was maintained in very trying circumstances. Nevertheless, it is also true that the income from planned giving has been on a downward trend over the last few years. Planned giving raised £35,548 in 2021 compared with £38,104 in 2020. In 2017, however, income from planned giving was £42,415. We do need more members of the congregation to commit to joining the planned giving scheme and it is also important that current members look at their giving on a regular basis and, if you feel able to increase your giving, that would be very well received.

Loose collections at services recovered somewhat in line with the return to worship. Our income from this source was, at £1,673, nearly twice the level seen in 2020 (£925) but still well down on the pre-pandemic year of 2019 when they brought in £6,519. **Net fee income** at £9,590 also showed an improvement on a year earlier (£8,033) but was also well down on the pre-pandemic 2019 figure of £13,150. There was a small return to running **money raising** events in 2021 but the target for these was largely the spire fund and the amount going into the general fund of £218 was well down on the £547 raised in 2020 and compares with a pre-pandemic 2019 figure of £5,102. **Donations** to the general fund rose from a low of, £2,078 in 2020 to £4,517 in 2021 but remained well below the pre-pandemic figure of £8,271 received in 2019. **Investment income** totalled £135 down from £351 in 2020 as interest rates on investments weakened further. The level of **tax recovered** on planned giving, donations and small gifts held steady at £10,914 compared with £10,174 in 2020.

Overall unrestricted income for 2021 stood at £92,901, the fall from £154,009 in 2020 being entirely explained by the lower level of bequests in 2021.

Expenditure

The major item of expenditure was the Parish Share which the diocese had decided would be kept at the same level as in 2020.

Elsewhere, the cost of utilities fell to £1,916 compared with £3,222 in 2020 and the cost of insurance for the building and hall amounted to £3,191 compared with 3,184.

Spending on the churchyard amounted to £6,219 in 2021 compared with £6,411 the previous year. Maintenance of the old churchyard accounted for £473, of which £240 was for tree work, with maintenance of the churchyard extension costing a further £1,380. Expenditure on new benches amounted to £4,366. Offsetting these costs, a grant was received from the Parish Council for £1,750 to cover the water catchment system which had been put in place in 2020 and donations totalling £2,740 were made towards the new benches.

Repairs to, and maintenance of, the building amounted to £8,485, a similar level to 2020's £9,346. Expenditure included £2,752 on electrical work and £3,148 on preparatory work on the lychgate by our architects.

In total, expenditure out of the general fund amounted to £104,167, leaving a deficit of £11,266.

Restricted funds

Organ Fund

At the beginning of 2021, the organ fund totalled £17,955. Donations during the year added £676 and three grants added a further £7,300. Our thanks to the Walter Farthing Trust who donated £5,000; AllChurches Trust who donated £1,500; and ON Organ Fund who donated £800. At the time of writing this report we were waiting to hear from: the Garfield Weston Foundation; the Stansted Airport Passenger Community Fund; the Tudwick Foundation; and the Essex County Council Locality Fund. The renovation work has already begun and is proceeding well. Our thanks to Trudy Stevens who has worked hard to obtain these grants.

Spire Fund

At the beginning of 2021, the spire fund stood at £67,003. Donations to the fund during the year amounted to £5,608, money raising schemes raised £1,236 and there was a grant of £500. Architect and other professional fees amounted £6,779 leaving the fund at £67,568 at end 2021. A further £10,000 has been promised from a local charitable fund.

Towards the end of the year came the very welcome news that St Mary's had been awarded a large grant by the National Lottery Heritage Fund. This grant of £135,721, together with our own fund raising of nearly £80,000, will now enable us to repair our tower and spire as well as replace the golden weathervane during 2022! The remit for the grant was more wide ranging, however, and the launch of "Project Rutherford" will take place in April 2022. In addition to the repair work, this is an exciting project based on our unique 1941 Rosemary Rutherford fresco in the church tower. The money will be used to conserve the fresco for future generations and perhaps most importantly, to share more widely the glorious heritage within our church building with a much wider range of people. Our thanks to Rev'd. Diana for all her work in seeing this project through to a successful outcome.

Other Funds

During 2020, it was agreed that, temporarily as it turned out, Broomfield would hold the North Chelmsford Ministry and Mission Partnership's Coordinator Fund. That has now been returned and the restricted fund closed. The amalgamation of the Chelmsford Deaneries mean that the Deanery Synod Fund monies held by Broomfield were transferred to the newly formed Chelmsford Deanery in 2021.

There was no movement in the stained glass window fund; the cremated remains area fund; and the sound system fund.

Reserves Policy

At the May 10th PCC meeting, the PCC agreed to the following Reserves Policy:

It is PCC policy to try to maintain unrestricted funds at a level sufficient to cover one year's unrestricted (general fund) expenditure. This should not only be sufficient to smooth out fluctuations in cash flow but also allow the Parish to meet emergencies, to offset any shocks to the parish's income such as the Covid pandemic and to maintain our Parish Share commitments.

It is customary for parishes to have a much lower target than this with the aim of, say, having sufficient reserves to cover just three months of general expenditure. There are several reasons, however, to have a much more conservative approach including:

- (1) the fact that St. Mary's general income over the last few years has relied heavily on bequests and one-off large donations. By their very nature, however, we cannot assume that these will be repeated every year and we therefore need to hold sufficient funds for those years when such generosity is not apparent.
- (2) The Covid 19 pandemic has shown that one off shocks to income can be extremely damaging. In 2020 general income (excluding bequests) amounted to £64,000 compared with nearly £90,000 in 2019 a drop of £26,000 equivalent to around three months expenditure.

At end 2021 unrestricted assets stood at £115,553 compared with an average level of expenditure over the past three years of around £100,000 satisfying the reserves policy criteria.

Expenditure Approvals Policy

At the same meeting the PCC also agreed that:

expenditure of up to £100 can be approved by the Vicar;

expenditure of between £100 and £500 can be approved by the Vicar acting in conjunction with the two church wardens and/or the Treasurer; with expenditure above £500 needing to be approved by the PCC.

Outlook

There have been three main factors impacting on our finances over the last two years. The pandemic has had a major negative effect on income. Collections at services, money raising, donations and fees are all well down on pre-pandemic levels. That situation looks likely to continue for some time before normal service is resumed. Secondly, the need to boost the organ and spire funds has channelled resources in their direction rather than into the general fund. With the lychgate needing to be repaired this year and the organ fund still short of the funds needed to cover the total cost of repair (albeit this might be solved by one or more of the outstanding grant applications being successful) that bias may continue for some months.

Nevertheless, both these factors will eventually come to an end. But that leaves the third factor which is more important in the long run. We have become overly dependent on bequests to make our accounts balance. And yet we simply cannot assume that we will receive that level of extra funding year after year. If there were to be no bequests this year our income would immediately be £20,000 down on 2021 and push us further into deficit.

A return to money raising, healthier fees, donations and collections will help especially if there is less pressure on building up funds to maintain the fabric of the building. But these will only narrow the gap. Closing the gap will require something more including reversing that downward trend in our regular giving. We are extremely grateful to all our parishioners who have supported the church in Broomfield

financially during a very difficult two years but, if we are to stay in the black, we do need more members of the congregation to commit to joining the planned giving scheme and it is also important that current members look at their giving on a regular basis and, if you feel able to increase your giving, that would be very well received.

Alun Powell
Honorary Treasurer

Parochial Church Council of St. Mary with St. Leonard, Broomfield

Financial Statements for the Year ended 31 December 2021

Receipts and Payments Account

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2021 £	Total 2020 £
RECEIPTS					
Voluntary receipts					
Planned giving		35,547.50		35,547.50	38,103.50
Collections at services		1,673.34	215.93	1,889.27	925.46
All other voluntary giving	4a	30,101.16	14,084.26	44,185.42	145,053.86
Gift Aid recovered		10,913.50		10,913.50	10,174.23
Activities for generating funds	4b	644.88	1,235.97	1,880.85	1,745.68
Investment income	4c	135.24		135.24	351.26
Church activities	4d	13,885.80		13,885.80	11,079.39
Charitable income			24.55	24.55	509.04
Deanery Synod/NCMMP			312.00	312.00	1,467.99
Total receipts		92,901.42	15872.71	108,774.13	209,410.41
PAYMENTS					
Church activities					
Diocesan parish contribution		77,269.53		77,269.53	77,269.50
Clergy and staffing costs		926.36		926.36	1,391.62
Church running expenses	4e	25,971.09	6,400.25	32,371.34	38,807.44
Charitable giving	4f		215.93	215.93	550.00
Costs of generating funds			379.00	379.00	0.00
Deanery Synod/NCMMP			1,980.40	1,980.40	45.00
Total payments		104,166.98	8,975.58	113,142.56	118,063.56
Excess of receipts over payments		-11,265.56	6,897.13	-4,368.43	91,346.85
Cash at bank and in hand at 1 January		126,818.20	99,278.62	226,096.82	134,749.97
Cash at bank and in hand at 31 December		115,552.64	106,175.75	221,728.39	226,096.82

Statement of Assets and Liabilities

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2021 £	Total 2020 £
Cash funds				
Bank current account	61,420.96		61,420.96	67,321.50
CCLA deposits	51,996.64	106,175.75	158,172.39	158,090.04
Other cash and deposits	2,135.04		2,135.04	685.28
	115,552.64	106,175.75	221,728.39	226,096.82
Investment assets				
Tithe Chancel Fund		10,427.61	10,427.61	8,879.81
J Gyne Foundation		2,084.21	2,084.21	1,823.37
		12,511.82	12,511.82	10,703.18
Total monetary assets	115,552.64	118,687.57	234,240.21	236,800.00

Notes:

- (1) The financial statements of the PCC have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 using the receipts and payments basis.
- (2) The income from the J Gyne Foundation is for ordinary church purposes. Income from the Tithe Chancel Fund is undistributed and is added to the capital sum.
- (3) The movements in restricted funds during the year were:

	Balance b/fwd	Receipts	Transfer	Payments	Balance c/fwd
Organ Fund	17,954.92	7,976.01			25,930.93
Spire Fund	67,003.07	7,344.22		6,779.25	67,568.04
Stained Glass Window Fund	12,500.00				12,500.00
Cremated Remains Area Fund	24.74				24.74
Sound System Fund	58.37				58.37
Charity Fund	7.20	240.48		215.93	31.75
Deanery Fund	200.41			200.41	0.00
North Chelmsford MMP Coordinator Fund	1,467.99	312.00		1,779.99	0.00
North Chelmsford MMP	61.92				61.92
	99,278.62	15,872.71	0.00	8,975.58	106,175.75

(4) Further Analysis of Receipt and Payments Accounts

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2021 £	Total 2020 £
Receipts					
a) All other voluntary giving					
Donations		4,517.19	6,284.26	10,801.45	5,053.90
Grants		2,500.00	7,800.00	10,300.00	
Legacies		23,083.97	0.00	23,083.97	140,000.00
		<u>30,101.16</u>	<u>14,084.26</u>	<u>44,185.42</u>	<u>145,053.90</u>
b) Activities for generating funds					
Parish Magazine - advertising		425.00		425.00	750.00
Christmas		1.50		1.50	17.52
Other		218.38	1,235.97	1,454.35	978.12
		<u>644.88</u>	<u>1,235.97</u>	<u>1,880.85</u>	<u>1,745.64</u>
c) Investment income					
Dividends					
Interest		135.24		135.24	351.26
		<u>135.24</u>		<u>135.24</u>	<u>351.26</u>
d) Church activities					
Fees for weddings, funerals etc		9,590.32		9,590.32	8,032.99
Parish Magazine - sales		465.50		465.50	995.40
Other		3,829.98		3,829.98	2,051.00
		<u>13,885.80</u>		<u>13,885.80</u>	<u>11,079.39</u>
Payments					
e) Church running expenses					
Music		2,187.32		2,187.32	1,651.84
Cost of services (utilities)		1,916.06		1,916.06	3,221.70
Cost of services (insurance)		3,190.69		3,190.69	3,184.28
Printing & stationery		65.97		65.97	205.33
Church building running expenses		2,542.98		2,542.98	3,870.98
Parish Magazine - printing costs		1,363.67		1,363.67	1,189.23
Church repairs & maintenance		8,485.38	6,400.25	14,885.63	15,804.12
Churchyard		6,219.02		6,219.02	7,696.96
Other					1,983.00
		<u>25,971.09</u>	<u>6,400.25</u>	<u>32,371.34</u>	<u>38,807.44</u>
f) Charitable giving					
Children's Society					200.00
Christian Aid					2,277.88
Little Haven					500.00
RBL Poppy Appeal			215.93	215.93	273.23
			<u>215.93</u>	<u>215.93</u>	<u>3,251.11</u>

Approved by the PCC on 8th February 2022.

Signed

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'C Tibbott', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Rev'd. C A Tibbott
PCC Chairman

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'C Knott', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mrs C Knott
PCC Secretary

***Independent examiner's report to the Trustees of the Parochial Church Council
of St. Mary with St. Leonard, Broomfield***

I report on the accounts of the PCC for the year ended 31 December 2021, which are set out on pages 14 to 21.

Respective Responsibilities of the Trustees and Examiner

The Church's Trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The church's trustees consider that an audit is not required for the year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- Examine the accounts (under section 145 of the 2011 Act);
- To follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners (under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act); and
- To state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of Independent Examiner's Statement.

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

Independent examiner's statement

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

- (1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with s.130 of the 2011 Act; and
 - to prepare accounts, which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act have not been met; or
- (2) to which in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

(Signed)



Richard Wood
BSc(Hons), MBCS, IQA Qualified, COBIT, ISACA Qualified

27th February 2022

VICAR'S REPORT

So 2021 continued to be a time of challenge as the whole country tried to work out how to manage in a pandemic. The beginning of the year most of our worship and work was online. The groups and clubs were not able to open and things were quiet. Risk Assessments were a common feature on the PCC agenda and many times we discussed issues via an email thread. I am particularly grateful to all members of the PCC here for engaging so diligently in the work we have continued to undertake.

In April both Rev'd. Diana and I were licensed as Associate Priests to neighbouring parishes: Rev'd. Diana to Chignalls with Mashbury and myself to Great Waltham with Ford End. These parishes had been in an extended vacancy, and it was generous of Broomfield PCC to acknowledge that the ministry team should be serving our neighbours by providing regular ordained ministers to support them as the vacancy went on. This did, of course, mean that we had to change some of our worship provision. However, we continue to work together with our neighbours, ensuring that all sacramental services are covered and assisting the Church Wardens and people of the four churches, during this time of change and transition.

Our ministry team has changed again, as we welcomed Andy Mussell as an Authorised Local Preacher in February and Rev'd. Dawn Butcher as a full time Curate. Andy is well known in the Parish as he has lived here all of his life; he is working hard as a Church Warden and we are blessed by his ministry as a preacher. Dawn moved into the parish in July; she has been getting to know some of you and finding her way around as she works for this year as a Deacon. We are privileged, not only to be a training parish, but also to have a strong sense of vocation within the Church Family, which means that all the people of God here are using their skills to the benefit of the community.

Although most fund-raising efforts this year had to be either cancelled or curtailed, there has been lots of background work continuing, to ensure that the Organ restoration and Spire & Tower repair would be able to go ahead as planned in 2022. Members of the PCC were involved in lots of grant applications and we have been fortunate that some of these came to fruition. The work on the organ began on the 28th December and should be completed before Easter. In October we heard that the Heritage Lottery Fund had granted us the full amount that we had applied for, for what is now known as 'Project Rutherford'. This is an exciting project, which we hope will not only provide the physical repairs that need to be undertaken but will also allow the church to be seen as the important historical heritage site that it is. There has been information in The Round Tower Magazine about the progress of the project. We will continue to keep you updated with developments, just one date for your diary... the launch date for Project Rutherford is 30th of April 2022.

We are also delighted to report that the Churchyard Working Party has been able to continue its work during all the lockdowns and closures. The churchyard continues to look magnificent, thanks to the hard work of David Marcus and the team. The new meadow continues to settle in and we have sourced more hedging to be planted around it. Thanks to Roger Cole and Malcolm Taylor for undertaking this work for us.

As soon as we were able to do so, we made plans with those who had previously booked occasional offices in 2020, for them to go ahead. We were delighted that there were 18 infant baptisms conducted here in the church during the year. Two adults were Confirmed when Bishop John attended a Sunday morning service. Only 3 weddings took place in the church; however, we do have a lot more planned for 2022.

Members of the ministry team officiated at 27 funerals, of which 8 were held in church or at the graveside, all the others were conducted at the Crematorium. We also conducted 19 interment of ashes

services in the churchyard. Pastoral care has been offered to families mainly by telephone calls and emails.

Throughout 2021 we have continued to bring the message of God's love and compassion to the people of Broomfield. We have achieved the Bronze Eco Church award, as we continue to try to be good stewards of God's creation. To this end we are planning more outdoor services, so that we can use the beautiful grounds that we have to share the spiritual side of nature, which so touches many peoples' souls, and we continue to care for this ancient church building. We also look forward to a time when the Covid 19 pandemic is just a memory, and we will be able to say that through that difficult era we continued as faithful servants of God. One of my favourite passages from scripture, outside of the Gospels, is from the words of the prophet Isaiah (40: 28 – 31).

Do you not know? Have you not heard?
The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth.
He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom.
He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak.
Even youths grow tired and weary, and young people stumble and fall.
but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength.
They will soar on wings like eagles;
they will run and not grow weary; they will walk and not be faint.

I know that we are all tired of the ongoing situation we are living through. We are suffering high levels of anxiety and the collective bereavement of the devastating loss of so many people who have died in the last few years. Yet, we have this promise! We are the ones who have the conviction, that our Lord, the creator of the heavens and the earth, will not rest. He is our Lord, who will raise us up, who will fill us with grace and power. We keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, allowing him to work through us in the transformation of the world, the church and the people. This is the work of the Church, the people of God in every challenge, in every transition, in every generation. So, we pray for God to give us strength, for Jesus to empower us and for the Holy Spirit to renew the strength of our faith, that we might ensure that all the people know and hear the message of the Gospel in these most challenging of times.

with every blessing
Carolyn

THE CHURCH WARDENS' FABRIC REPORT

Buildings:

The fabric of the Church is in good order. We recently had a complete electrical safety check which in general was good although we have some points to address as we would expect with required maintenance. Most of these works have been completed. The gas boiler heating system has also recently been serviced and is fully operational. We are now arranging to complete a full fire safety inspection.

We again experienced invasions from bees. Fortunately, a specialist was able to attend and remove a significant number and transfer them to hives. We will continue to monitor this situation and to take appropriate action.

During lockdown a camera was purchased to enable on-line streaming and videos of services for those who were unable to attend limited services. In addition, new chairs were purchased for the Church Hall.

We were extremely delighted and relieved to receive a positive response to our grant application to the Lottery Heritage Fund and thank Rev'd. Diana for all her time and hard work involved in that application. We are now preparing for restoration works to the Fresco by Rosemary Rutherford; the repairs to the spire will commence shortly, initially by way of meetings with contractors and ensuring preservation of our bat population.

The building has passed an asbestos survey conducted by Environtec and we were pleased to find that the organ is also clear of any asbestos. The organ work began in earnest on 28th December and we look forward to hearing our wonderful organ in peak condition once again.

We are still working towards facilitating the requisite repairs to the lychgate which was highlighted as requiring extensive restoration in our report last year. Arrangements are ongoing for a meeting with the Architect and contractors.

Grounds:

We have endeavoured to make our churchyard rules more prominent in order to avoid having to remove items; these now include rules regarding items placed on the burial of ashes areas. Signage has been installed at all gates in an effort to impress on the public that dogs off-lead and cycling in the Churchyard is strictly prohibited. It is hoped that with the opening of the new cycle path adjacent to the Churchyard the use by cyclists will be greatly reduced.

The hard work carried out in the grounds by David Marcus and all who volunteer to work with him on a Tuesday is extremely appreciated. We pass on our thanks to you all. In the near future we will be working closely with the Diocesan Tree Advisor and the working party to begin a new schedule of works involving the maintenance of the trees and we very much look forward to working with all involved to achieve this. These efforts should ensure that the churchyard will remain not only a beautiful and peaceful place but also one of safety for those tending graves or visiting.

Andrew Mussell and Susan Garwood

ELECTORAL ROLL

This year again has been a sad and difficult time, as four older members of our congregation have sadly died and others have moved away. At the end of 2020 there were 129 on the Electoral Roll whereas currently there are 122 names on the roll.

Due to the intermittent attendance of the congregation, as a result of the Covid pandemic, it has been more challenging to enrol new members but we can be hopeful that we will be able to continue with more regular attendance during 2022.

*Kathy Rouse
(Electoral Roll Officer)*

NCMMP

St. Mary with St. Leonard Church is a member of the North Chelmsford Mission and Ministry Partnership (NCMMP) which also includes the parishes of St. Mary's – Great Leighs; St John's - Little Leighs; St. John the Evangelist - Ford End; The Chignals with Mashbury; St. Mary with St. Lawrence - Great Waltham; St Martin's – Little Waltham; Holy Trinity - Pleshey; St, Francis - Beaulieu; St. Andrew's - Boreham; St Augustine's and All Saints in Springfield.

The NCMMP council have met three times since I took over the role as your lay representative in April 2021: in May via Zoom; a Retreat/Workshop held at Othona on 4th and 5th October; and a further meeting on 13th October at St. Mary's, Broomfield.

The NCMMP has spent considerable time and effort throughout this year, and especially at the Othona workshop, praying together for guidance in considering the way forward to explore how the body of Christ that worship across the 12 churches can continue to flourish and survive into the future. Ideas on how the parishes may work in collaboration in the future have been put forward to Archdeacon Snowden for consideration in the Deanery Plan consultation period.

We have to acknowledge in the Deanery plan that, due to the financial situation of Chelmsford Diocese, there will be a reduced number of stipend clergy in our NCMMP. We need to work towards consolidating our ongoing commitment to collaboration between ordained, lay ministers and congregations across the NCMMP if our churches are to survive in the future.

Several Parishes in the NCMMP have been in interregnum for a number of years and to assist these parishes Rev'd. Carolyn Tibbott kindly agreed to assist Gt Waltham and Ford End churches and Rev'd. Diana Garfield to assist Chignal with Mashbury, until April 2023. This has greatly increased the pressure on our ministers here at St. Mary's.

The NCMMP has been acknowledged in being successful in forging collaboration between member churches and it is important we build on that strength.

Lis Hardy
Lay NCMMP Representative for the PCC

DEANERY SYNOD

During 2021, four sessions of the Chelmsford Deanery Synod took place. The first on 2nd March was, by necessity, online via Zoom. It was the second session of the newly united Chelmsford Deanery. The main discussion topic was homelessness and rough sleeping in Chelmsford informed by a presentation given by Gary Fleming, an ordinand based at the Cathedral and working with the City Council, CHES, Sanctus and the Cathedral to address this issue. There was also information and discussion of various organisational matters following the uniting of the Chelmsford North and South Deaneries including the appointment of a Deanery Treasurer and a Deanery subscription. At the end of each Synod, members divided into groups for prayer according to parish requests circulated with the agenda.

The next session was held on 12th May again by Zoom. Prior to the session, the draft Deanery Plan was circulated for consultation within parishes. The main topic for the session was 'Living in Love and Faith' (LLF), the Church of England's resource material for helping churches in learning and praying

together as part of discerning a way forward in matters of identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage. Rev'd. Susan Iskander is an official advocate for the LLF project and she guided Synod through the material to help see how parishes and MMU's might use it and engage with it fruitfully. A report of the latest session of General Synod was received. Notice was given of the forthcoming Diocesan Synod election in which Deanery Synod members vote for their representatives.

The session on 8th September was held in person at St Luke's, Moulsham. The main item of discussion was Vocation, led by Rev'd. Carolyn Tibbott. This was particularly relevant in the light of diminishing stipendiary clergy numbers that has to be addressed in the Deanery Plan. We were reminded that we are all called by God to minister in His church in some capacity. Progress on the Deanery Plan was reported and again prayers for the needs of parishes were said in groups.

The final session of the year was on 1st December at Meadgate Church. The main item was a presentation of the "NightStop Project" in which Chelmsford City Council are participating to provide emergency accommodation for young people who are in danger of becoming homeless. It is hoped to seek volunteers to provide a room or other services to assist the project. Some questions relating to the Deanery Plan were asked and hope was expressed that the revised version could be adopted early next year. The Treasurer raised matters relating to a Deanery contribution from parishes to cover the hosting of the Synod and the support of some charities. A General Synod report was received.

The Deanery Synod meets to fulfil statutory duties to consult and decide, to share and discuss best practice, and pray together. St Mary's Deanery Synod representatives are laity – Jill Readings, Ros Mercer and Kathy Rouse, plus our clergy team.

Ros Mercer

WORSHIP & MINISTRY

ASSOCIATE PRIEST'S REPORT

This has been another year of challenge and change, both for me personally and for St Mary's.

It is good to be worshipping in church again now and singing together but sadly Covid anxieties are still affecting us all. We pray that Summer 2022 will allow us to get back to the full social and spiritual life of church with all our members back with us.

In April 2021 Rev'd. Carolyn and I took on the extra responsibilities of Gt Waltham and Ford End and Chignalls with Mashbury. I am now Associate Priest in the Chignalls and lead worship there once a month. During the week we read Morning Prayer at St Nicholas' on Wednesdays and I spend a little time there. This has meant of course that I am not around at St Mary's quite so much as I used to be, which some of you have noticed. It has also led to changes in our worship pattern at Broomfield which I know some of you are finding hard to accept. Change is always difficult for all of us.

I continue to enjoy the pastoral contacts that I have in Broomfield and keep in touch with as many of you at home as I can. My thanks too to the Wednesday Bible Study group whose unfailing enthusiasm for keeping going has kept me going this year as well. Our strength as a church always lies in the bonds of love that we have with each other.

The exciting thing this year has, of course, been our successful bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund for a grant for Project Rutherford. I know that St Mary's will rise to the challenge of running this demanding project and I rejoice that the tower and spire, the symbols of our mission in this place, will be restored to their former glory. Everyone needs to be involved in this project which, God willing, will open up our church to an even greater and more diverse number of people.

At the end of May 2022 I reach the grand old age of 70 and I have decided that this is the right time for me to retire from Associate Ministry. St Mary's Broomfield is, as you know, my true spiritual home and I will always be so grateful for the privilege of serving as priest here. God has indeed poured his blessings on me here.

Rev'd. Diana Garfield

THE CURATE'S REPORT

Firstly, thank you to everyone for welcoming us as a family to Broomfield. I was licensed as a Lay Worker on 27th June 2021, but the summer months were mostly concentrated on our moving home, settling in, and finding our way around Broomfield and surrounding areas. I was ordained Deacon on 11th September 2021 and formally began my curacy training. As a family, we have felt welcomed and included, which has been so helpful and has eased our move here enormously. I am grateful especially for Rev'd. Carolyn and Rev'd. Diana's wisdom and guidance in setting me on the right path at the start of my curacy. You, the people of God, are playing a part in forming me into the Deacon and Priest God is calling me to be, and I am thankful I have been placed in a community that understands this and is willing to help train me and, importantly, be gracious in the face of my mistakes.

I am aware I have yet to see St Mary's in 'normal' times (if there is such a time as normal!). We remain in the grips of the Covid-19 pandemic and church gatherings, whilst resumed after the period of lockdowns, are yet to be completely restored to pre-pandemic experience. We remain cautious, rightly, by wearing masks and keeping space, and we have had to be creative and flexible in some of the services and events held since September. A great example of this was our family Nativity event on Christmas Eve, telling the Nativity story as we walked around the outside of the church. This was undoubtedly driven by the need to be outside and was somewhat of a trial – it was a little different from the normal Crib services, but the Nativity story was re-told, and we met the Christ-child anew within the excitement and joy of all who were present.

It has, despite the current Covid-dictated climate, been a pleasure to worship with you, to join the community in praise and worship of God, to gather once again in sharing the Eucharist and hearing the word of God in our midst. I have had the pleasure of joining the 'Baffled by the Bible' and 'Friends with Faith' groups. With Rev'd. Carolyn, it has been a joy to regularly join with Ford End Primary school in weekly collective worship and to visit Broomfield Primary School and Great Waltham Primary School for occasional assemblies. We were also able to welcome Broomfield Primary School into church for their Christmas celebrations and it was wonderful to see the church full of children hearing the Christmas story and watching them with their musical instruments, singing and giving dramatic performances. I have also had the pleasure of visiting the 'Little Lambs' group on occasion and seeing the important work Margaret and Virginia are undertaking in providing space for families.

I am, slowly, getting around to meeting with members of the congregation. It is enormously interesting to hear personal stories and get to know you all as individuals and as a community.

Thank you all for your support and welcome and let's all look forward into the next year with hopeful anticipation of what God is doing in Broomfield.

Rev'd. Dawn Butcher

AUTHORISED LOCAL PREACHER'S REPORT

When Jesus called to his disciples on Lake Galilee and told them to follow him he said "I will make you fishers of men". How very difficult it is sometimes, and how profound the change can be, when we accept the call of Jesus in our lives; it is this call that led me to worship with you at St. Mary's in the beginning of 2020. I began a Confirmation course in March (little did I know at the time what was to transpire as our Church was closed and worship began online and via zoom). I was Confirmed by Bishop John in August 2020 and welcomed as an Authorised Local Preacher (ALP) at St. Mary's in February 2021 which began my journey in ministry with you.

I have been extremely grateful and sometimes overwhelmed by the level of support that I have received as I began my ministry journey. The care and love of Christ shown among you is truly humbling and I am sure that this love has been of immense support and strength through recent times of fear and anguish. The support that I have received from you all has enabled me to immerse myself in learning the work involved in the day-to-day running of the Church and the diverse ways in which the Church is alive in our community; even when our church was closed our ministry continued. I find myself now a fully committed member of the ministry team and I know in my very soul that I am following God's call on me.

Thank you all once again and I look forward to serving God with you all in our Church and our community in the future. I know that God's love will sustain us all.

Andy Mussell

Servers

The team returned to serving at the beginning of September. Owing to the pandemic this was a different way of serving as during Eucharist services communicants are offered the wafer but not wine. Nonetheless it was an honour to be able to once again assist Clergy at the Altar.

Sadly, one of our servers has withdrawn from the role and we would like to thank her for her devoted service.

We are pleased to welcome new servers to our team and pray that God be with them as they start this privileged role.

In September three servers attended a Company of Servers meeting and service at St. Mary's Church in Maldon. This gave us the opportunity to network with fellow servers and to discuss issues related to the role of serving.

Chris Bailey, Margaret Clarke, Margaret Ginn, Lis Hardy, Sheila Hasler, Kathy Rouse

INTERCESSIONS GROUP

Although we have not restarted the group, folk that we know about are prayed for by us as individuals. We also include many by name at the Bible Study meeting on a Wednesday morning and at other prayer times throughout each week.

Mavis Tebby

THE PASTORAL CARE AND VISITING TEAM

Pastoral team members have continued to provide as much support as possible to the housebound and elderly during another difficult year. Visiting has necessarily been curtailed during much of the year although we now have guidelines for home visits and are beginning to re-start them. Phone contact has been maintained as much as possible.

We have not as yet returned to our regular visits to the residential care homes in the parish but hope to do this in the near future.

Grateful thanks as ever to our Pastoral Team members who do so much caring around the parish.

Rev'd. Diana Garfield

RUTHERFORD PROJECT

Much time was spent over the summer of 2021 in putting together our bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) for a grant towards running this project which centres around conserving and promoting Rosemary Rutherford's unique fresco in the church tower. At the beginning of November we finally received the good news that we had been awarded a grant of £135,721 which, together with our own fund raising of £70,000, will cover the conservation work on the fresco, the repair of the church spire and tower, and the community and school activities that are an integral part of the project.

At our PCC meeting on December 6th we agreed the basics of a Project Management structure and a Project plan - both required by the NLHF. The project will require everyone in the church to be involved and play an active part. We have to provide regular reports on our progress and the project will last until the end of 2023.

There will be a Project Rutherford Launch event on 30th April 2022 to which all our friends and supporters will be invited. The building work on the spire and tower will begin on 6th June, after the Jubilee. Bakers of Danbury have been awarded the contract. They are local building contractors who have long experience in restoring churches and who know St Mary's Broomfield well. After the building work is done, the interior of the tower will be refurbished and the fresco cleaned and conserved. Our bell ringers will benefit from these improvements and when the ringers are not there, we want to create a space within the tower for quiet reflection and meditation.

The key aim of the project is to conserve the Rutherford fresco in the church tower and to promote local and national knowledge of Rosemary Rutherford's work. We will be creating an exhibition in church about the artist's life and work and in order to create space for this display, the PCC have agreed to remove a number of pews from the back of the north aisle. For a long time we have felt the need for a better display space in church, so this will provide a welcome addition to our facilities. We are putting together a team of people from inside and outside the church to work on the content of this exhibition and to produce related publications about Rosemary Rutherford's work.

The NLHF is providing this grant on the understanding that our church's rich heritage is shared more widely, both locally and nationally. We must look at how we can keep the church building open and accessible more of the time so that more visitors can come. We have also committed to working with our local schools to involve our young people more deeply in conserving and promoting the church's heritage. If we can achieve this then we are helping to safeguard the future of our beautiful building.

Project Rutherford is perhaps the biggest challenge that our church has undertaken since the building of St Leonard's Hall. Past generations have worked to ensure that our building is in good condition for us. Now it is our turn to work to ensure that St Mary with St Leonard is fit for community use in the 21st century. The long-term future of our building depends on the wider involvement of the community in Broomfield.

Rev'd. Diana Garfield

ECO CHURCH

Eco Church is a project that has been set up by A Rocha UK, a Christian Charity working for the protection and restoration of the natural world. The aim of this project is to equip Christians and churches in the UK to care for the Environment. In February 2021 the PCC voted to work towards becoming an Eco Church and work started on this in the April.

The first step was to complete an online survey about how St. Mary's are caring for God's earth through our life and work. This focussed around five key areas: worship and teaching; management of church buildings; management of church land; community and global engagement; and lifestyle. The answers we provided went towards collecting points towards an Eco Church award of which there are three levels - Bronze, Silver and Gold.

By early July we had collated all the relevant information together on the work that we are currently doing and completed the survey. We were thrilled to learn that we had been awarded a Bronze award! A great achievement! Although we scored a Bronze award overall the individual breakdown of each category shows that we are already at Gold standard for worship and teaching; Silver standard for both the management of buildings and land; and bronze for both community and global engagement and lifestyle. This is a great place for us to start this journey and we are now working towards our Silver award.

We have a small Eco group working on the above which includes Rachel Butterworth, Sarah Clark, Sheila Hasler, Yvonne Heaver, Karen Paxton, Kathy Rouse and Glynis Worboys.

We have also joined the NCMMP Eco Church Network which has so far met once, but also has email and What's App groups to enable the churches to support one another and share information and ideas about our Eco Church journeys.

Rachel Butterworth

WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY GROUP (1)

On a lovely sunny Wednesday at the end of July, Ros Mercer invited Members of the Bible Study Group to meet in her garden. Apart from having to comply with social distancing, we were together at last and, God willing, we hopefully agreed to recommence our meetings in September.

We began our programme by choosing some of the sayings from the Book of Proverbs, comparing them with ones we use today and reminding ourselves of some of the well-known sayings of Jesus.

Further studies were from Paul's letter to the Philippians, followed by the lives of three women from the Old Testament. Advent studies brought us to the end of another year. With our thanks to Ros for her hospitality, we trust that our meetings will continue throughout 2022 without any further COVID-19 restrictions.

Mavis Tebby

WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY GROUP (2) – 'BAFFLED BY THE BIBLE'

The "Baffled by the Bible" group has gone from strength to strength this year with several new members joining us. In the Spring and Summer we continued our meetings on Zoom and during Lent spent time studying and appreciating the Book of Psalms. In September we re-started face-to-face meetings in St. Leonard's Hall and have enjoyed being in each other's company again. We completed a thorough study of St Mark's Gospel which provoked much discussion and then followed an Advent course based on the Sunday morning readings in church.

We welcome anyone who would like to study the Bible in more depth with us. We learn by questioning and discussion, and we have quite a few laughs along the way too.

Rev'd. Diana Garfield

LITTLE LAMBS

Virginia and I were delighted to return to Little Lambs in June 2021 for six weeks until the Summer holidays. I had asked parents and grandparents to ring and book from week to week on a first come system to keep numbers down to 12 adults and this worked well. The children seemed subdued at first, as this was the first time some had mixed with other children.

In September the booking system was behind us and it was lovely to welcome back friends old and new. We have between 10 and 15 families attending regularly. The children have settled and enjoy playing with new friends as parents and grandparents enjoy a chat.

We were sorry to say 'Goodbye' to Mavis, who since 2011 had made many cups of tea. We are always pleased to see her when she calls in from time to time.

Margaret Deacon

FRIENDS WITH FAITH

This group meets every alternate Tuesday during term time from 9.30am for an hour and is run by Rev'd. Carolyn Tibbott and more recently Rev'd. Dawn Butcher. It is a group for parents and carers of children of all ages to meet for mutual Christian support and discussion. If parents and carers have pre-school children they are able to play whilst we chat.

With the pandemic ongoing we continued to meet virtually via zoom with a core group of seven. Then, in September, we were delighted to meet face-to-face in the church hall once again. This is when we also welcomed our new curate, Rev'd. Dawn Butcher, to the group.

We continue to enjoy open and relaxed spiritual discussions. It is a group valued by its members providing shared support, a great opportunity to talk about issues beyond day-to-day childcare and also

explore member's Christianity. Discussions are mostly based around scripture and we are currently enjoying exploring the importance of some of the key women in the Bible. Additionally, we are able to give support to each other through open chat both face-to-face and via our What's App group. All discussions have enabled us to deepen our Christian understanding and faith and also find the support we all needed during another difficult year.

All new members will be warmly welcomed, especially those with little ones who are not at school and can play while we chat.

Rachel Butterworth

SUPPORTING WORSHIP

PUPPET CREW

After a break of 18 months puppets returned for the family service on the 19th September. With restrictions still in place we were able to do a limited performance on Christmas Eve. Fingers crossed things will be better next year. It was lovely to have Rhian back with us for the performance. We would be very pleased to welcome new members.

Michelle Curtis

CHURCH MUSIC

Normality returned to our church music-making to some extent during the year. We were able to restart choir practices in September and it was a joy to be able sing freely again.

Of course, in recent months, mask wearing is again the norm but at least we can sing. Christmas services were able to go ahead and we had a lovely Carol service in church, followed on Christmas Eve by our outdoor nativity which proved to be a huge success.

My thanks to our wonderful choir whose enthusiasm for bringing lovely music to you every week is to be commended. Many churches don't have a choir at all, and those who do often sing the same things during communion week after week. I believe it's important that we bring you a range of songs, hymns and chants which are particularly chosen to compliment the readings of the day.

Currently we are looking through our new hymn book in search of new material we can bring to you during the year.

There have only been a few weddings during the year but in 2022 we have 10 booked in, some of which will have a choir. Good luck to those couples who are currently preparing for their special day.

The Organ

Andrew Stephens started work on our organ restoration on December 28th. I'm sure you've all been amazed to see it stretched out before us in the north aisle. Some work will be done in his workshop but he hopes to complete the work by Easter. It will be wonderful to celebrate this important feast day with the sounds of our organ ringing in our ears.

Jill Parkin

ST. MARY'S BELL RINGERS

We're back! Happy days are here again.

2021 has been a difficult year obviously with Covid still being a major disruption to daily routines. However, the relaxing of restrictions earlier in the year meant we could return to Bell Ringing. Hopefully some of you reading this enjoy hearing the bells rung again.

Our first action was a solemn one; we tolled the tenor in memory of the Duke of Edinburgh back in April when he passed away and again for his funeral in conjunction with numerous other towers around the country.

Following a deep cleaning exercise upstairs we have resumed ringing for services and weddings, together with holding practice night on a Wednesday. We have another new recruit under training to help strengthen the band and together with the others still learning (that sadly got their training derailed) we hope to build a strong team capable of ringing for any occasion.

For further information or if you're interested in learning to ring please contact Chris Marcus (Tower Captain) by email at broomfield@eacr.org.uk or by telephone 07730 796 422.

Chris Marcus

BIBLE READING FELLOWSHIP (BRF)

BRF is still offering several publications for daily readings, including those already read by our members: New Daylight, which appears to be the most popular and there is also a larger print issue for those who have eyesight problems; Upper Room; Guidelines; Bible Readings for Older People; and Day by Day with God. These booklets are issued three times a year.

There are several other publications which could be of interest.

Margaret Ginn

CHURCH WEBSITE

Despite Covid and all its restrictions, the church website has been very active over the past year, livestreaming most of the services that have been held in church, plus evening prayer online and a daily Morning and Evening Prayer. Since lockdown has eased, I have been putting events and information on the website plus adding many more events to the diary. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Andy the webmaster for all his work backing up and maintaining the website and putting up anything that cannot be done by the ministry team or myself.

Joan Vine

SAFEGUARDING

The PCC last agreed and adopted the Church of England Safeguarding Policy – Promoting a Safer Church - on 4th February 2021 and, as this requires annual approval, this proposal will be put forward to the PCC members for re-adoption at their next meeting on 8th February 2022.

In accordance with this policy our church is committed to:

- Promoting a safer environment and culture
- Safely recruiting and supporting all those with any responsibility related to children, young people and vulnerable adults within the church.
- Responding promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation.
- Caring pastorally for victims/survivors of abuse and other affected persons.
- Caring pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns or allegations of abuse and other affected persons.
- Responding to those that may pose a risk to others.

Safeguarding telephone numbers are displayed in the church, church hall, parish magazine and website.

There have been changes to the Safeguarding training this year and volunteers now undertake the National Safeguarding Promoting a Safer Church training which is more relevant to our volunteers' roles; this has to be undertaken every three years.

As from January 2022 all new DBS checks will be required to be renewed after 3 years instead of 5 years. I will contact all those with existing DBS certificates when they will be required to renew theirs.

Over the last eighteen months we have tried to ensure the safety of all the congregation during the Covid restrictions and we look forward to a time when these can be relaxed.

Lisbeth Hardy

THE WIDER CHURCH

FILM AND LUNCH CLUB

St Mary's Picture House was closed for a good part of 2021 due to the restrictions in place for the Covid virus. We were eventually able to re-open in September and it was good to be back. Our films cover a range of productions. Those screened since September were 'Whisky Galore', 'An Elephant's Journey', 'Extraordinary Measures' and finally, for December, 'Scrooge'.

The Film Club meet on the second Monday of each month at 12.30pm, other than during school holidays. Bring your own lunch with you, we provide tea or coffee. Some of the films lined up for 2022 are: 'Goodbye Christopher Robin', 'The Other Boleyn Girl', 'Water for Elephants', 'Mandela', 'Local Hero', 'Dear John'. Hope you will be able to join us, you will be very welcome.

Peter Baker

LUNCH AND LAUGHTER

WE ARE BACK! We started in September with just a few of us but as time moves on we are gradually increasing in numbers so hopefully we will soon be back to strength. There is plenty of room for anyone who would like to join us on the third Monday of each month at 12.30pm in the church hall; all donations are for church funds.

I look forward to seeing you. God bless.

Sue Browning

BEETLE DRIVE

We met in January 2020 and then picked up where we left off in September 2021. We had 13 people attending that month and were so pleased to be back playing, chatting, sipping tea and eating cake.

We played again in October and November and look forward to a busier time in 2022.

We get together on the third Thursday of the month at 2pm in St. Mary's Hall – 50p – can't be bad.

Look forward to seeing you there.

Margaret Powell, Margaret Deacon

TUESDAY CHURCHYARD WORKING PARTY

For the second year running Covid 19 has placed additional restrictions on the operation of the Working Party but we managed to keep going throughout. We have operated in accordance with the social distancing guidance and we all wear gloves. The risk of infection to our volunteers is minimal as we are working in the open air.

For those who do not know of us we meet every Tuesday morning, usually from 9.30am to about 12.30 - 1pm. We maintain the Churchyard and the car park and our tasks include cutting the grass, trimming the hedges and shrubs, clearing leaves, tidying the graves and the cremated remains areas, attending to the flower beds, sweeping the paths around the Church and clearing the surface water channels.

The large variety of trees is a notable feature of our Churchyard and towards the end of the year I took over responsibility for the trees, working with the Church Wardens. The routine maintenance of the trees also features in the work of the Working Party.

The PCC have given us authority to ensure that the Churchyard is maintained in accordance with the rules and we remove items from graves that are deemed in contravention of those rules. This includes grave surrounds, plastic and artificial flowers, photographs, cards, balloons, wind-chimes, soft toys, ornaments, candles and personal belongings or memorabilia etc. A minority of visitors to the graves disregard the rules and one of the least pleasant aspects of our work is dealing with the removal of these inappropriate items. It is necessary to have rules to ensure common standards which respect other bereaved families.

Expenses are kept to a minimum as much as possible and during 2021 our total costs amounted to about £270. This was mainly for petrol for the mowers and strimmers, parts for the latter and weedkiller to deal with the courtyard paving. It is estimated that over 1,000 man hours of work go into the maintenance of the Churchyard and car park every year. This is a very significant voluntary commitment by the members of the Working Party to the benefit of our Church.

An important part of our role is a presence in the Churchyard on Tuesday mornings when we are available to talk to visitors. We have many regulars with whom we enjoy a chat.

Our very welcome practice of a refreshment break during the morning with sausage rolls has been reintroduced although we partake of this outside in the Churchyard or the Courtyard. It gives an opportunity for a chat.

I am very pleased to report that we have had new volunteers join us during the year and also a volunteer for the maintenance of our mowers and strimmers.

We continue to look after the Churchyard in a manner so that there is a balance between the need to make it attractive to local people and visitors whilst also encouraging wild flowers, insects, birds and bats by leaving areas of grass uncut and log piles. Areas of our Churchyard are at least as old as the Church Building, if not older, and have been a refuge for plants and animals for generations.

Anybody who enjoys a socially distanced chat with or without a bit of gardening thrown in would be very welcome to call in and see us on a Tuesday morning anytime between 9.30 and 12.30.

David Marcus

ST. MARY'S LADIES GROUP

Having been unable to meet face-to-face for 18 months, our first meeting of 2021 was a "Welcome Back" celebration held in September. The committee had decided that our group would continue to meet on the 4th Thursday of the month but now at 2pm in the afternoon. This time has proved very popular with everyone, and we have welcomed 6 new members.

In October our speaker was Brian Howson from the Angel Tree Project and as a group we provided 23 Christmas presents for children of prisoners in Chelmsford prison.

Trudy Stevens gave us an insight into her work as a member of the Broomfield Hospital Chaplaincy team at our November meeting.

We ended the year with our traditional Christmas celebration of carols and readings in the church followed by a potluck supper in St Leonards Hall.

We are looking forward to a full programme in 2022. Our meetings are advertised in the Round Tower and on the church website. Any ladies who would like to join us will receive a very warm welcome.

Sue Cole

THE CHILDREN'S SOCIETY

21 members of St Mary's congregation have a Children's Society box where they deposit their loose change throughout the year. Unfortunately, due to Covid restrictions the boxes have not been collected since 2019. I am hoping that these can be brought to church on 30th January 2022 to be blessed at St. Mary's Annual Christingle Service.

The Society has been very important to children during the pandemic, especially to those whose education was disrupted and those cut-off from their peers. They live their lives increasingly "online" where they can be at risk from grooming. This can have a negative impact on their mental health together with feelings of loneliness and isolation. The Children's Society has been at the forefront of tackling such problems.

I would like to thank all those who continue to support the Children's Society. The kindness and compassion shown by box holders enables the Society to make it possible for these children to escape potentially harmful surroundings and lead the happier lives that they deserve.

Sue Cole

CHRISTIAN AID

Sadly, due to the COVID restrictions, we have been unable to support Christian Aid in our usual ways throughout this year. However, despite a reduction in resources, this important organisation has continued to demonstrate Christian care in a number of resource-poor countries. It is well worth exploring their website to catch up with all they are undertaking.

Two new projects for 2022 involve working in Bangladesh to test innovative microcredit models that build resilience to climate-related shocks and stresses; and in Sierra Leone developing new models to support women's economic empowerment. Both projects are exciting developments based on lessons learned from past work and are worthy of our support.

Christian Aid week in 2022 will be 15th – 21st May

It may be that, again, we cannot physically undertake any door-to-door collections during May but online donations provide an enormous resource for continuation of this important work. Please do consider giving via www.christianaid.org.uk/appeals.

With thanks

Trudy.Stevens2021@gmail.com

Trudy Stevens

FLOWER ARRANGERS

Owing to the closure of the Church for normal services, due to Lockdown, no flowers were required in the early part of the year. Rev'd. Carolyn asked me to make Mothering Sunday posies which were to be collected on the day from the Church Porch. 80 posies soon went, leaving some ladies disappointed. With the reopening of the Church I was delighted to be asked to provide a weekly pedestal arrangement next to the pulpit, beside the temporary Altar. Harvest Festival saw the team of ladies decorating the whole Church, a lovely sight when completed. Sue and Roger Cole helped me adorn the Church with some of the poppies made by ladies from the village for the 2018 100-year remembrance of the end of World War One. We decorated again at Christmas, with the assistance of two new helpers.

There have only been two weddings requiring flowers during the year.

Sadly Daphne, one of our team, died just before Christmas.

My grateful thanks to the ladies of the team and the ministry team for their support during this difficult year. Let us hope and pray that 2022 is an easier one for us all.

Margaret Pinkerton

THE ROUND TOWER MAGAZINE

It was good to get back to near normality in 2021. True, when the church was closed earlier in the year, distribution was more onerous but as the year progressed that also improved. There was rarely a shortage of material to be included which meant that the size of the magazine was increased by four pages during 2021. We are very grateful to all who contributed articles. Please continue to send them in. It is so good to have a Round Tower that is filled by its readership. I have seen parish magazines which contain the vicar's letter, a few bits of news and lots of "filler" and that seems a little sad.

The Round Tower remains an important way of sharing the church news with our parishioners, especially over the last two years of the pandemic. Currently we distribute just over 170 copies directly to our readership with another 10 to 20 being purchased from church. That number has been drifting down so if you see an opportunity to add to our readership numbers please do.

Many thanks to all our distributors who have done an incredible job in very trying circumstances. My thanks too to our editorial panel who sift through the copy every month looking for typos, grammatical errors and mistakes.

Alun Powell