

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ST. MARY, THORPE

England & Wales - Charity number 1176929

Details

Other names	ST MARY'S CHURCH, THORPE PCC, THORPE ST. MARY PCC
Status	Registered
Legal form	Other
Registered	2018-01-31
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

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Activities

Objects: PROMOTING IN THE PARISH THE WHOLE MISSION OF THE CHURCH, PASTORAL, EVANGELISTIC, SOCIAL AND ECUMENICAL.

Activities: Regular public worship open to all; provision of a sacred place for personal prayer and contemplation; pastoral work including visiting the sick and infirm;taking of religious assemblies in school; promotion of Christianity through sermons, courses, groups, events and meetings;supporting other charities in the UK and overseas; promoting the mission of the church throughout the Parish.

Classification

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

Geography

- Surrey

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2024-12-31	£988,125	£988,197	£521,191	0
2023-12-31	£134,110	£145,561	-	-
2022-12-31	£202,340	£201,741	-	-
2021-12-31	£140,964	£140,126	-	-
2020-12-31	£94,152	£98,430	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
ALLISON ELIZABETH KELLY		2021-01-01
ANDREW WEST		2017-04-30
CLAIRE MARGARET COBBOLD		2017-04-30
DIANA LEES		2022-04-10
JENNIFER OLIVE BRIGHT		2017-04-30
MARGARET THERESA HARNDEN		2017-04-30
Mary Morris		2022-01-01
SUZANNE THORNTON		2020-04-01

Accounts



St Mary's Church Thorpe



Annual Report

For the year ending 31st December 2024

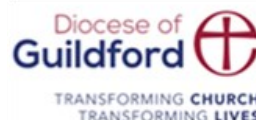
ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

To be held on

Sunday 23rd March 2025 11:30am

St Mary's Church, Church Approach,
Thorpe Village, Surrey TW20 8TQ
Charity No: 1176929

www.stmaryschurchthorpe.co.uk



Contents

	Pages
Part 1	
Introduction to the Annual Parochial Church Meeting	2
Agenda for the Vestry Meeting 23rd March 2025	3
Agenda for the Annual Parochial Church Meeting 23rd March 2025	3
Minutes of the Vestry Meeting held Sunday 21st April 2024	4
Minutes of the APCM held Sunday 21st April 2024	5
<u>Reports for 2024</u>	
Vicar's Report	9
Electoral Roll Report	11
PCC Secretary's Report	11
Churchwardens' Annual Report	12
Fabric and Property Register Report	14
Financial Report	16
Safeguarding	18
Deanery Synod Representatives' Report	19
<u>Other Reports in the Life of the Church</u>	
Family Service	22
Noah's Ark	22
Church Cleaning	23
Contemplative Prayer Group	23
Flower Guild	23
Music Secretary's Report	24
Social and Fundraising Team	24
Thorpe Church of England Primary School	26
Runnymede Foodbank	28
Tea and Talk	28
Part 2	
Financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2024	30
Independent Examiner's Report	33
PCC Responsibilities, Governance and Vision	34
Part 3 Appendix Section	
Regular Worship and Social Activities at St Mary's	35

Introduction to the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM).

The APCM is an opportunity to elect our representatives for the Parochial Church Council (PCC) and to ask questions about the finances of the church, the state of the buildings, or any matter of concern in the life of the parish. The PCC takes account of views expressed and matters are taken forward in subsequent PCC meetings for discussion. We look forward to the year ahead as well as reflecting upon the past year.

Please read the report thoroughly and come to the meeting with questions, as we meet together in sacramental worship and fellowship – Transforming Church, Transforming Lives.

Agenda for the Vestry Meeting (Meeting of Parishioners)

Opening Prayer

Apologies for absence

Minutes of 21st April 2024 and any matters arising

Election of Churchwardens

Nomination for approval of Deputy Wardens (honorary supportive role)

End of Vestry Meeting

(At this point those not named on the Church Electoral Roll cannot vote if they remain.)

Agenda for the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM)

Apologies for absence

Minutes of the previous APCM held in Church on 21st April 2024

Matters arising

1. Elections & Appointments

Annual election of PCC Members

Election of Deanery Synod Representatives

Approval of Sides-persons

Appointment of Sides-person to assist the Treasurer with banking

Confirmation of appointment of the Electoral Roll Officer

Note that the PCC Secretary, Treasurer and Vice Chair of the PCC will be formally agreed at the next Parochial Church Council meeting (to be held on Monday 19th May 2025 7:30pm) as they are Officers of the PCC.

Appointment of the Independent Examiner for 2025 Financial Accounts to assist the Treasurer with banking.

2. Reports – see written reports

(i) Report on Electoral Roll

(ii) PCC Secretary's Report on the proceedings of the PCC

(iii) Parish Reports – *printed & distributed*

Summary of reports from the Chair

(iv) Churchwardens' Report including Fabric/Terrier

(v) Accounts – Financial Report 2024

Acceptance of Financial Report 2024

(vi) Deanery Synod Representatives' Report – *printed & distributed*

3. Any other business

(i) Questions & Answers Session – *questions please at least 24 hours in advance stmaryschurchthorpe@outlook.com*

(ii) Announcements

The meeting concludes in prayer and with the Grace.

**Minutes of the Vestry Meeting /Annual Parochial Church Meeting
of St Mary's Church, Thorpe – Sunday 21st April 2024
in the Rutherwyke Room**

Vestry Meeting

Present: Allison Kelly (PCC Secretary) – Chair (AK) –Vestry Meeting
Diana Lees (Churchwarden) – Chair (DL) – APCM Meeting

Present:

P. Gruncell, A. West (AW), Joy Mitchiner, Jane Carter, Katerina Ridge, Margaret Alderson, Ann Leighton, Terry Leighton, Elaine Gill, Kim Stangroom, Claire Cobbold, Jill Collinson, David de Ville, Jackie de Ville, Sue Bruce, Jenny Bright, Joan Gruncell, Susi Thornton (ST), Paul Whitlock, Margaret Roberts, Mary Morris, David Howard, Helen Cunningham, Deborah Kidd.

Absent:

All electoral roll members not listed as Present or having submitted apologies

Meeting commenced: 11.35 am

1. Diana Lees opened the meeting with prayer.

2. Apologies for Absence:

Grace Brown, John Brown, John Brittain, Jean McCloud, Margaret Lilley, John Rook.

3. Minutes and Matters Arising

Minutes for the Vestry Meeting held 2nd April 2023 were accepted and no matters were arising.

4. Election of Church Wardens

Peter Gruncell and Diana Lees confirmed their agreement to stand as Church Wardens.

Unanimously elected.

5. Nominations for approval Deputy Wardens

There were eight Deputy Warden nominations from:

Margaret Harnden, Susi Thornton, Helen Cunningham, Bev Germany, Jill Collinson, Deborah Kidd, Margaret Roberts and Kim Stangroom.

All eight candidates were unanimously accepted.

7. Any Other Business

None

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Minutes from the APCM held 2nd April 2023 were accepted with no amendments.

Matters Arising

None.

1. Elections and Appointments

There were 6 nominations for PCC:

Andy West, Allison Kelly, Margaret Harnden, Jenny Bright, Susi Thornton and Grace Brown.

All 6 nominations were unanimously confirmed.

Election of Deanery Synod Representatives

Mary Morris, Claire Cobbold and Diana Lees indicated their wish to continue serving as Deanery Synod Representatives.

Unanimously approved.

Approval of Sides-persons

Nominations for Sides Persons were:

Susi Thornton, Deborah Kidd, Joan Gruncell, Margaret Roberts, Jill Collinson, Philip Alder, Margaret Harnden, Sue Bruce, Jenny Bright, Bev Germany, Helen Cunningham. Elaine Gill, Grace Brown and Joy Mitchiner.

Unanimously approved.

Appointment of Sides Person to Assist the Treasurer with banking

Nomination from Paul Whitlock.

Unanimously approved.

Confirmation of appointment of the Electoral Roll Officer

Claire Cobbold confirmed that she was happy to continue as Electoral Roll Officer.

Unanimously approved.

Appointment of the Independent Examiner for 2024 Financial Accounts

Paul Whitlock was unanimously confirmed.

2. Reports

DL asked if there were any amendments or errors to the reports contained in the 2024 APCM booklet. There were none.

(i) Electoral Roll

Claire Cobbold confirmed that there were currently 114 on the roll, 80 of the households contained on the roll are of 2 people.

ST raised a query on behalf of Iris Rigazzi-Tarling who had now moved and

wished to remain on St. Mary's electoral roll as well as that of her new parish. DL confirmed Iris could be on two electoral rolls but was only eligible to vote on one.

Claire Cobbold confirmed there would be a full revision of the electoral roll in 2025.

(ii) PCC Secretary's Report

No questions raised.

(iii) Parish Reports

DL advised that attendance was starting to pick up at services, all of which had been kept running during the vacancy. She passed her thanks to all the visiting clergy, with special thanks to Fr Gerard, together with Mary Morris for her work behind the scenes securing priests. Thanks were passed by all to DL and MM for the tremendous amount of work undertaken during the vacancy.

(iv) Church Wardens Report (including Fabric/Terrier)

DL confirmed that there were 3 applicants for the post of vicar, who will be attending interviews 29/30 May. There are a mix of men and women with wide experience and skills. Claire Cobbold enquired why there was a long delay before interviews. DL advised the process is one month's notices to give candidates time to prepare and for initial DBS and Safeguarding checks to be undertaken. Sue Bruce enquired if the Diocese choose who they feel is the most suitable candidate after interviews. AW advised that he and DL as parish representatives can override the choice.

DL confirmed the current candidates were a better selection than those who had previously applied and all should keep praying. Jackie de Ville asked how long the appointment was for. DL confirmed the position had been advertised as a three-year tenure with intention to renew, so this could be six years. AW explained that this was dependent on whether St. Mary's can pay its way. The current discount on the Parish Share

continues but is on a decreasing scale over the next 5 years. If we can pay our Parish Share there would be no argument on the position continuing, otherwise the Diocese would seek an alternative solution. Katerina Ridge enquired if a full-time priest would place a burden on the church. AW advised this was not the case, the Parish Share covers employment costs, although less than the salary. It costs £92,000pa for any church in the Diocese, regardless of size, to retain a full-time priest. £47,000 of which is employment costs – salary, pension, NI and the balance goes to the Diocese to support them in its work – staff etc.

Sue Bruce enquired why the Vicarage had only had one short let during the vacancy. AW advised that the Vicarage does not belong to St. Mary's, it is owned by the Diocese, any rentals would have gone to them.

Margaret Roberts felt that the Ecclesiastical Council should release some of

the funds they hold – currently 10.2 billion.

Mary Morris advised that even the Cathedral is trying to sell some of its land in order to stay afloat.

Margaret Harnden wished to pass the thanks of all those present to DL, AW, PG and MM for all the work they have done over the year.

Unanimously agreed.

DL again explained that service numbers did fall initially at the start of the vacancy but are now showing small increases. Our relationship with the Thorpe Primary School and TESIS continues well, with thanks also to Bryan Nixon and his staff.

DL also passed thanks to the Social Committee and to AW as Treasurer and Sacristan, we rely heavily on his knowledge.

Margaret Alderson pointed out that there was no children's church viable currently, there was no contact with parents although children attend through school events. Parents were not always included in the invitation to services. AW advised this was down to the school, parents are always welcome. Susi Thornton advised that she has been requesting for a year an appointment to talk to parents about church activities – perhaps at an open evening – but had not received any response. AW confirmed all candidates will be specially questioned about school commitment and the community at large. Outreach in school is strongly required, it has been noticeable since Fr Damian left there has been no contact in school. The school children's services are held by year group as an extension of their RE lessons, so it is not really appropriate for parents to attend. Parents were at the Harvest Festival services but at Easter with 210 children in attendance there was no room for parents.

Elaine Gill raised the question that historically parents used to have forms signed to say they attended church but this is no longer undertaken, why not? Margaret Harnden advised that under the selection process regular attendees get priority access even over siblings, however, parents would attend until the forms were signed and then disappear.

PG advised that to make the walk back to school safer, the children are now accessing TESIS grounds.

Margaret Harnden is aware that Helen Southgate is keen we start up Faith and Fun again on a Monday, it did encourage parents to attend on a Sunday as follow on. DL advised that currently there is not enough manpower to run. AW advised that Faith and Fun finished because of Covid and Fr. Damian leaving, it will be imperative that the new vicar starts up contact with the school.

Sue Bruce enquired if there were any Scouts of Guides groups in the area. Elaine Gill advised Thorpe Brownies are still running but there are no scouts, due to lack of leaders. DL reiterated that there will be a strong emphasis to candidates that increasing child and youth contact is very important.

Elaine Gill advised that St. Mary's would be prominent at the Summer Fair and when the new vicar is in situ she proposed a Mayoral service for children. Unanimously approved.

DL advised that as churchwardens, there is a legal responsibility to keep the inventory (terrier) and logbook updated. This had last been reviewed in 2018, but she could now advise this was all up-to-date.

PG passed thanks DL for all the work and hours involved in undertaking the full review.

(v) Accounts – Financial Report 2023

AW referred to the report in the APCM booklet with the statement of accounts, which highlighted the age old conflict of income vs expenditure.

Giving is down 17%. Other donations are down 94%. There had been fewer weddings and funerals over the year, which were down 24%.

Apart from the Parish Share of £63,000 other costs were static. DL has been renewing contracts where applicable with lower costs and heating has been reduced over the winter months.

The new organ was installed in August which has been very much enjoyed. There is a need to keep on top of costs and hope income will rise on appointment of a new Vicar, which will be down to growing the congregation. AW thanked all for what they do give as without it there would be no church.

The Diocese would be continuing the Parish Share discount over the next 5 years with £67,000 required this year.

Margaret Harnden enquired if we lose much money through not having an online service. AW confirmed no, the broadcasting licence was costing £1,000 pa and that during lockdown we still raised money via Facebook and A Church near You, what we lost were the cash/envelope money as it transferred online.

Claire Cobbold voiced that Fr. Damian had had a high profile and a relationship with a vicar is helpful, hopefully when a new vicar is in post this will increase events.

Jane Carter enquired if parking was a problem with weddings. AW advised no, this has always previously worked out and guests are aware, it is the lack of priest which makes St. Mary's a less attractive venue.

DL proposed acceptance of the Accounts for 2023.

Accounts unanimously accepted.

(vi) Deanery Synod Report

There were no questions raised. Thanks were passed to Claire Cobbold, Mary Morris and Diana Lees for their attendance and reports.

3. Any Other Business

No questions had been submitted before meeting.

Elaine Gill asked if christening candidates had to reside in the parish. Mary Morris confirmed this was not required. All christenings are currently being

held during the 10am service. DL also confirmed no qualifying connections were required.

AW wished to pass his thanks to Paul Whitlock for his work as Independent Examiner of the annual accounts.

DL closed the meeting with the Grace.

Meeting concluded at 12.36pm.

REPORTS FOR 2024

Vicar's Report 2024

As I look back to my Licensing service on 1st October 2024, I do so with deep appreciation for the warm welcome, the generous hospitality and the prayerful service with Bishop Paul that set the course for my ministry as Vicar of Thorpe. I arrived in a church that has been lovingly looked after by the Churchwardens, PCC and congregation, who were delighted to see the end of a long vacancy and ready to take a breath and prepare, with me, for a new season. The following months have been about listening and learning as we respond to the Bishop's charge to grow the church larger, younger and to become financially sustainable.



As an inclusive church this work has begun by making sure that when people come to services who may be unfamiliar with how we do things, they are put at their ease and feel included; able to follow what is going on even if they have little idea of church or Christian faith. Listening to families who used to come to St Mary's, pre-Covid (or who have never been), about what would work for them by way of Sunday and midweek activities, has been a priority. Also I have been meeting community leaders and having conversations with residents of the parish to find out what at St Mary's is of interest to people, or

what would be of interest. Conversations with other church leaders in the area and with the central staff of the Diocese have helped us maintain a sense of the bigger picture to ensure that the ministry and mission of St Mary's is part of the greater life of the church.

One of the remarkable features of my conversations around the parish has been the goodwill towards the church and the sense that this is 'our church', including among those who don't attend for worship. It has also been somewhat sobering to meet people who have lived in the parish for many years and never visited St Mary's or weren't really aware of it - after all most residents of the parish live around the edges and would have little reason to pass by St Mary's. Developing how we communicate to the wider parish has also been a priority - huge thanks to the office staff for support with publicity and administration.

We have enjoyed glorious worship through the seasons of Advent, Christmas and Epiphany in the majestic setting of St Mary's, hosted a memorable Christmas fair that saw the nave full of activity and enjoyed many other social events. I'd like to express sincere thanks to the Choir, the Social Committee and all who support our services and maintain the building, bless you. It has been a pleasure to throw myself into leading Collective Worship at Thorpe (CofE) School, school services at St Mary's and to begin to work with the staff and governors to develop the links between church and school - there are many opportunities to work together.



As I reflect upon the history of St Mary's as a church maintained by the monks of Chertsey Abbey, and upon cultural changes in the way people express belonging to a church, a picture is beginning to emerge of what I believe are some key foundations to build upon, for a secure and vibrant future.

I will be working with the PCC to prayerfully discern our priorities but I strongly believe it will be less about what we do and more about who we are: the church as a community of people of faith working out how to respond to the invitational love of God in the way that we live and serve together.

Thanks be to God for his work among us, in Christ.
Fr. Stephen

Electoral Roll Report

The Electoral Roll for St Mary's Thorpe at the end of December 2024 was 115 and of this figure there are 18 households where there are 2 members. The figure has slightly decreased from 121. This has included some additions and some members of our church family passing on or moving away. St Mary's Church Thorpe had an interregnum of 21 months. This was longer than expected. Bearing this in mind, the electoral roll figures remained reasonably stable. Knowing this, I believe the electoral roll figures to be quite positive. 2025 is the year where everyone has to re-apply for the electoral roll. This is my third year serving as an electoral officer. I am grateful for the encouragement I have received during this year.

Electoral Roll Officer, Clare Cobbold

PCC Secretary's Report on the work of the Parochial Church Council

The Parochial Church Council met six times over 2024 for regular meetings, excluding the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on Sunday 21st April 2024. There was 1 additional extraordinary meeting, concerned with decisions to be made on legacies.

Again 2024 involved much discussion regarding the vacancy, but at last concluding with interviews of candidates and installation of Fr Stephen Girling to the post on 1st October 2024.

The whole PCC has been involved in work not undertaken by individual members previously in order to keep St. Mary's running but special thanks go to Andy West, Diana Lees and Peter Gruncell who have kept us up to date with finances, the huge admin commitment and upkeep and caretaking of the buildings and churchyard. These tasks while not seen are a heavy time commitment which is massively appreciated by us all.

PCC Secretary, Allison Kelly

Church Wardens' Annual Report 2024

We began 2024 twelve months into our Vacancy and after a further 9 months we were delighted to welcome Fr Stephen Girling, his wife Diane and their family to St Mary's Thorpe. It has been a pleasure getting to know them, and to be working with Fr Stephen, looking to the future and becoming a strong united team.

As in 2023, we are extremely grateful to all the visiting clergy who continued to support St Mary's during the year providing a wonderful range of services. They have all become firm friends and we will miss seeing them so often. Thank you to each of them for their time and commitment.

Attendance at services dipped as the second year of our Vacancy progressed but our many social events were well supported and we saw a lot of engagement from the local community. Our thanks go to Jill Collinson for her unwavering hard work organising the hymns, organists and choir throughout the year, and to our organists, David Howard and Lionel Pike, for their outstanding playing at all our regular services, weddings, funerals and baptisms. Their music is always greatly enjoyed and appreciated. This year we have been joined by Naomi Parfitt and Edward Wilmoth, two local students, who are learning to play the organ, and who have played the hymns and anthems in our 10am services. It has been a real pleasure to welcome them and we have greatly enjoyed their playing. Thank you to them for their time and efforts.

During the year we held a number of festivals including Holy Week and Easter, our Patronal Service, Harvest Festival, Remembrance Sunday and Christmas. All these services saw the church beautifully decorated by our dedicated team of flower arrangers. Thank you to all of them for their creative genius, practical skills and dedication.



On October 1st we held the Licensing and Installation Service for Fr Stephen attended by The Rt Rev'd Paul Davies, Bishop of Dorking, The Venerable Martin Breadmore, Archdeacon of Dorking and Fr Max Kramer, Chaplain of Keble college, Oxford, who are the Patron for St Mary's Church, Thorpe. We were delighted to welcome the Bath Abbey Girls Choir who, after a rain-soaked afternoon at Thorpe Park, remained thoroughly cheerful and sang beautifully.

Outreach

The Social committee excelled themselves in 2024. At times they were so busy with multiple events, they weren't sure if they were coming or going!! Congratulations to all the team for their truly superb efforts and outstanding dedication, and special thanks to Susi Thornton who leads the team with seemingly unlimited energy and enthusiasm.

Where would St Mary's be without them?

Susi, Claire and Margaret have worked extremely hard during the year leading our twice monthly Family Service and have seen some growth in the number of families attending. The team are working closely with Fr Stephen to develop the service and are exploring several exciting opportunities for greater engagement.

Allison and Joy lead Noah's Ark, our pre-school and toddler play group, which runs every Thursday during term-time, and have seen continued growth in attendance. An amazing selection of toys, tempting refreshments and time for adult conversation among the parent and carers make it a thoroughly enjoyable morning. Thank you to our family outreach workers!

Community Engagement

Thank you to TESIS Head of School, Bryan Nixon, for his ongoing support in allowing us access to the South Carpark, leading the students on our churchyard cleanup days and his participation in our church services. The students came several times during the year to help clear up the churchyard, and in October they helped clean the vicarage and tidy the carpark ready for the arrival of Fr Stephen and family. We are immensely grateful for their hard work and cheerful willingness.

We continued to host the children from Thorpe Church of England Primary School at a number of services held in the church. We thoroughly enjoy these services and the very high standard of engagement from the pupils bears witness to the leadership from headteacher, Helen Southgate, and her staff. We look forward to building on our relationship with the school in the coming years through the efforts of Fr Stephen who is working hard to establish new activities to support parents, children and staff.

St Mary's Church continues to support and contribute regularly to Thorpe Together. magazine. We believe in its value as a means of engaging with the village and use it to promote our services and social events. We would like to acknowledge the total commitment given by Margaret Harnden to keeping the magazine running and thank her for her sterling efforts.

In addition to those already mentioned we would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to all the other volunteers who serve so willingly at the church in a wide variety of ways including: our Deputy Wardens, servers, readers, and welcomers for managing our services; Claire, our Electoral Roll Officer and

Facebook Administrator, our coffee and breakfast helpers, the Tea and Talk Team hosting our very popular monthly community get together; Clare, our excellent cleaner who is assisted by Jill and Hannah; Kim who looks after our service linen and serves at some of the Wednesday services, and Bev who manages our Gift Aid donations.

We would like to express our sincere thanks to Andrew West, our Treasurer and Sacristan, whose hard work is invaluable in managing the church finances and coordinating the myriad details for the smooth running of services including being our server nearly every week at the 8am service. His experience and knowledge is essential to our team.

Further thanks are due to the Administration team: Mary Morris, (Parish Administrator), Andrew West, Jill Collinson, Allison Kelly, the members of the PCC and all the parish teams for their efforts and steadfast support during the year.

Finally, on a personal note, the churchwardens would like to thank everyone at St Mary's for the unfailing support, assistance, encouragement and laughter you have shared with both of us in a challenging year.

Churchwardens: Peter Gruncell and Diana Lees

Church Property Register and Fabric Report

The Inventory has been updated to record the donation of 4 hand-painted icons and a framed print during the year. The icons which were made in Greece depict: the Virgin Mary, Jesus Christ, Archangel Gabriel and St Nicholas. The framed print is a copy of "Light of the World" by William Holman Hunt and is in recognition of our stronger links with our Patron, Keble College in Oxford. The inventory entries for two large paintings formerly recorded as missing were updated when the items were located behind the High Altar. A printed version is held in the Parish Office and a digital version on the church computer. The Church Log Book has been updated for 2024.

The Tower and Church Building

A PVC strip curtain was fitted across the west doorway of the tower replacing an old fabric curtain. This has significantly reduced the flow of cold air into the base of the tower and the loss of heat from the rear of the church. Over the course of the year there was a 10% reduction in gas usage. The gutters of the church and the Rutherwyke Room complex have been cleaned.

Church Bells

Cumbrian Bell Co. made visits during the year to reset the controls on the electric console in the church and to investigate failures in the electronic relays that cause the bells to be struck. There are 8 relays which operate the electro-magnetic hammers. One was replaced in January but the remaining 7 are

beginning to fail. At present we can reset these but in time these relays will need to be replaced. We are monitoring the situation.

Clock

The clock continues to run well with timely adjustments made by Andrew West. It is serviced annually.

Organs

The original bench supplied with the Viscount electronic organ has been replaced by the supplier three times due to deterioration of the veneer. This will be monitored in future.

The pipe organ, made by Lewis & Co Ltd, Brixton, will remain in situ for the foreseeable future.

Health & Safety

All required safety checks have been carried out for the electrics and portable appliances, gas, fire alarm system and fire extinguishers and the requisite certificates received. A replacement powder extinguisher was fitted in the boiler room. An advisory notice was given for the smoke detectors in the Rutherwyke Room complex. These have been cleaned and serviced but will need to be replaced in the next couple of years.

Ecclesiastical Insurance carried out an inspection of our policies, procedures and safety checks which we passed with flying colours.

The bollard lamp outside the Boiler Room was repaired and additional solar lights have been placed alongside the path to the vicarage car park.

Churchyard

Our sincere thanks go to our TASIC neighbours; to Bryan Nixon and the volunteer students and adults, who spent several days during the year clearing the churchyard and tidying up the carpark. Pete and Joan Gruncell have worked hard to keep the churchyard patios and paths tidy and have been helped by volunteers from the church family.



Plans are in place to put more flowering plants in the west flowerbed beside the TASIC wall. The tree overhanging the vicarage gate began to lean significantly during the summer. It was cut back and a vast amount of ivy removed to ease the weight on the trunk. This situation is being closely monitored. Pete replaced the reed roof on the Nativity stable which looks amazing and should last for some years.

The Vicarage

During the interregnum the churchwardens made weekly inspections of the Vicarage and took monthly meter readings. In June a significant flood was discovered in the vicarage following the removal of several radiator valves by a diocesan contractor. This required considerable repair and redecoration work to be carried out by the Diocese Property Department which was completed in time for Fr Stephen Girling and his wife, Diane, to move in. The churchwardens thank the Diocese for their support during the refurbishment process.

St Mary's was liable for the repainting of the vicarage, regardless of the flooding, but because of it, the Diocese assumed a larger proportion of the cost than is usual for which we were very grateful. The final cost for the painting paid by St Mary's was £3006.59.

Churchwardens: Peter Gruncell and Diana Lees

Financial Report 2024

PCC Accounts can be found at pages 30 - 33.

Receipts

Regular Giving

Income from regular giving saw a considerable decrease throughout 2024. Planned giving from standing orders or regular direct credits to the Bank decreased by £797 on the previous year (-2.9%) and Gift-aided donations were down by £20.4k (-66%), although half of the 2023 figure included a £10k donation for the organ. Income from yellow and green envelopes was down by £3k or -37% compared to last year. Overall giving for the year decreased by 31% or £17,375 compared to the previous year.

Other voluntary receipts

In 2024 the church received an extremely generous legacy from former churchwarden Barry Huxley as well as two smaller legacies from past members of the church. Total income for the year was £461,670. £450,000 was transferred temporarily to the Works a/c whilst the PCC considered where best to invest the money and how to fulfil any conditions attached to these donations. Income from wall-boxes/ votive candles was slightly down on 2023.

Fund-generating activities

Receipts from fund-raising events in 2024 were 12% higher than the previous year at £8,161. This is a reflection of the very hard work put in by the social committee in organising fund-raising events throughout 2024 and the generosity of all those who helped and attended. Receipts from room hire were up by 62% totalling £3,248. Total income from this category was £11,409, an increase of £2,122 (22.9%) on the previous year.

Income from Church activities

2024 saw far fewer weddings and funerals than 2023 and this is reflected in the difference in income compared with last year. Revenue was down by £3,533 (-41%). Noah's Ark saw very encouraging growth in attendance and this was reflected in the income which was up by £579 or 69.7% compared to last year – thank you to Allison and Joy. Overall, income from church activities was down by £2,951 (-27.8%) compared to 2023.

Receipts from Investments & Other Income

The dividend from our CBF shares rose very slightly by 1.6% year on year providing an annual return of £516 compared to £508 in 2023. Works account transfers were the transfer of the BH legacy funds back into the current account prior to investment in several savings accounts via Flagstone. Education transfers were to reimburse the purchase of Noah's Ark resources and PCC contributions to Thorpe primary school for a projector and travel costs for the Yr6 Leavers service at the cathedral. The Tax reclaim (Gift Aid) from HMRC for 2023 (received in 2024) was £10,106, a reduction of 21%.

Total receipt and payment activity for 2024 was £988,125 compared to £134,110 in 2023.

Payments

Church Activities

The Parish Share for St. Mary's for 2024 was £69,987 of which £45,007 was paid in-year. Of this, £10,007 was outstanding from 2023, so the real contribution to last year's PS was only £35,000. It must be noted that the £69,987 due for the year included a £25k sliding-scale reduction agreed with the Diocese i.e. £20k in 2025, £15k in 2026, £10k in 2027, £5% in 2028, £0k in 2029. Parish running costs such as visiting priest's travel and a new telephone service provider were £1,306 (116%) more than 2023 although future savings will be made with the new phone system. Resources for Services increased by £1,1421 mainly due to outlay on the new icons and our Patronal visit to Eucharist at Keble College, Oxford, both of which were reimbursed in full. Overall, the cost of church activities was £51,108.

Maintenance

Maintenance costs were £2,731 lower (-39%) than last year. As well as weekly cleaning, the main areas of expenditure were the regular servicing contracts for the boiler, fire and alarm systems as well as some remedial work to the bell ringing system and Tower draught exclusion.

Church running expenses

The cost of insurance rose by £141 (4.8%) compared with last year. Utility costs fell by 7% (£468). We try to maintain a constant building temperature to protect the fabric of the church, especially in the Winter months and all our

utility expenditure is monitored carefully by Diana.

Administration

Costs across administration, computer and office supplies were £1,386 (12.8%) higher than 2023. Office operating supplies such as photocopier charges, paper and stationary are also included here.

Other costs

Total expenditure in 2024 includes the investment (shown as expenditure) of the large legacy (£250,000) from B Huxley to Flagstone in October so any year on year comparison must take this into account. Vicarage costs were expectedly higher than 2023 (up £1,397) due to expenditure on decorating, garden maintenance and utility costs not covered by the Diocese. Most other areas saw a reduction on 2023.

Sundry payments were the cost of the school projector and cathedral visits for the pupils mentioned above.

Fund transfers

This £450,000 transfer represents the movement of the main (BH) legacy from the current account to the Works account where it remained until the PCC decided to invest it with Flagstone (see Receipts-Other Voluntary Receipts) Total payments in 2024 were £988,197 compared to £145,561 in 2023. This difference between Income and expenditure for 2024 was -£72, compared with £-11,451 in 2023.

Treasurer, Andy West

Safeguarding Officer's Report 2024

There were no reported safeguarding incidents in 2024.

In 2022 St Mary's enrolled in a new safeguarding administrative system, the 'Parish Dashboard', which is a simple online tool, enabling us to keep track of safeguarding and keeps us up to date with local and national changes in safeguarding requirements. We have also been able to link to a national safeguarding 'hub', which provides an excellent form of record keeping. The Vicar, Safeguarding Officer and Warden Diana have permission to access the Parish Dashboard and Safeguarding Hub.

All PCC members, Wardens and Noah's Ark staff have taken (or are in the process of taking) the requisite safeguarding courses, renewable every three years.

Church of England Safeguarding has been under scrutiny over the last year, resulting in several changes in senior management. A Church of England Regional Safeguarding lead covering Guildford Diocese, Michaela Berry, has been appointed to provide additional independent scrutiny. In December 2024 the Diocese produced a new Parish Safeguarding Information Welcome Pack, which is available on the link noticeboard, as well as names and contact details of the Diocesan Safeguarding Team.

Online diocesan safeguarding surgeries will soon be available for Churchwardens, Safeguarding Officers, PCCs and incumbents. These surgeries should broaden our knowledge and help us to be aware of any safeguarding issues in our parish.

Throughout 2024 St Mary's Church gave no indication of being anything other than a safe environment .

Parish Safeguarding Officer, Mary Morris

Deanery Synod Representatives' Report 2024

The Runnymede Deanery Synod met 3 times in 2024. The meetings are well attended and varied. The Deanery leadership has remained the same. We are still upholding our longstanding link with Kebbi (In Nigeria). The Runnymede Deanery accounts continue to be sound.

The last meeting was held here at St Mary's Thorpe. Our New Vicar, Father Stephen Girling hosted the meeting. Our own churchwarden, Diana talked about our 21 months interregnum here at St Mary's Thorpe.

Other topics included growth, applying for grants and green champions. It is a nice opportunity to meet other people from other churches.

There will be 3 meetings in 2025.

Clare Cobbold







OTHER REPORTS IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

Family Service Report 2024



Claire Margaret and Susi have kept the Family Service going through the vacancy holding 2 Family Services each month. This has hymns, prayers, and creative work connected with the gospel reading.

The number of families has been very small since Covid and the departure of Fr Damian but the families that come are enthusiastic and we have staunch support from some of our congregation. Diana created a new Service leaflet and we are deeply

indebted to David and Lionel for joining us and providing live music for hymns.

We are hoping to extend this by the visitors coming around the organ or piano to watch our wonderful musicians play. Now with Fr Stephen in position there are many new ideas as to how to increase our Family Service membership and a Family Service Tea has been arranged for April. Watch this space.

Susi Thornton

Noah's Ark Report 2024

Noah's Ark, the toddler group, meets every Thursday from 9am to 11.30am, term time, in the Rutherwyke Room. We use the outside enclosed playground weather permitting. Children have a range of toys and activities they can

undertake and we finish with a singing session and bubbles. Age range is from birth to school starters who attend with carers, parents and grandparents.

Average attendance is approximately 16 children.



We hold an annual Christmas party with Santa Claus and an end of year Summer Teddy Bear's Picnic. The group is lively, noisy and thoroughly enjoyed by those who attend. We have space for additional children if you are aware of neighbours or relatives who would like to come—no need to book and there is no pressure to attend every week.

Joy Mitchiner and Allison Kelly

Church Cleaning Report 2024

As for many years Clare continues to undertake the regular cleaning of the church on a Wednesday. She washes the floor and dusts the church, She also cleans the Rutherwyke room and adjacent areas and cleans windows when time permits. Hannah and I meet monthly to supplement where required. A team from Tasis visited and cleaned windows in the Rutherwyke room. Many thanks for all who have assisted.

Jill Collinson

Contemplative Prayer Group Report 2024

Our small Contemplative Prayer Group continues every week. We welcome anyone who would like to join us and see if this is suitable for them. What is this about? A time to shut off the burdens (and joys) of the outside world; to move into stillness and silence after listening to some suitable readings. We give ourselves to a Holy Space. It is a precious and beautiful time which we share each week on a Monday afternoon. There is a time for intercessions as we move back into the present time of need.

This is a tradition begun at St Mary's in the 1970's and continued since then but it is an age old tradition of mystics and those who want to hear the words: 'Be Still and Know that I am God'

We finish with tea, cake and conversation!

For more information contact the Parish Office.

Flower Guild Report 2024

Elaine, Grace, Helen and I continue to enjoy providing floral arrangements in the church and are joined by Jane when not in the USA - and Margaret occasionally is able to join us from Scotland too! And I have just heard that another congregation member is considering offering her services. Please do the same if you would like to 'have a go.' We are all amateurs but happy to share our flower arranging knowledge with you.

We especially love to decorate the church for festivals and special services. We are in the season of Lent now, when traditionally we don't have flowers in church, but are looking forward to filling the church with flowers, mainly lilies, for Easter Sunday. Before that, there will be flowers in church temporarily – but just for one special day, Mothering Sunday.

Jenni has in the past helped us to prepare little posies which are given to mothers and carers at the Sunday morning service. We thank you for your invaluable help Jenni which is much appreciated!



One of the special services in the past year was of course when we welcomed our new vicar, Fr Stephen, in early October, which was soon followed by the autumnal arrangements for Harvest Festival, a time of year I particularly love. We hope you feel the addition of flowers in St Mary's adds to its beauty but of course, it is always a special space full of love and prayers – with or without flowers!

Margaret Harnden

Music Secretary's Report 2024

We have had a full range of music at St Mary's this year and thank all for their participation and support.

Concerts were held by The Hythe Singers, The Egham Band, Tasis 5 member choir and The Red House Rhythm and Blues duo. The Bath Abbey Girls choir sang beautifully at Fr Stephen's Installation service.

We thank our organists David Howard and Lionel Pike for their tireless service. We also thank Naomi Parfitt who David has been training and Edward Wilmouth and Lindsey Bridgwater for standing in when required.

Our choir has sung at 10 funerals and one wedding and at several Festivals this year. In addition, we have sung with the choirs at St Paul's Addlestone and All Saints Woodham and at a Harvest Festival concert for Marsha White Lodge.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our choir for giving up their time to practice and sing at St Mary's. We meet to practice at 11.30 on the 2nd and 4th Sunday of the month and would welcome any new members.

Please contact me for more details.

Music Secretary, Jill Collinson

Social and Fundraising Team Report 2024

We continue to thrive as a fully formed Social and Fundraising Committee and provide support for all the refreshments for concerts and services. We continue to host our monthly Tea and Talk thanks to Susi and Allison for their valiant efforts in keep it going. It is well received and provides great fellowship.

We started off our year with a very well attended quiz which raised nearly £1,000. We have been doing this for several years now so it is well tried and tested and provides a warm welcome of community.

We organised a Rhythm and Blues evening in April with refreshments which was a new venture but we had a disappointing turnout. Nonetheless it was a great community effort. A few days later we hosted a tea party for our German visitors for which they were very appreciative. Andy kindly gave them a talk about the history of the Church and Jill Richards took them on a small walkabout to look at the historic buildings in the vicinity.

We took part in the Thorpe community fayre in June and had several stalls. It was a lovely day and brilliantly organised. Everyone seemed to enjoy the day and there was plenty of family fun. Our stalls did very well and we made a profit of approximately £1400 after costs.

We hosted our annual patronal festival in August to which we invited our friends from Woodham. It was a great success. A good spread was provided and the weather was kind to us which enabled some of our guests to sit in the churchyard.

In September we organised “thank you” meals on two different occasions for the kind priests who helped us during the interregnum. On the 1st October we also organised a welcome buffet for our new Priest – Father Stephen which was a great success.

Later in October we catered for the Knights Templar. We catered for 45 and the buffet was very well received - there was virtually no waste and it was a worthwhile fundraising event.

The Christmas Fayre was very well received and a great success thanks to Father Stephen who kindly allowed the use of the Church for most of the stalls. As it was so cold we had an indoor BBQ, which Father Stephen kindly ran. A pianist played in the Church and the young Egham Band also entertained us. It was an amazing day and we all thoroughly enjoyed it. We also made a net profit of approx. £1500.



The Hythe Singers joined us for the Lessons and Carols and they provided an amazing support for our choir. We also had a lot more people than last year for refreshments.

The Egham Band concert followed a few days later. We did make a charge on that evening for the mulled wine and mince pies. For the nativity not only did we take part but we provided refreshments for the families and there was a joyous buzz in the Rutherwyke Room.

After Christmas we drew our Grand raffle which also raised approximately £500. It was followed the next day by a meal at the Red Lion following the Epiphany service. We organised a raffle which again brought in some revenue.

In February we organised a bring and share meal which met with great response and we received very generous donations. A couple of weeks later a continental breakfast was provided for all our congregations = again another success.

Jenny Bright

Thorpe Church of England Primary School Report 2024

We are very grateful for the close partnership with St Mary's PCC and the new appointment of Father Stephen Girling has had a very positive impact on life at Thorpe CofE Primary. Fr Stephen attends our whole staff prayers and sharing of vulnerable children on Monday morning as well as leading worship for children every Tuesday.

We have had a very successful teaching session for Holy Communion and we see our partnership with St Mary's go from strength to strength. We are grateful that Fr Stephen, Andy West, Diana Lees and Margaret Harnden are on our governing body.

Parents have welcomed open events and coffee mornings held by the PCC. We have strong links with the Diocese of Guildford who support with personnel issues as well as leadership, pastoral and academic.

We continue to work with the Runnymede Learning Partnership to enhance provision, support our staff and raise standards. The schools in this partnership are St Ann's Heath Junior School, Trumps Green Infant School, The Hythe, Manorcroft, Thorpe Lea Primary School and us.

We are also working with Lyne and Longcross to enhance our Christian Distinctiveness provision for our Worship Committee ensuring we are ready for our next SIAMs inspection.

We are committed to safeguarding children's welfare and all checks on regular helpers are carried out. Our Single Central List is checked by our Safeguarding Governor Mr Bryan Nixon every term. We have undertaken a Safeguarding Audit by the Diocese. The Headteacher trains governors and every member of

staff on an annual basis and visitors who volunteer also have training before they work with children.

FOTSA has raised a lot of money - they work hard, often with other job roles, for the benefit of all the children in the school. Recent purchases have been another bank of laptops and a trolley, various items for our Outdoor Play and Learning (Opal Play) scheme for all children as well as money for each class to spend on enrichment activities. We are very grateful to all our parents who work so hard for our children. Opal Play continues to support children with their play but this needs regular replenishment with donations of various items such as sand, dressing up clothes and construction items.

We have a very successful Breakfast Club - Earlybirds, starting at 7.30am. and After School Club – Owl Club (from 3pm to 5.30pm). We also have a variety of other clubs; dance, coding, football, cookery, art and dodgeball. Again, we would love Faith n Fun to return to Thorpe, especially for our infant children.

We are very pleased with the admissions to our school for 2025 and although we have seen quite a bit of movement to and from school; children have joined our school and settled well. We were delighted with our last Ofsted, October 2024 which states; Pupils are caring and thoughtful at this nurturing village school.

If you have any questions, or would like to come for a visit, please do not hesitate to contact me.

01932 562329 or
head@thorpe.surrey.sch.uk

Many thanks
Mrs Helen Southgate, Headteacher



Faith, Love and Excellence



Runnymede Foodbank 2024

We continue to support the Runnymede Foodbank. Their current needs are provided on a monthly basis and details displayed in the Rutherwyke room. These details are also printed on handy slips of paper to make shopping easier.

The food is delivered to the Foodbank at the warehouse in Thorpe where it is sorted and parcelled up to those in greatest need. The Foodbank use the cash donated to purchase further needs and our contribution amounted to £240 this year

The following was recently received:

“We have had another busy year and during the first 9 months of 2024 alone we provided over 61,580 meals to clients in the Runnymede and Weybridge areas.

We are so grateful for your continuing faithful support, which is enabling us to continue to help those in our community who are most in need.

Please pass on our thanks to those who contributed.

Thank you again for your continuous support”.

Jill Collinson

Tea and Talk 2024

We have had a very successful year with our monthly meetings. Our numbers are constant and often get extra people coming. Allison continues to provide wonderful cakes with the help of Grace and Jenny. Diana is always on hand to help the speakers set up with their equipment, grateful thanks to all of them.

We have had talks on the sound of an Egyptian Mummy from David Howard, Grant returned to tell us more about Wild life dangers, one afternoon of personal sharings, another was a ‘death café’, a fascinating talk in November from Margaret Harnden on the Graves Commission and we finished the year with a showing of Brassed Off.

2025 was opened by Ian – a sailor and a weather man who came to share how the weather is plotted. This was followed by David’s return with his student Naomi showing us creativity in the electronic engineering department at Royal Holloway. A full programme will follow.

Susi Thornton



For Families & Children at St Mary's Church, Thorpe

BABIES, TODDLER & PRE-SCHOOL



Noah's Ark



"Come and help us sail Noah's Ark!"

Every Thursday of Term-Time 9 - 11.30am

Noah's Ark Dates for Summer 2025 at St Mary's

24th April to 17th July
Half Term Holiday 29th May

We meet in the Rutherwyke Room, behind the church. Follow the red brick path to the rear of the building. Feel free to park in the Vicarage.

Noah's Ark is a toddler group for babies, toddlers and pre-school children with parents/carers/grandparents.

We are an informal playgroup and always have an aided craft session, fun action song or story segment during the morning. Secure outside play area (weather permitting).

Refreshments for adults and children.

£2.00 per child.



LOOKING AHEAD:
End of Term Teddy Bears Picnic 17th July 2025



WORSHIP FOR CHILDREN AND PARENTS WITH CRAFT ACTIVITIES TALK, MUSIC & DRAMA

Family Service



Every 1st & 3rd Sunday of the month 11.30 am – 12 noon

A simple service of children's songs, a bible parable with interactive talk, craft and prayers

Family fun for everyone – come along and join in the celebration

St Mary's Church Thorpe, Church Approach, Thorpe Village, TW20 8TQ.

Parish Office: 01932 567603 www.stmaryschurchthorpe.co.uk



St Mary's Church, Thorpe
Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2024

General Receipts & Payments

Receipts	2024	2023
	£	£
<i>Regular Giving</i>		
Planned giving	26,480	27,277
Collections and other giving (non gift aid)	6,883	20,404
Collections and other giving (gift aid)	5,128	8,186
	38,492	55,867
<i>Other Voluntary Receipts</i>		
Donations/Legacies	461,670	-
Wall boxes & Candles	122	154
	461,792	154
<i>Receipts from Fund-generating Activities</i>		
Fund-raising Events & Activities	8,161	7,277
Hire of Church and Rutherwyke Room	3,248	2,010
	11,409	9,287
<i>Receipts from Church Activities</i>		
Fees (Banns, Weddings, Funerals)	5,067	8,600
Refreshments	869	879
Noah's Ark	1,408	830
Flowers	20	305
Sundry (Stall, Cards, Gifts etc.)	315	17
	7,679	10,630
<i>Receipts from Investments</i>		
CBF Dividends	516	508
	516	508
<i>Other Income</i>		
Works Account (inter a/c transfers)	455,798	44,869
Education Account (inter a/c transfers)	2,334	-
Tax reclaims (2023 Gift Aid)	10,106	12,795
	468,237	57,664
Total Receipts	988,125	134,110

Payments

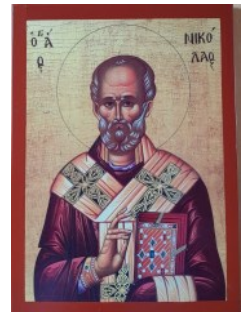
	2024	2023
	£	£
<i>Church Activities</i>		
Diocesan Parish Share	45,007	53,225
Parish Costs (Expenses, Travel, Telephone)	2,429	1,122
Organists	1,270	1,740
Cost of services	2,402	982
	51,108	57,069
<i>Maintenance</i>		
Facilities maint. Cleaning, Fees etc	5,355	8,087
	5,355	8,087
<i>Church running expenses</i>		
Insurance	3,069	2,927
Gas, Electricity, Water	6,207	6,675
	9,275	9,602
<i>Administration</i>		
Admin, computer & office supplies	12,185.93	10,800
Bank charges	-	-
Postage	43	31
	12,228	10,831
<i>Other Costs</i>		
Vicarage (Interregnum) utilities/repairs etc.	4,049	1,368
Music & Subscriptions	22	46
Children's Resources	243	-
Parish Fees to Diocese/Deanery	286	427
Events & Fund-raising costs	1,484	2,158
Refreshments	941	1,033
Marketing	1,071	1,633
Flowers	50	358
Sundry payments (School projector & Cathedral visit)	2,085	-
Legacy Transfer to Flagstone Investment	450,000	-
Fixed assets	-	42,950
	460,230	49,972
<i>Fund Transfers</i>		
Transfer to Works Acc	450,000	10,000
Transfer to Education Acc	-	-
	450,000	10,000
Total Payments	988,197	145,561
Balance (Income less Expenditure)	(72)	(11,451)

Statement of Assets and Liabilities

		2024	2023
		£	£
Cash Funds			
at 31 Dec 2	Bank: Current Account	1 12,237	12,309
	Bank: Business Reserve Account: Education	2 22,227	24,204
	Bank: Business Saver: Works	3 7,027	9,899
Investment Assets			
	Flagstone investment accounts	6 454,364	-
	CBF shares/CCLA: Thorpe St. Mary PCC <i>(821.99 shares @ £23.12 each on 31/12/24)</i>	4 19,007	18,581
		514,862	64,994
Other Monetary Assets			
	Estimated refund for 2024 GA donations	5 6,329	10,245
		6,329	10,245
Breakdown of Cash Funds			
	Unrestricted (1+4+5)	37,573	41,135
	Restricted (2+3+6)	483,618	34,103
		521,191	75,239

Approved by the PCC on

and signed on their behalf by:





Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/
members of

THORPE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

On accounts for the year
ended

2024

Charity
no.

1176929

Set out on pages

1 & 2

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year end 31/12/2024.

**Responsibilities and
basis of report**

As the charity trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

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

**Independent
examiner's statement**

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention (other than that disclosed below *) in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect,:

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

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

* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

Signed:

Paul Whitlock

Date:

30th January 2025

Name:

PAUL WHITLOCK

**Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):**

Address:

*47, ASHLEIGH AVENUE
EGHAM, SURREY TW 20 9LB.*

Part 2 Appendix Section

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of St Mary's, Thorpe – Charity No: 5116755

The Parochial Church Council and Responsibilities

St Mary's Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of co-operating with and assisting the Vicar in promoting, in the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission to which Christ Jesus calls his Church; worship, pastoral care, evangelistic outreach, fellowship as well as engaging fully within our local Deanery of Runnymede. Our PCC has responsibility for the fabric of St Mary's Historic Medieval Church, the Rutherwyke Room with Wallace Room (Parish Office) and closed churchyard surrounding the church buildings (including the Leigh Bennett Enclosure, and the southern end of Church Approach including the lych-gate, flowerbed and entrance to the Vicarage in Church Approach). By agreement St Mary's PCC maintains the Vicarage front garden for use as a church car park. This land remains the property of the Diocesan Parsonage Board and the agreement allows for car parking on the red gravel area only (approximately 13 spaces). The asphalt part of the driveway must always be kept clear for emergency vehicles and access to the Vicarage.

Governance

Churchwardens are elected at the Vestry Meeting and serve for a period of no longer than six years. They are then normally disqualified from being churchwardens for the next two years, after which they are free to stand for another term of six years. In 2008 the APCM voted to allow an extension of up to two years' service before disqualification under the rules. Members of the PCC are either elected by the APCM or are ex officio in accordance with the Church Representation Rules.

Membership and Governance is managed under the provisions of the Church Representation Rules, details of which may be found on the Church of England website. <https://www.churchofengland.org/>

Parish Share Calculation

See Financial Report for 2024 for details. pages 30 - 33.

The Parish Share calculation is made up of two component parts: 'Ministry Costs' which include stipends, pension liabilities (including historical pension costs), housing, training (including curates) and the cost of maintaining vicarages, etc.

'Shared Costs' which include money for mission and the National Church, church schools, diocesan costs and much more besides.

GDPR & Privacy Notice

Your privacy is especially important to Thorpe PCC and we are committed to keeping your information and data secure and safe. Visit our website to read our Privacy Notice: <https://www.stmaryschurchthorpe.co.uk/>

Gift Aid

As a charity this is especially important in meeting the costs of ministry and the maintenance of our historic medieval church here in Thorpe. We ask every member of the church family who can do so, to complete and sign an annual Gift Aid declaration. Thank you for your help and support.

Part 3 Appendix Section

Regular Worship and Social Activities at St Mary's

Sunday Worship **8am Said Eucharist**

10am Sung Parish Eucharist
1st & 3rd Sunday monthly **11:30am Family Service**

Weekdays **11am Wednesday Said Eucharist**

Check our newsletter for details of baptisms and other services

Tea and Talk 2nd Monday of the month 1.45pm to 2.00pm start

Guest speaker, delicious refreshments and friendly company

Noah's Ark Thursdays during term time 9am to 11.30am Our play group for babies, toddlers and pre-school children with parents, grandparents and carers attending'

Includes fun action songs, a story, play time and refreshments!
(Please park cars at the Vic-arage).



HAPPY MOTHERING SUNDAY AT ST MARY'S THORPE 30TH MARCH from 10 - 11am



Join together for a service
for all the family,
to celebrate our mothers and
the special place that they have
(*or have had*) in our lives.

Posies of flowers for the ladies
and refreshments
served afterwards with cakes
provided by the dads!

All welcome.



Image by Freepik

13th Palm Sunday

10am Holy Communion

14th Monday

7pm Meditation on Easter art

15th Tuesday

7pm Meditation on Easter art

16th Wednesday

11am Stations of the Cross meditation

7pm Meditation on Easter art

Thu 17th Maundy Thursday

7pm Holy Communion

8.15pm Night Watch (quiet till midnight)

Fri 18th Good Friday

Noon Service for all the family

2pm Hour at the Cross, a reflection

19th Holy Saturday

6.30pm Vigil of Light & Holy Communion

20th Easter Sunday

8am Holy Communion

10am Holy Communion for all the family

St Mary's Church Thorpe Easter Services in April



Image by starline on Freepik

St Mary's Church, Thorpe
Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2024

General Receipts & Payments

Receipts	2024
	£
<i>Regular Giving</i>	
Planned giving	26,480
Collections and other giving (non gift aid)	6,883
Collections and other giving (gift aid)	5,128
	<hr/>
	38,492
 <i>Other Voluntary Receipts</i>	
Donations/Legacies	461,670
Wall boxes & Candles	122
	<hr/>
	461,792
 <i>Receipts from Fund-generating Activities</i>	
Fund-raising Events & Activities	8,161
Hire of Church and Rutherwyke Room	3,248
	<hr/>
	11,409
 <i>Receipts from Church Activities</i>	
Fees (Banns, Weddings, Funerals)	5,067
Refreshments	869
Noah's Ark	1,408
Flowers	20
Sundry (Stall, Cards, Gifts etc.)	315
	<hr/>
	7,679
 <i>Receipts from Investments</i>	
CBF Dividends	516
	<hr/>
	516
 <i>Other Income</i>	
Works Account (inter a/c transfers)	455,798
Education Account (inter a/c transfers)	2,334
Tax reclaims (2023 Gift Aid)	10,106
	<hr/>
	468,237
 Total Receipts	<hr/> <hr/> 988,125

Payments	2024
	£
<i>Church Activities</i>	
Diocesan Parish Share	45,007
Parish Costs (Expenses, Travel, Telephone)	2,429

Organists	1,270
Cost of services	2,402
	<u>51,108</u>
<i>Maintenance</i>	
Facilities maint. Cleaning, Fees etc	5,355
	<u>5,355</u>
<i>Church running expenses</i>	
Insurance	3,069
Gas, Electricity, Water	6,207
	<u>9,275</u>
<i>Administration</i>	
Admin, computer & office supplies	12,185.93
Bank charges	-
Postage	43
	<u>12,228</u>
<i>Other Costs</i>	
Vicarage (Interregnum) utilities/repairs etc.	4,049
Music & Subscriptions	22
Children's Resources	243
Parish Fees to Diocese/Deanery	286
Events & Fund-raising costs	1,484
Refreshments	941
Marketing	1,071
Flowers	50
Sundry payments (School projector & Cathedral visit)	2,085
Legacy Transfer to Flagstone Investment	450,000
Fixed assets	-
	<u>460,230</u>
<i>Fund Transfers</i>	
Transfer to Works Acc	450,000
Transfer to Education Acc	-
	<u>450,000</u>
Total Payments	<u><u>988,197</u></u>
Balance (Income less Expenditure)	(72)

Statement of Assets and Liabilities

	2024
	£
Cash Funds	
at 31 Dec 20 Bank: Current Account	1 12,237
Bank: Business Reserve Account: Education	2 22,227
Bank: Business Saver: Works	3 7,027
Investment Assets	
Flagstone investment accounts	6 454,364
CBF shares/CCLA: Thorpe St. Mary PCC (821.99 shares @ £23.12 each on 31/12/24)	4 19,007

514,862

Other Monetary Assets

Estimated refund for 2024 GA donations

5 6,329

6,329

Breakdown of Cash Funds

Unrestricted (1+4+5)

37,573

Restricted (2+3+6)

483,618

521,191

Approved by the PCC on

and signed on their behalf by:

2023
£

27,277
20,404
8,186

55,867

-
154

154

7,277
2,010

9,287

8,600
879
830
305
17

10,630

508

508

44,869
-
12,795

57,664

###

2023
£

53,225
1,122

1,740
982

57,069

8,087

8,087

2,927
6,675

9,602

10,800
-
31

10,831

1,368
46
-
427
2,158
1,033
1,633
358
-
-
42,950

49,972

10,000
-

10,000

###

###

2023
£

12,309
24,204
9,899
-
18,581

64,994

10,245

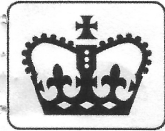
10,245

41,135

34,103

75,239

:



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/
members of

THORPE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

On accounts for the year
ended

2024

Charity
no.

1176929

Set out on pages

1 & 2

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year end 31/12/2024.

**Responsibilities and
basis of report**

As the charity trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

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

**Independent
examiner's statement**

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention (other than that disclosed below *) in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect,:

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

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

* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

Signed:

Paul Whitlock

Date:

30th JANUARY 2025

Name:

PAUL WHITLOCK

Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):

Address:

*47, ASHLEIGH AVENUE
EGHAM, SURREY TW 20 9LB.*

Accounts

St Mary's Medieval Church, Thorpe



VESTRY MEETING

and reports for the

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

Sunday 21st April 2024 11:30am

including the

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ST. MARY, THORPE

Charity No: 1176929

for the year ending 31 December 2023

St Mary's Vicarage, Church Approach,
Thorpe Village, Surrey TW20 8TQ

www.stmaryschurchthorpe.co.uk

**St Mary's Thorpe VESTRY MEETING and Reports for the
ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING**

Contents

Part 1

- p. 2 What is the Annual Parochial Church Meeting? A brief introduction
- p. 2 Agenda for the Vestry Meeting 21st April 2024
- p. 3 Agenda for the Annual Parochial Church Meeting 21st April 2024
- p. 3 Minutes of the Vestry Meeting held Sunday 2nd April 2023
- p. 4 Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held Sunday 2nd April 2023
Reports for 2023
- p. 6 Electoral Roll Report
- p. 6 PCC Secretary's Report
- p. 7 Churchwardens' Annual Report
- p. 9 Fabric and Property Register Report
- p. 10 Financial Report
- p. 11 Safeguarding
- p. 11 Deanery Synod Representatives' Report
- Other Reports in the Life of the Church
- p. 12 Family Service
- p. 13 Noah's Ark
- p. 13 Church Cleaning
- p. 13 Contemplative Prayer Group
- p. 13 Flower Guild
- p. 13 Music Secretary's Report
- p. 14 Social and Fundraising Team
- p. 14 Eco Church
- p. 14 Thorpe Church of England Primary School
- p. 15 Runnymede Foodbank
- P. 15 Tea and Talk

Part 2

- p. 15 PCC Responsibilities, Governance and Vision
- p. 17 Financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2023
- p. 21 Independent Examiner's Report

Part 3 Appendix Section

- p. 22 Regular Worship and Social Activities at St Mary's

What is the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM)? A brief introduction

The APCM is an important meeting for the whole church, an opportunity to elect the people our congregation want to represent them on their Parochial Church Council (PCC). It is an opportunity to ask questions about the finances of the church, the state of the buildings, or about any matter of concern in the life of the parish. The PCC takes account of views expressed at the APCM and matters are taken forward into the subsequent PCC for discussion. Thorpe PCC meets six times a year to conduct the business of the church. Please read these reports thoroughly and come to the meeting with questions, as we meet together as the family of faith in sacramental worship and fellowship – Transforming Church, Transforming Lives. We do this in a Christian spirit of mutual respect and love, as friends and pilgrims. We come prepared to look forward as well as reflect upon the past year. May the Lord of all guide our thoughts, words and actions to his Glory and the building up of the Kingdom in Thorpe.

Agenda for the Vestry Meeting (Meeting of Parishioners)

Sunday 21st April 2024, 11:30am (*following the Eucharist*)

1. The opening of proceedings with Prayers
 2. Apologies for absence
 3. Minutes of 2nd April 2023 and any matters arising
 4. Election of Churchwardens
 5. Nomination for approval of Deputy Wardens (honorary supportive role)
- End of Vestry Meeting

(At this point those not named on the Church Electoral Roll cannot vote if they remain.)

Agenda for the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM)

Sunday 21st April 2024, 11:30am (*immediately following the Vestry Meeting*)

Apologies for absence

Minutes of the previous APCM held in Church on 2nd April 2023 11:30am.

Matters arising

1. Elections & Appointments

- Annual election of PCC Members
- Election of Deanery Synod Representatives
- Approval of Sides-persons (to assist Wardens with service duties)
- Appointment of Sides-person to assist the Treasurer with banking
- Confirmation of appointment of the Electoral Roll Officer
- *Note that the PCC Secretary, Treasurer and Vice Chair of the PCC will be formally agreed at the next Parochial Church Council meeting (to be held on Monday 22nd May 2024, 7:30pm) as they are Officers of the PCC.*
- Appointment of the Independent Examiner for 2024 Financial Accounts (Mr Paul Whitlock)

2. Reports – see written reports

- (i) Report on Electoral Roll
- (ii) PCC Secretary's Report on the proceedings of the PCC
- (iii) Parish Reports – *printed & distributed*
Summary of reports from the Chair
- (iv) Churchwardens' Report including Fabric/Terrier
- (v) Accounts – Financial Report 2023
Acceptance of Financial Report 2023
- (vi) Deanery Synod Representatives' Report – *printed & distributed*

3. Any other business

- (i) Questions & Answers Session – *questions please at least 24 hours in advance*
stmaryschurchthorpe@outlook.com
 - (ii) Announcements
- The meeting concludes in prayer and with the Grace.

Minutes of the Vestry Meeting /Annual Parochial Church Meeting of St Mary's Church, Thorpe – Sunday 2nd April 2023 in Church.

Vestry Meeting

Present: Allison Kelly (PCC Secretary) – Chair (AK) – Vestry Meeting

Diana Lees (Churchwarden) – Chair (DL) – APCM Meeting

Present in Church:

P. Gruncell, A. West (AW), J. Brittain, H. Brittain, J. deVille, D. deVille, H. Cunningham,
S. Thornton, J. Collinson, J. Bright, J. Brown, G. Brown, J. Gruncell, D. Kidd, M. Herne,
J. Mitchiner, P. Whitlock, M. Roberts, M. Morris, S. Bruce, J. Rook, J. Carter*

*Arrived 11.55 a.m, during Item 2(v).

Absent: All electoral roll members not listed as Present or having submitted apologies

Meeting commenced: 11.40 a.m

1. Diana Lees opened the meeting with prayer.

2. Apologies for Absence:

C. Cobbold, M. Harnden, M. Lilley, J. McCloud, D. Howard, C. Howard, B. Ives, J. Ives,
B. Germany, K. Stangroom.

3. Minutes and Matters Arising

Minutes for the Vestry Meeting held 10th April 2022 were accepted and no matters were arising.

4. Election of Church Wardens

Peter Gruncell and Diana Lees confirmed their agreement to stand as Church Wardens.
Unanimously elected.

5. Nominations for approval Deputy Wardens

There were eight Deputy Warden nominations from:

Margaret Harnden, Susi Thornton, Helen Cunningham, Bev Germany, Jill Collinson, Deborah Kidd, Margaret Roberts and Kim Stangroom.
All eight candidates were unanimously accepted.

7. Any Other Business

Peter Gruncell took the opportunity to thank Diana Lees for her work as Church Warden to date, and confirmed that he was looking forward to continue working in partnership to ensure smooth running of the church during interregnum and beyond.

Diana thanked Pete and Joan Gruncell for their hard work during the year when Pete continued as sole churchwarden following the sudden death of Barry Huxley. Diana drew attention to a tribute to Barry, written by Helen Cunningham, displayed at the back of the church.

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Minutes from the APCM held 10th April 2022 were accepted with no amendments.

Matters Arising

None.

1. Elections and Appointments

DL enquired if there were any additional nominations for PCC, who had not completed application forms.

John Brittain expressed a desire to be included, but only if meetings could be held during the day, rather than evenings. It was decided that as some members of PCC worked it would not be possible currently to move the meeting times to facilitate, but if at a future date this was reviewed, John would be approached to submit application to join PCC at that time.

There were 7 nominations for PCC:

Andy West, Allison Kelly, Margaret Harnden, Jenny Bright, Susi Thornton, Mary Morris and Grace Brown.

All 7 nominations were unanimously confirmed.

- Election of Deanery Synod Representatives

Mary Morris and Clare Cobbold had indicated their wish to continue serving as Deanery Synod Representatives, with a third addition of Diana Lees.

Unanimously approved.

- Approval of Sides-persons

Nominations for Sides Persons were:

Susi Thornton, Deborah Kidd, Joan Gruncell, Margaret Roberts, Jill Collinson, Terry Leighton, Ann Leighton, Philip Alder, Margaret Harnden, Sue Bruce, Jenny Bright, Bev Germany and Helen Cunningham.

Unanimously approved.

- Appointment of Sides Person to Assist the Treasurer with banking

Nomination from Paul Whitlock.

Unanimously approved.

- Confirmation of appointment of the Electoral Roll Officer

Claire Cobbold confirmed that she was happy to continue as Electoral Roll Officer.

Unanimously approved.

- Appointment of the Independent Examiner for 2023 Financial Accounts

Paul Whitlock was unanimously confirmed.

2. Reports

AW pointed out that the Vicar's address on Page 7 of the 2023 booklet was incorrect. Father Damian had stated that £75,000 per annum was the revised cost for a full-time priest. The correct sum is £91,000 per annum, which had been confirmed by the Archdeacon to the Church Wardens at a recent meeting.

(i) Electoral Roll

DL confirmed that there were currently 117 on the roll,

Broken down there are 97 households and 19 households of 2 people.

(ii) PCC Secretary's Report

DL passed her thanks to Allison Kelly for her work as PCC Secretary and also for that undertaken at Noah's Ark.

(iii) Parish Reports

There were no questions raised.

(iv) Church Wardens Report (including Fabric/Terrier)

Church Wardens wished to pass their thanks to Fr Gerard for his continued background support.

AW confirmed he had applied for a Faculty for a new electronic organ, possible after a generous donation. Research had been undertaken between Lionel Pike, David Howard and himself and final decision had been made on an instrument both organists had played. The Faculty is now with the Consistory Court. Once this has been approved the organ can be formally ordered.

The current pipe organ will be maintained and occasionally used. The new organ will be sited in the North Transept. A complete overhaul of the pipe organ would cost thousands of pounds and is unfeasible. The new organ will be reliable. PG confirmed that the bells had become temperamental with the control box somewhat sensitive. The Bell company will be coming later in April to undertake maintenance.

The TASIS students, who are undertaking Duke of Edinburgh have a planned visit for 22.04.23. PG pointed out that the church is responsible for the Vicarage garden until the house is let.

DL wished to further thank TASIS, who are enormously supportive of all we do and for their help with the car park, gardening etc.

DL confirmed that there is also a hardworking group currently undertaking inventory in and around the church. Volunteers will be sought to assist with the final update when this is undertaken.

(v) Accounts – Financial Report 2022

AW confirmed that the income for 2022 was higher than 2021, due to increased standing order donations and Gift Aid, we have risen to the challenge. Funds have also been boosted by social committee events, for which he thanked those who organise and those who continue to support.

AW confirmed that the parish share had been paid in full for 2022 and due to cost cutting most areas of activity had cost less than 2021. The biggest expenditure had been the AV system and supporting works.

A large refund of a duplicated payment had been made to HMRC, which they had made in error and part of the income to TWRA from the Platinum Jubilee had been made which appeared as large items of expenditure. The bank accounts at end 2022 were:

£23,976 Education Fund.

£44,481 Works Account (includes organ donation),

£23,760 Current Account.

Going forward we will face challenges; we are not immune. Utility bills and increasing parish share are imminent.

AW confirmed we are currently in negotiations with the Diocese to find an affordable way forward.

AW confirmed that 'Parish Buying' does reduce utility costs as this is combined purchasing for all churches who join. The gas bill has been received and for the November, December, January period is £4,000, which is the highest gas bill we have ever received. Heating has been reduced in the Rutherwyke Room.

However, AW had established that VAT on the bill is incorrect at 25%, and neither should the climate charge levy be applicable as we are a registered charity. The VAT rate is 5% and he is awaiting a rebate to be received.

AW asked for any questions on the 2022 accounts – there were none.

DL passed thanks on behalf of us all, the church is deeply grateful for all his hard work.

Peter Gruncell proposed acceptance of the Accounts for 2022.

Jill Collinson seconded.

Accounts unanimously accepted.

(vi) Deanery Synod Report

There were no questions raised. Thanks were passed to Clare Cobbold and Mary Morris for their attendance and reports.

4. Any Other Business

No questions had been submitted before meeting.

DL passed thanks to everyone who stands on a committee or team. Please keep going.

Susi Thornton was concerned that very few had undertaken the Eco Report and asked that everyone please undertake as this helps towards the Gold award. The link is on the news-sheet and does contain helpful hints for us all.

Jane Carter wished to point out that although Fr Gerard had written a Liturgy Group Report, they had only met once in 2022 and had decided not to continue meetings as those who had taken part were no longer involved. It was confirmed that PCC will reassess the Liturgy Group and members, and try to re-establish meetings. It was noted that this group are now re-named Services Team.

DL pointed out that the new Parish Share would be significantly increased and several meetings had been held and suggestions made to reduce cost, i.e a house for duty priest, part-time priest etc. There would be a Vacancy Vision Workshop for PCC on 24.04.23, in order all ideas can be put forward. Feedback questionnaires have been distributed and the deadline for return is 16.04.23 in order to amalgamate replies in time for the meeting.

Marion Herne asked if the form could be put on-line to make completion easier. DL confirmed this would be put on the website and MM will place a reminder via the news-sheet.

DL further advised she had been in contact with Keble College, our patron, and is building a relationship with Fr Max Kramer the Chaplain, who is keen to be involved in the selection of a new priest. We are still awaiting response from the Diocese to St. Mary's asking for further involvement of Keble College. The Parish Profile is still to be completed. DL confirmed we had received an invite to visit Keble College and Mary Morris is investigating numbers to see if a small coach would be viable. Margaret Roberts confirmed she had visited Keble College several times.

Susi Thornton confirmed 4 people had met with Ben Spencer our MP to ask him to attend the 'Save the Parishes' meeting.

Marion Herne asked if there had been any additional income from the installation of the AV screen. AW confirmed there had been none but all was fully operational. Marion asked if this was being advertised as available. AW advised that the screens were initially to be used by the school for children's services and they are the most immediate group to benefit. Marion pointed out that the church is a good space with modern equipment and lettings should be encouraged for income. MM confirmed that if any enquiries were made, she would respond immediately, however, we do not currently have the personnel power to support lettings, with opening, closing and attendance. DL confirmed a policy should be raised by PCC to see how this will run as an option, as any lettings must have the correct support. Peter Gruncell confirmed that 200 children and their teachers had attended on Friday 31.01.23 and the screens had been in full use. They will also be in use for the school planned monthly visits. Marion enquired if there was any charge to the school. It was confirmed that there is no charge as they are a Church of England school.

DL advised that there is currently a problem with the internet. Susi Thornton expressed concern as the coronation event is being advertised. DL confirmed she was aware of the deadline and will revert as soon as possible.

John Rook asked what was the likelihood of having a shared priest. DL confirmed that negotiations are currently underway to gain additional support from the Diocese. John asked what were the implications for the Vicarage. DL confirmed this was likely to be rented out for 6 months, she had not received any information to support this being sold.

Jill Collinson wished to point out that the way everyone has come together is amazing and it is wonderful to be a part of this fellowship. She wanted to say what a great job Clare Cobbold, Susi Thornton, Allison Kelly, Joy Mitchiner and Bev Germany do in keeping the family services and children's work going in the current vacancy and thank them for all their hard work, it is so important. DL concurred that we do have a very strong team.

DL closed with the Grace.

Meeting concluded at 12.25pm.

REPORTS FOR 2023

Vicar's Report 2023

No priest in post 2023. See Churchwardens' Report

Electoral Roll Report – January-December 2023

The Annual Revision of the Electoral Roll has taken place as required by the Church Representation Rules. Notices were posted 10 March 2024 for 21 days and the revised Roll displayed for 14 days at Church, as prepared and approved.

The Electoral Roll for St Mary's Thorpe at the end of December 2023 was 114 and of this figure there are 18 households where there are 2 members.

The figure in December 2022 was 117 so there has been an overall slight decrease of three this year, which has included some additions and some members of our church family passing on or moving away.

In the summer 2022 Fr Damian and I did a review of the electoral roll, when some entries were removed. I believe this is why our electoral roll has been quite stable. Given the fact that St Mary's Thorpe is still in an interregnum, I believe the electoral roll figures to be quite positive.

This is my 2nd year serving as an electoral officer. I am grateful for the encouragement I have received during this year.

Electoral Roll Officer, Clare Cobbold

PCC Secretary's Report 2023 on the work of the Parochial Church Council

The Parochial Church Council met six times over 2023 for regular meetings, excluding the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on Sunday 2nd April 2023. There were an additional 5 extraordinary meetings, concerned with decisions required for the vacancy.

Following a great deal of work and investigation by Andy West, David Howard and Lionel Pike, PCC approved purchase

of the new electronic organ, funded by a generous donation. Much discussion over the year has been regarding the vacancy, starting with the Parish Profile, the document used to advertise the position of priest for St. Mary's, selection of Parish Representatives to undertake short listing and interviews for any applicants and advertising of the position. Andy West has kept us up to date with income and expenditure over the year and how we will progress with payment of the Parish Share and decisions were made with regard to monthly payments to meet St. Mary's commitment. It has been a busy year and PCC have stepped up to undertake roles not previously required and to caretake for St. Mary's during the vacancy. Diana Lees and Peter Gruncell require heartfelt thanks for all the work they undertake in the background to maintain the mammoth task of necessary administration, the church building and grounds, in order we can continue to worship at St. Mary's.

PCC Secretary, Allison Kelly

Church Wardens' Annual Report 2023

2023 has been a very successful, perhaps even a triumphant year! Yes, we are still in Vacancy and looking for a new Interim Minister, but just look at everything the congregations and Administration Team have achieved in 2023. We're still here providing all our weekly services, holding services for all the major festivals, hosting a wide range of entertainment and social events, and fulfilling responsibilities to the diocese and local community. Well done St Mary's!

In the absence of a vicar, the churchwardens will provide an overview of the church operations during 2023 and its general state as we embark on 2024's voyage.

First of all, we are thoroughly indebted to all of the many priests who have come to take services for us. They have come from far and wide, with cheerful willingness and enthusiasm, and we have enjoyed and appreciated their visits. Thank you to each and every one of you! Because of your support we have been able to maintain our full level of services and festival celebrations with very few exceptions. We are so grateful and all we can say is thank you and God bless you all. There are too many priests to mention each by name but some who have come week after week deserve a special mention. Especial thanks go to Revd Janet Franck, Fr Roland Olliff, and Fr Orion Edgar for their unwavering commitment to St Mary's Church.

And where would we be without Fr Gerard Mee who has shouldered the workload of services, funerals, baptisms and weddings with so much goodwill and cheerfulness? We are deep in your debt Fr Gerard. Thank you so much for everything you have done for us this year. We could not have managed without your support.

At this point we must also recognise the efforts of our Parish Administrator, Mary Morris, who is the lynch pin holding St Mary's together. Without Mary, we would not have had so much support from so many different clergy. It is entirely due to her contacts and persuasiveness that we have been so well looked after. We are also very appreciative of all the hard work Mary puts in to managing the administration behind the scenes, keeping us on the straight and narrow, and ensuring we do all our training courses as required by the diocese. Furthermore, in spite of her increased workload Mary has sustained us all with her irrepressible sense of humour. Thank you, Mary, for everything you do for St Mary's.

Vacancy Update

After significant efforts to obtain feedback from the congregations at St Mary's, the PCC and Standing Committee did sterling work ascertaining the requirements for the new priest, putting together the Parish Profile (our "marketing brochure"), and electing the Parish Representatives to be involved in the interview process. All of which was in addition to their normal duties overseeing church activities, ensuring policies and procedures are in place and dealing with numerous enquiries. Thank you to all members of the PCC and Standing Committee for their unwavering support to Pete and Diana as churchwardens. Your assistance and willingness have been greatly appreciated. Extra thanks to Allison, our PCC Secretary, for keeping us up to date, overseeing our diocesan responsibilities, and making coherent Minutes of our meetings.

The Parish Profile, specifying the priorities for a new priest and the personal qualities we are looking for, was agreed in July and the first round of advertising took place in September. Unfortunately, the candidates were not deemed suitable and a second round took place in December and January 2024. We planned to interview one candidate but the application was withdrawn shortly before the interview date. We are now planning another round of adverts for March 2024 and we ask for your fervent prayers for the right candidate to come forward.

Services

As in many churches, congregation numbers attending services have still not returned to their pre-Covid levels but despite an initial fall following Fr Damian's departure, our numbers have remained stable and as the year neared its close, we saw a slight rise in the week-on-week attendance.

The reflective 8am service is holding its own and is actually growing despite the early hour! The sung 10am Eucharist is starting to grow as well and this is certainly partly due to the efforts of our Musical Director, Jill Collinson, and our organists, David Howard and Lionel Pike, who put so much time and hard work into the services playing the psalms, anthems and hymns enjoyed by all who attend. Thank you, David and Lionel, for your knowledge, expertise and willingness to turn out for services day or night. Further thanks to Jill for the myriad hours spent selecting the music for every service and

preparing the folders for the organists and choir; those tireless efforts which ensure the smooth running of our weekly services and festivals and keep our musical traditions standing strong.

During the year we held a number of festivals and special services including Holy Week and Easter, our Patronal Service which we shared with All Saints Woodham, Harvest Festival, Remembrance Sunday and Christmas. Whilst the numbers attending were a little lower than in previous years they were still well attended and enjoyed by all who came. The Contemplative Prayer Group has seen a slight increase in numbers and has installed a Bookcase Library in the Link corridor which is available for everyone to use.

Outreach to Children and Youth

We have sustained our efforts to provide outreach to the youngest members of our church family during 2023. Our family service is doing very well (1st and 3rd Sundays, come and join in!) and has a number of regular attendees. Thank you to Susi, Claire and Margaret for your efforts planning and running the services.

Noah's Ark, our pre-school and toddler play group, is growing steadily and is very popular. The fun, joy and noise are an experience to savour, as are the refreshments. Thank you to Allison and Joy for all the hard work every week during term time.

Sadly, we were unable to keep our Lego Club running but we still have all the Lego and hope to revive it sometime in the not-too-distant future. We would also like to find a way to reach out to the young people in our community but at present the workload on our small team is hindering this. We look forward to being able to do this when we have our new minister.

Online Outreach

In this increasingly digital world, we are endeavouring to interact with the more technologically minded of our supporters and visitors. Thank you to Claire Cobbold for taking on the role of managing our Facebook page which, due to technical difficulties, had to be restarted from scratch in February. The number of those viewing and following the page is growing steadily. Well done, Claire for all the photos and updates posted during the year.

We have been learning how to manage our new audio-visual system. It is a pleasure to report that we are using the drop-down screen and sound system increasingly for school and family services, and particularly at funerals where we can play photo PowerPoint presentations and music of choice for the families involved. One very successful event was the live streaming of the King's Coronation which was well attended and much enhanced by excellent refreshments!

Our website will be reviewed and redesigned in January 2024 as we change our hosting arrangements to achieve significant cost savings over the next three years.

Community Engagement

We have been delighted to host the children from Thorpe Church of England Primary School at a number of services in the church during the year. These are always delightful and the very high standard of presentation by the pupils is a testament to the leadership from headteacher, Helen Southgate, and her teaching team. We look forward to continuing to build on our excellent relationship with the school in 2024 and thank all involved for their support for our church.

We are pleased to have been able to continue our close relationship with TASIS this year and are very grateful for their support. In particular we enjoyed the company of all the students who volunteered to help with sundry gardening tasks, paper shredding, window cleaning and craft activities several times during the year. Thank you to Carolyn Norris for her enthusiasm and co-ordination of the student visits. We would particularly like to thank headteacher, Bryan Nixon, for his support in allowing us access to the South Carpark, leading the students on our churchyard cleanup days and his participation in our church services.

We also thank Pete and Joan who have taken charge of the churchyard, overseeing the TASIS students and working weekends to keep it looking tidy and well cared for. It is vital work but not always pleasant given the wet and windy year we have had.

St Mary's Church is a regular contributor to Thorpe Together using it to promote our services and social events and to engage with the Thorpe community. We would like to thank Margaret for her extraordinary commitment to garnering content and the essential advertising to keep the magazine running.

Administration Activities

Over the course of the year, we carried out a review of all computer data and paperwork files to remove obsolete files and ensure GDPR compliance. Mary and Diana invested a considerable amount of time and effort into restructuring the church computer files which has greatly simplified and sped up the process of finding information held on file. Reorganising the storeroom has freed up some much-needed storage space. Along the way we made some significant cost savings by changing suppliers for a number of services including; broadband and telephone, website hosting, Antivirus software, and Fire Alarm maintenance.

Volunteers

St Mary's Church relies on volunteers to help with all the tasks and services, and this is even more so during a time of vacancy. There are so many individuals and groups involved whom we wish to recognise and thank. Without your efforts

we could not function and we really do appreciate your time and effort turning up day and night, week after week. You are the treasure at the heart of St Mary's Church and we thank each and every one of you for everything you do.

In addition to those we have already mentioned we would like to include:

Our Deputy Wardens, servers, readers, and welcomers for managing our services; our coffee and breakfast helpers who provide the welcome to our visiting priests and church family; the Flower Arrangers who provide the glorious and inspiring flowers for our services and festive occasions; the Tea and Talk Team hosting our very popular monthly community get together; Clare, our excellent cleaner who is assisted by Jill and Hannah; Kim who looks after our service linen and Bev who manages our Gift Aid donations ensuring the confidentiality and accuracy of our records.

Finally, we would like to give two special thank you messages:

Firstly, to Susi Thornton and the Social Committee members. Susi inspires and leads our amazing Committee which puts on our outstanding range of events, for both outreach and fundraising purposes. Thank you for your energy, drive, enthusiasm and leadership Susi. Thank you to all the team for your support efforts! You are all astounding! Everyone at St Mary's is very appreciative of the efforts you make and grateful for everything you achieve.

And secondly to Andrew West, our Treasurer, Sacristan and one of the Parish Representatives for the vacancy interview panel. Your knowledge and experience in these roles have been indispensable and we are extremely grateful for everything you have contributed. Some may be surprised to learn that this work has also included cleaning the tower, putting up bunting, decorations and Christmas lights, scaling ladders repeatedly to check out broadband connections and imparting your knowledge of St Mary's and its treasures to the review of the Church Inventory. Thank you so much for your invaluable support and hard work Andy.

As the "newbie" churchwarden at St Mary's in 2023 Diana would like to thank her fellow churchwarden, Pete, for his steadfast support and friendship during the year. Thanks, Pete, for all your efforts attending meetings, engaging in decision-making, maintaining the fabric of the church, looking after the churchyard, supervising our volunteers and welcoming those who use our church for baptisms, funerals and weddings. It has been a real pleasure to work with you and Joan. Together we make an excellent and balanced team, and share the workload.

Pete and Diana would like to thank everyone at St Mary's, and all who have come to the church during the year for the support, assistance and encouragement you have given to us in a challenging year.

Churchwardens: Peter Gruncell & Diana Lees

Fabric and Property Register Report (Formerly Terrier and Inventory) 2023

This year a comprehensive review of the Inventory has been carried out which has resulted in significant updating. Considerable time has been spent recording church plate, metalwork, woodwork, stonework, textiles and books etc with many items being photographed. A large number of items previously not recorded have been added and a few items identified which we were unable to locate. A printed version is held in the Parish Office and a digital version on the church computer.

The Church Log Book has also been updated for the years 2018 to 2023.

Church Bells

At the beginning of the year two bells were found to have worked loose and these were reset and tested along with the other bells. Further visits by Cumbrian Bell Co. have been needed during the year to reset the controls on the electric console. In November it was ascertained that one of the bells was not being struck. Investigation led to a recommendation for a new electromagnetic hammer and relay to be supplied, fitted and tested. This was done in time to ensure that we were able to ring the bells at our Christmas services. This expensive repair was very kindly funded by donations. Thank you to those concerned.

Clock

The clock continues to run well with timely adjustments made by Andrew West. It is serviced annually.

Organ

In January the air blower on the pipe organ was removed due to asbestos content and a replacement box fitted. Pete Gruncell also strengthened the seat to make it easier and safer for the organists.

In August our new Viscount 3 manual Envoy 350 deluxe electronic organ was installed in the North Aisle. This was very generously donated by a family in our congregation and we are extremely grateful. Six speakers were attached to the rear roof beam and face the back wall so that the sound is reflected into the church as though coming from the old organ, and the acoustics are wonderful.

We would like to thank Andrew West for his extensive work as Project Leader researching the instrument, obtaining the Faculty, and overseeing the arrangements for its installation. Special thanks are due for his efforts cleaning the very grubby ground floor of the Tower prior to the installation of several organ speakers. We hope to make the instrument available for practice for organ students and to hold some concerts for the community.

The pipe organ, made by Lewis & Co Ltd, Brixton, will remain in situ and will be maintained and played periodically to keep it in functioning order for the foreseeable future.

Church Break-in

In April an unsuccessful attempt was made to break into the Rutherwyke Room and as we were taking steps to increase the security, a second attempt was made. Access was gained into the church and through the Link to the Rutherwyke Room. The Wallace Room and Choir Vestry were broken into and several cupboard doors and drawers were forced open. Nothing of value was taken, nor any valuable items damaged. The intent seems to have been to find any loose cash so the only monies lost were from votive candle donations and the large loose cash bottle in the church. A replacement fire door was fitted, a door lock replaced and new keys issued where needed. An additional door bolt has been fitted in the Rutherwyke Room. We are trying to maintain a heightened awareness of security.

Health & Safety

All required safety checks for the electrics and appliances, gas, fire alarm system and fire extinguishers have been carried out and certificates received. Several fire extinguishers have been replaced.

The hinges for one of the blue entry doors in the porch worked loose and has been repaired.

The shingle outside the Wallace Room west wall was topped up to bring it level with the stone slabs, and a safety cord has been fitted to secure the stacked tables in the storeroom. Work is in hand to fix the lighting along the path from the vicarage carpark to the Rutherwyke Room.

Churchyard

Pete and Joan Gruncell have worked very hard to keep the churchyard looking tidy and have marshalled the efforts of church volunteers and TESIS students to great effect. The churchyard cleanup day in March was a great success with some 27 bags of garden rubbish being removed and all garden bins being filled. We are extremely grateful to the TESIS volunteers who came in October and worked to clear and weed the Leigh Bennett Enclosure, to remove the ivy from several gravestones and sweep and weed the churchyard.

The Vicarage

During this time of vacancy, the PCC is responsible for the upkeep of the Vicarage. We are carrying out monthly meter readings, and have liaised with the Diocese concerning several electrical and plumbing repairs. The Diocese has confirmed they will remove the moss from the roof and cut the ivy along the front of the property. The property has had two professional cleans done during the year including a full clean of the carpets. A gardener was hired to do a major tidy up of the garden and carpark in June prior to a short-term lease of the building by TESIS. Further work on the carpark was done in the summer by our wonderful church volunteers. Thank you.

Churchwardens: Peter Gruncell & Diana Lees

Financial Report 2023

PCC accounts can be found at pages 17-20.

Receipts

Regular Giving

Income from regular giving saw a considerable decrease throughout the 2023. Planned giving decreased by £3,197 from the previous year (minus 10.5%), Gift Aided donations dropped by just over £4,000 (-33%) and non-Gift Aid donations by £2,172 (-17.3%) in real terms (taking into account the organ donations in 2022 and 2023). When this is taken into consideration Regular Giving for 2023 was £45,867 compared with £55,256 in 2022, a drop of £9,389 compared to last year (-17%).

Other Voluntary Receipts

Income from general donations in 2023 i.e. *In Memoriam*, Charities and wall-boxes/candle etc dropped by £2,372 compared to the previous year (-93.9%).

Fund-generating activities

Receipts from fund-raising events in 2023 were £7,277. Compared with 2022 this was a reduction of £12,494 (-63%) but it is worth remembering that the Platinum Jubilee was held that year and accounted for an additional £9,110 so the year-on-year comparison is not exactly like-for-like. Receipts from hire were down by 33% at £2,010. Total income from this category was £9,287, a drop of £13,496 (-59%) on the previous year.

Income from Church activities

Income from fees (Banns, weddings & funerals) was £8,600 which was £2,914 less than last year. Of this, Wedding income was £2,318 and Funeral fees £6,200. Overall income was down by £3,425 (-24%) compared to 2022.

Receipts from Investments & Other Income

The dividend from our CBF shares rose very slightly by 0.6% year on year providing an annual return of £508 compared to £505 in 2022. Inter-account transfers (shown as income from the Works a/c) were to pay suppliers for the new organ and for a replacement blower case for the pipe organ. The Tax reclaim (Gift Aid) from HMRC for 2022 (received in 2023) was £12,795.

Total receipts for 2023 were £134,100 compared to £202,340 in 2022.

Payments

Church Activities

The Parish Share for 2023 was £63,007 of which £53,000 was paid in-year (£225 being outstanding from 2022). The outstanding £10k for 2023 will be paid to the Diocese when our Gift Aid claim has been received. Parish running costs such as travel, telephone and related expenses were £137 more than 2022 whilst fees for organists and supplies for services were lower than 2022 by £1,580 and £1,555 respectively. Overall, the cost of church activities fell by 12.8% equivalent to £8,390 compared to the previous year.

Maintenance

Maintenance costs were slightly lower (£651) than last year. As well as weekly cleaning, the main areas of expenditure were the regular servicing contracts for the fire and alarm systems. The renewal of the organ blower case also fell into this category although it was funded from the Works deposit a/c.

Church Running Expenses

The cost of insurance rose by £255 (9.6%) compared with last year and Utility costs by 29% (£1,512). A large Gas bill for £4,000 covering Dec 2022, Jan & Feb 2023 partly accounted for the increase in costs on the previous year, as well as prices rises. However, since being rated for zero VAT and CCL and by keeping a close eye on building temperatures and timings throughout the year it is expected that utility costs will be fairly static during 2024.

Administration

Costs across administration, computer and office supplies were £622 (6%) higher than 2022. Office operating supplies such as photocopier charges, paper, phone line and annual subscriptions are also included here. As part of our continued cost-reduction efforts the telephone, website and internet providers have been changed to ones that will be more cost-effective and offer better value for money in future.

Other Costs

Total expenditure in this sector fell by £13,177 (-21%) compared to last year. However, when comparing year to year it must be noted that a) Parish Fees were not payable in 2023 due to the vacancy, b) fundraising costs in 2022 were much higher due to the Platinum Jubilee, c) there was no tax overpayment/repayment in 2023. Fixed asset costs in 2022 were for the AV System and the Organ in 2023. Vicarage costs were for utilities (Gas/Elec) with the exception of £600 for electrical work undertaken in December 2022 but not billed until Jan 2023.

Fund Transfers

A total of £10,000 which was received for the new organ was transferred from the Current account to the Works deposit account in 2023. As usual all donations specifically identified as project specific were recorded as income when received into the Current account (see Other Voluntary Receipts and Receipts from Fund-generating Activities) and then as expenditure upon transfer to the Works Account (Deposit). These transfers impact both Income and Expenditure totals and so should be taken into consideration for any comparison of the two.

Total payments in 2023 were £145,561 compared to £201,741 in 2022.

Like so many other churches nation-wide St. Mary's continues to face difficult circumstances as a result of falling attendance and economic circumstances resulting in a sharp decrease in income from regular giving and other income streams, which has been exacerbated by the current interregnum. Nevertheless, the outstanding generosity, hard work and resilience of our faithful parishioners, the PCC and the church's leadership must be recognised as we work and pray for a new priest to lead us into the future.

Treasurer, Andy West

Safeguarding Officer's Report 2023

During a parish vacancy, any personal safeguarding issues would first be dealt with by the Archdeacon. I am pleased to confirm that no safeguarding incidents have been reported during the vacancy year 2023-2024.

The Wardens and Safeguarding Officer now confirm that the requisite safeguarding records have been completed for the year 2023-2024 and the Diocesan 'Parish Dashboard' is up to date for St Mary's Church.

All DBS and Safeguarding records are stored securely and confidentiality is maintained at all times.

Parish Safeguarding Officer, Mary Morris

Deanery Synod Representatives' Report 2023

Three Deanery Synod meetings were held in 2023 at Holy Trinity Lyne & Longcross (Spring), Christ Church Ottershaw (Summer) and St John Egham (Autumn). Each meeting had a "Parish Focus" on the church life and community involvement of the hosting parish followed by prayer requests for that church, and updates from the previous Synod meeting.

All three meetings were open to the public and detailed Minutes are available via the Deanery Administrator at runnymededeanery@gmail.com and on the Deanery website.

The spring meeting included an interesting discussion on the rising charges imposed by some banks prompted by the HSBC decision to charge £5 month to manage accounts. Some churches are changing to the Co-op and NatWest banks. Clem Jones gave an update on the 2030 Road Map for Eco Church during which it was highlighted that St Mary's Church had achieved its Silver Award.

At the beginning of the June meeting the attendees toured the churchyard at Christ Church which is managed in line with Eco Church principles then Emma Coy (Mission Enabler Guildford Diocese) gave a very informative presentation on "Families in the 2020s". This was followed by a very enthusiastic discussion exploring the reasons why it is proving difficult post-Covid to attract and involve families with children in churches, not just in Runnymede but across the country.

The conclusions can be summed up as:

ASK – LISTEN – RESHAPE

Ask what families want, listen to the answers, try to meet the need where and when it is needed.

This will mean greater flexibility of day and/or time, and perhaps different locations to what was previously offered.

October Synod examined the challenge of "Deanery – What's the Point?" and began with an overview of its purpose which is to:

- Listen to, understand and meet through common action the needs of member parishes
- Help parishes fulfil their local mission as part of God's work worldwide
- Be a network for the sharing of resources and expertise in different areas of ministry
- Be a channel of communication and representation with the Diocese, other churches, Runnymede Council and our whole borough/deanery community

The representatives joined several small groups to discuss priorities for development and exchange ideas. It was hoped some of these topics could be taken forward in 2024 including Youth and Children, Outreach, Discipleship and Schools. Funding options were mentioned including the Deanery Fund which provides seed grants to support new initiatives, and the Runnymede and Surrey Council which does make funds available to help church community initiatives.

Deanery Leadership Team (DLT)

The Team, consisting of the Area Dean, Lay Chair and incumbents of the parishes met twice in 2023 to discuss deanery structure and events, vacancy support and partnership opportunities, the Deanery Mission Plan and Deanery Growth Fund, networking and general deanery business. Churchwardens, Pete Gruncell and Diana Lees, attended the October meeting, held at St Mary's Church, in lieu of an incumbent.

Kebbi Link

Bishop Andrew of Guildford was once again invited by Archbishop Henry of Nigeria to speak at a plenary session of the Nigerian National Conference in November 2023, upholding the longstanding link with our diocese. Nigeria is the largest member of the Anglican Communion with over 20 million people.

Finance

Runnymede Deanery accounts continue to be sound and Parish Contributions were confirmed to remain at the same level as in recent years (individual parish amounts are determined by three-year rolling average of Sunday attendance, combined with Relative Prosperity Index), plus an invitation for 30% additional donations towards the Deanery Growth Fund. A £250 Deanery Growth Fund grant was awarded to Egham Hythe in support of their new Godly Play activity.

*St Mary's Representatives on Runnymede Deanery Synod
Clare Cobbold, Mary Morris & Diana Lees*

OTHER REPORTS IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

Family Service Report 2023

Clare, Margaret and Susi rotate to lead our Family Services. Currently approximately 6 family groups attend, but unfortunately, they rarely attend at the same time. Diana has created a very useful Service card which is always used, and a creative activity is undertaken, relating to the Gospel reading. Thanks go to Lionel and David for playing at each service. Some of our wonderful adult regulars attend and fully participate in the fun of the service. Birthday cards have recently been introduced to mark the children's birthdays, which appear to be much appreciated.

Susi Thornton

Noah's Ark Report 2023

Noah's Ark, the toddler group, continues with lively meetings every Thursday from 9am to 11.30am Children have a range of toys and activities they can undertake and we finish with a singing session and bubbles. Having lost a large number of older children to school in September, we have a generally younger age group of around 2 years currently. Average attendance is approximately 16 children with their parents/carers each week. The group is noisy and active and much loved by those who attend. We have several 'Mums' who are now bringing their 3rd child every week and we love to see them growing up within the group.

Joy Mitchiner and Allison Kelly

Church Cleaning Report 2023

The regular cleaning is undertaken weekly by Clare which includes hoovering and dusting all the rooms and general cleaning in the kitchen etc. She also washes the Church floor and does general dusting. Jill and Hannah meet monthly to supplement this where required.

A small group of the congregation continue to contribute £30 on an ad hoc basis to the cleaning of the church and if anyone is able to contribute at any time, please put the contribution in a Gift Aid envelope marked CLEANING.

A Team from Tasis cleaned windows and various other areas on a recent visit and are happy to do so again.

Many thanks to all who have assisted in the upkeep of our church.

Jill Collinson

Contemplative Prayer Group Report 2023

We continue learning to still our thoughts and listen to the silence in which the presence of God can move among us and within us.

It is a precious and beautiful time which we share each week on a Monday or Tuesday afternoon in Susi's welcoming home. After the silence we move to a time of intercession for the World, the parish and for individuals in need, or who we wish to name.

If you feel that God is prompting you to join us, we would be delighted to welcome you. The group was founded by Fr. Peter Amor, when he was Vicar of Thorpe and has continued in various forms ever since.

Do speak to Susi, Margaret or Jane if you would like to know more. We usually end with tea, cake and conversation.

For further information contact the Parish Office.

Jane Carter, Margaret Harnden, Marie Jedla, Susi Thornton

Flower Guild Report 2023

Our small band of three regular flower arrangers at St Mary's, Elaine, Helen and myself, were joined this year by Grace who has been a great asset to the team. Jane and Margaret continue to join us when in the area and Jenni very kindly produced the beautiful posies given to mothers and carers on Mothering Sunday. Thank you so much Jenni – they were beautiful!

We love decorating the church for special festivals – Christmas, Easter, the Patronal Festival etc and have over the past year also provided flower arrangements for weddings and funerals when requested.

For some festivals we encourage all church members, and others in the community, to 'have a go' at producing a simple arrangement and in the past that has resulted in more people joining the Guild so if you would like to do that, do speak to one of us. We are here to help!

As I write this, we are in the season of Lent when traditionally St Mary's doesn't have flowers in church but soon, we will be decorating the church with white Easter lilies and other flowers to welcome the dawn of Easter Sunday, celebrating the Risen Christ. It is a privilege and a joy to beautify this wonderful church through the seasons so if you love flowers – come and join us!

Margaret Harnden

Liturgy Group Report 2023

Not meeting during interregnum.

Music Secretary's Report 2023

Music, as usual, has played a large part in the services held at St Mary's and we are grateful to all those who have made it possible including Mary Morris who has managed to recruit priests for all our regular services. Thanks also go to Susi Thornton and Andy West in preparing the church for every service and to Andy West, Lionel Pike and Jane Carter who have assisted me in setting the services. We are fortunate to have two superb organists, David Howard and Lionel Pike, to lead us and thank them for their dedication and beautiful music. The new organ has been gratefully received and beautifully played at all services.

Thank you too to our choir who give up their time to rehearse and sing at many regular services, festivals and four weddings, two baptisms and two funerals. We also thank members of Hythe Singers for joining us at major services including Mayor Margaret Harnden's Thanksgiving Service.

We were asked to sing at four funerals at St Paul's Church in Addlestone, and All Saints Woodham joined us for our Patronal Service and we reciprocated. We were sad to lose choir member Linda Williams and sang at her funeral.

Our family services held on the first and third Sunday of the month at 11.30, led by Susi Thornton, Margaret Harnden and Claire Cobbold, have been enhanced by our organists and energetic singing.

It is a pleasure to sing at St Mary's and if you would like to learn more about our choir please contact me.

Music Secretary, Jill Collinson

Social and Fundraising Team Report 2023

We continue with a strong social and fundraising committee and have been joined by our Churchwarden, Diana. We continue to host Tea and Talk on a monthly basis, which has been very successful with some very interesting guest speakers.

In March we held our annual quiz which is a good fundraiser (£900 net).

In May we celebrated the Coronation of King Charles. This involved viewing the actual coronation on the big screen and the Committee provided a sumptuous royal lunch. A large cake was the centrepiece and a coronation quiche, coronation chicken, gammon and salmon were our main course. It was a thoroughly successful and enjoyable experience and we were delighted to welcome our German visitors. We even made a small profit!

On Sunday 9th July we held our usual fayre in the Church Grounds which was quite well attended and we made a profit of around £1,000.

Our next event was the Patronal Festival held in September when we provided lunch for 40 people including a good contingent from Woodham. It was a lovely day and we all sat outside enjoying the sunshine and savouring the delicious lunch.

In October, to celebrate the harvest, we held a barn dance in the Church – the chairs were moved back to provide the space and Karen was the caller. We provided a two-course supper and those who came gave us good feedback. However, the numbers were disappointing.

There were several events over the Christmas period. The Egham Band concert was very successful and we did well on the catering, selling out of mulled wine. The licence carried through to the Lessons and Carols but we had disappointing numbers and very few came back after the service for refreshments. We also catered for the crib service and it was so nice to see the young families all gathered together.

This year we hosted a Mardi Gras celebration and provided a two-course meal including pancakes. David and Naomi played foot tapping piano duets and Susi organised some fun and games afterwards. A small profit was made.

We are looking forward to our next Quiz and a Blues evening in April and continue to look for more fundraising opportunities.

Jenny Bright

Eco Church 2023

We have not had any formal meetings and I would recommend that we disband this Group for the time being.

Unofficially we look after the Church Environment with our boxes (thanks to Pete), and Tea and Talk has had a number of talks covering animals and their preservation and care: Recent talks have been undertaken by The Harper Asprey Sanctuary and Zoological Society caring for Endangered Species. Both talks were enthusiastically received and attendees have expressed their further interest.

Susi Thornton

Thorpe Church of England Primary School Report 2023

We are very grateful for the close partnership with St Mary's PCC through the Church wardens. Our partnership has been further strengthened having Andy West and Diana Lees joining our governing body.

Our school has joined a new partnership with the Runnymede Learning Partnership. The schools in this partnership are St Ann's Heath Junior School, Trumps Green Infant School, The Hythe, Manorcroft, Thorpe Lea Primary School and us. We are also working with Lyne and Longcross to enhance our Christian Distinctiveness provision for our Worship Committee. We are working with the wider school community in North West Surrey.

We are committed to safeguarding children's welfare and all checks on regular helpers are carried out. Our Single Central List is checked by our Safeguarding Governor, Mr Bryan Nixon, every term. We have undertaken a Safeguarding Audit by the Diocese. Headteacher trains governors and every member of staff on an annual basis and visitors who volunteer also have training before they work with children.

FOTSA has raised a lot of money - they work hard, often with other job roles, for the benefit of all the children in the school. Recent purchases have been a bank of laptops and a trolley, BeeBots for IT work, new gym equipment and £250 per class to spend on enrichment activities. We are very grateful to all our parents who work so hard for our children.

We have a very successful Breakfast Club - Earlybirds, starting at 7.30am. After School Club – Owl Club (from 3pm to 5.30pm). We also have a variety of other clubs; dance, coding, football, cookery, art and dodgeball. Again, we would love Faith n Fun to return to Thorpe when St Mary's has capacity, especially for our infant children.

Opal Play continues to support children with their play but this needs regular replenishment with donations of various items such as sand, dressing up clothes, construction items.

We are very pleased with the admissions to our school for 2024 and although we have seen quite a bit of movement to and from school; children have joined our school and settled well. Infant classes are full and we have 8 spaces across the Junior classes.

If you have any questions, or would like to come for a visit, please do not hesitate to contact me. 01932 562329 or head@thorpe.surrey.sch.uk



Mrs Helen Southgate, Head teacher Faith, Love and Excellence

God's Kingdom in our School
Faith – Love – Excellence

Runnymede Foodbank 2023

Sadly, the Foodbank is still a vital resource in our area and St Mary's continues to give generously to this cause. A monthly list of "needs" is received from the Foodbank and displayed within the Church and Rutherwyke Room. Donations delivered to the Foodbank during the last year, weighing 342.55kg, were delivered from St Mary's.

The following was received:

"That is a fantastic total and we thank you for all of your effort and kind donations.

This is enough food (by weight) for approximately 200 meals for our clients.

Thank you very much." *Steve Foodbank Runnymede*

In addition, financial contributions are often made and I know many of you make a direct debit to the Foodbank which enables them to purchase specific needs.

Many thanks to you all.

Jill Collinson

Tea and Talk 2023

This is a very worthwhile monthly activity. The mission of the group is to bring people together, hearing from some very interesting speakers, whilst gaining some financial support.

The speakers enjoy the friendliness of the people that attend and everyone enjoys the wonderful cakes Allison provides.

Numbers are increasing month on month. The topic to be covered by the speaker each month is advertised on the weekly news sheet and those already attending receive regular email updates on events

Susi Thornton

Part 2

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of St Mary's, Thorpe – Charity No: 5116755

Annual Report & Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2023

St Mary's Church, Thorpe entered a period of vacancy on January 15th 2023, and is seeking to appoint an Interim Priest in Charge as soon as possible.

The Parochial Church Council and Responsibilities

St Mary's Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of co-operating with and assisting the Vicar in promoting, in the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission to which Christ Jesus calls his Church; worship, pastoral care, evangelistic outreach, fellowship as well as engaging fully within our local Deanery of Runnymede. Our PCC has responsibility for the fabric of St Mary's Historic Medieval Church, the Rutherwyke Room with Wallace Room (Parish Office) and closed churchyard surrounding the church buildings (including the Leigh Bennett Enclosure, and the southern end of Church Approach including the lych-gate, flowerbed and entrance to the Vicarage in Church Approach). By agreement St Mary's PCC maintains the Vicarage front garden for use as a church car park. This land remains the property of the Diocesan Parsonage Board and the agreement allows for car parking on the red gravel area only (approximately 13 spaces). The asphalt part of the driveway must always be kept clear for emergency vehicles and access to the Vicarage.

Governance

Churchwardens are elected at the Vestry Meeting (meeting of parishioners) and serve for a period of no longer than six years. They are then disqualified from being churchwardens for the next two years, after which they are free to stand for another term of six years. In 2008 the APCM voted to allow an extension of up to two years' service before disqualification under the rules. Members of the PCC are either elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) or ex officio in accordance with the Church Representation Rules. Up to 2018 elected members have served on a three-year term for up

to two terms, before being disqualified for a year, as agreed by a previous APCM. This was reviewed at our 2018 APCM and a motion carried for a change to block elections for the PCC annually.

From 2019 APCM all those intending to stand for the PCC need to complete an application form and be proposed and seconded in the customary way. If there are more proposed people than places an election will be held. Additional members may be co-opted at the PCC's discretion for a specific purpose, up to two at any one time. Membership and Governance is managed under the provisions of the Church Representation Rules, details of which may be found on the Church of England website. <https://www.churchofengland.org/>

Parish Share Calculation

See Financial Report for 2023 for details.

The Parish Share calculation is made up of two component parts:

- 'Ministry Costs' which include stipends, pension liabilities (including historical pension costs), housing, training (including curates) and the cost of maintaining vicarages, etc.
- 'Shared Costs' which include money for mission and the National Church, church schools, diocesan costs and much more besides.

Church Attendance

Congregation numbers attending services have still not returned to their pre-Covid levels which is the case with many churches across the country. There was a drop in numbers attending when Fr Damian left in January, but our numbers have stabilised during the year and we saw a slight rise in the week-on-week attendance as we approached year end.

GDPR & Privacy Notice

Your privacy is especially important to Thorpe PCC and we are committed to keeping your information and data secure and safe. Visit our website to read our Privacy Notice: <https://www.stmaryschurchthorpe.co.uk/>

Church Development Plan (CDP) for Thorpe

Approved at our November PCC 2022

As we look to the future, we always hold in mind that:

"Unless The Lord builds the house, the builders labour in vain." Psalm 127:1

We turn to the Trinity of love in faith for inspiration. All our discussions are rooted in prayer and trust in the God from whom all good things come in the first place. (See 1 Chronicles 29:14)

During this period of vacancy, it has been agreed by the PCC to postpone some of the work towards these priorities until the appointment of a minister to lead our efforts.

Vision Priorities:

- i. Work to ensure the musical tradition of the church is maintained with a working organ.
- ii. Secure a children and families worker part time to lead Lego Club and re-introduce Faith & Fun activities on a Sunday morning and after school club at Thorpe Primary.
- iii. Establish new WhatsApp groups and a bible study group. (End use of the Workplace communication platform before charging begins).
- iv. Develop discipleship and personal evangelism with continued courses.
- v. Migrate financial management over to the Planned Giving Scheme.
- vi. Eco-Church - strive for the Gold Award.

Gift Aid

As a charity this is especially important in meeting the costs of ministry and the maintenance of our historic medieval church here in Thorpe. We ask every member of the church family who can do so, to complete and sign an annual Gift Aid declaration. Thank you for your help and support.

St Mary's Church, Thorpe
Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2023

General Receipts & Payments

Receipts

	2023	2022
	£	£
<i>Regular Giving</i>		
Planned giving	27,277	30,474
Collections and other giving (non gift aid)	20,404	52,576
Collections and other giving (gift aid)	8,186	12,206
	55,867	95,256
<i>Other Voluntary Receipts</i>		
Donations/ <i>In Memorium</i>	-	2,095
Charities	-	199
Wall boxes & Candles	154	231
	154	2,525
<i>Receipts from Fund-generating Activities</i>		
Fund-raising Events & Activities	7,277	19,771
Hire of Church and Rutherwyke Room	2,010	3,012
	9,287	22,783
<i>Receipts from Church Activities</i>		
Fees (Banns, Weddings, Funerals)	8,600	11,513
Refreshments	879	1,131
Noah's Ark	830	739
Flowers	305	224
Books	-	-
Sundry (Stall, Cards, Gifts etc.)	17	448
	10,630	14,055
<i>Receipts from Investments</i>		
CBF Dividends	508	505
	508	505

Other Income

Works Account (inter a/c transfers)	44,869	24,723
Education Account (inter a/c transfers)	-	12,679
Tax reclaims (2022 Gift Aid)	12,795	29,816
Receipts from insurance	-	-
	57,664	67,218

Total Receipts

134,110	202,340
----------------	----------------

Payments**2023**
£**2022**
£*Church Activities*

Diocesan Parish Share	53,225	58,617
Parish Costs (Expenses, Travel, Telephone)	1,122	985
Organists	1,740	3,320
Cost of services	982	2,537
	57,069	65,459

Maintenance

Facilities maint. Cleaning, Fees etc	8,087	8,738
	8,087	8,738

Church running expenses

Insurance	2,927	2,672
Gas, Electricity, Water	6,675	5,163
	9,602	7,925

Administration

Admin, computer & office supplies	10,800	10,129
Bank charges	-	10
Postage	31	69
	10,831	10,209

Other Costs

Vicarage (Interregnum) utilities/repairs etc.	1,368	-
Books	-	10
Music & Subscriptions	46	91
Children's Resources	-	264
Charities	-	208
Parish Fees to Diocese	427	3,682
Events & Fund-raising costs	2,158	8,251
Refreshments	1,033	903
Marketing	1,633	1,655
Flowers	358	399
Tax repayment	-	11,394
Sundry payments (training, misc)	-	192
Fixed assets	42,950	36,100
	49,972	63,149

Fund Transfers

Transfer to Works Acc	10,000	43,938
Transfer to Education Acc	-	2,324
	10,000	46,262

Total Payments

145,561 **201,741**

Balance (Income less Expenditure)

(11,451) **599**

		2023	2022
		£	£
Statement of Assets and Liabilities			
Cash Funds			
at 29 Dec 2023	Bank: Current Account	1 12,309	23,760
	Bank: Business Reserve Account: Education	2 24,204	23,976
	Bank: Business Saver: Works	3 9,899	44,481
Investment Assets			
	CBF: Thorpe St. Mary PCC - value of shares <i>821.99 shares £22.6053 each on 31/12/23</i>	4 18,581	16,983
		64,994	109,201
Other Monetary Assets			
	Estimated refund for 2023 GA donations	5 10,245	12,985
		10,245	12,985
Breakdown of Cash Funds			
	Unrestricted (1+4+5)	41,135	53,729
	Restricted (2+3)	<u>34,103</u>	<u>68,457</u>
		<u>75,239</u>	<u>112,186</u>

Approved by the PCC on Monday 18th March 2024
and signed on their behalf by:



Mr. Andrew West
Treasurer



Diana Lees
Churchwarden



Allison Kelly
PCC Secretary





Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/
members of

THORPE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

On accounts for the year
ended

2023

Charity
no.

1176929

Set out on pages

1 & 2

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year end 31/12/2023.

Responsibilities and
basis of report

As the charity trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

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

Independent
examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention (other than that disclosed below *) in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect,:

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

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

* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

Signed:

~~Paul Whitlock~~ P.W. Whitlock

Date:

23/2/2024

Name:

PAUL WHITLOCK

Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):

Address:

47 ASHLEIGH AVENUE
E GATON
SOMLEY TR 20 8L3

Sunday Worship at St Mary's

8am Said Eucharist

10am Sung Parish Eucharist

1st & 3rd Sunday monthly 11:30am Family Service

2nd Sunday monthly 11am Healing Ministry

Weekdays

11am Wednesday Said Eucharist

Check our newsletter for details of baptisms and other services

Tea and Talk

2nd Monday of the month

2pm for 2.15pm start

Guest speaker, delicious refreshments and friendly company

Noah's Ark

Thursdays during term time 9am to 11.30am

Our play group for babies, toddlers and pre-school children

with parents, grandparents and carers attending'

Includes fun action songs, a story, play time and refreshments!

(Please park cars at the Vicarage).



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Marketing - 1,655

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Approved by the PCC on

and signed on their behalf by:



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THORPE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

On accounts for the year
ended

2023

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* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

Signed:

~~23/12/23~~ P.W. Whitlock

Date:

23/12/23

Name:

PAUL WHITLOCK

Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):

Address:

47 ASHLEIGH AVENUE
EGHAM
SURREY TW20 8LP

Accounts

St Mary's Medieval Church, Thorpe



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND



TRANSFORMING CHURCH
TRANSFORMING LIVES

VESTRY MEETING *and reports for the*

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING *Palm Sunday 2nd April 2023 11:30am*

including the

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ST. MARY, THORPE **Charity No: 1176929**

for the year ending 31 December 2022

Vicar: The Revd Damian Stewart Harrison-Miles, BTh
St Mary's Vicarage, Church Approach,
Thorpe Village, Surrey TW20 8TQ

www.stmaryschurchthorpe.co.uk

St Mary's Thorpe VESTRY MEETING and reports for the ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

Contents

Part 1

- p. 2 What is an Annual Parish Church Meeting?
- p. 3 Agenda for the Meeting of Parishioners (Vestry Meeting)
- p. 3 Agenda for the Annual Parochial Church Meeting
- p. 4 Minutes of the Meeting of Parishioners held Sunday 10th April 2022
- p. 5 Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held Sunday 10th April 2022
- p. 10 Reports – starting with the Vicar's Report on 2022
- p. 13 Electoral Roll Officer's Report on 2022
- p. 13 PCC Secretary's Report on the proceedings of the PCC during 2022
- p. 14 Churchwardens' Report on 2022 (*Fabric Report is included here*)
- p. 15 Financial Report (Treasurer's Report) 2022
- p. 17 Safeguarding
- p. 18 Deanery Synod Report & Diocesan Synod Report
- p. 19 **OTHER REPORTS IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH** (alphabetical)

Part 2

- p. 27 PCC Responsibilities and Governance
- p. 28 Parish Share Figures for phased increase projected over 5 years
- p. 29 Statistics for Mission, National Church, Thorpe Together & Mission
- p. 32 Financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2022
- p. 37 Independent Examiner's Report

Part 3 Appendix Section

- p.38 Regular Worship at St Mary's – Covid-19 planned and suspended activities

What is the Annual Parish Meeting (APCM) all about? A brief introduction

The APCM is an important meeting for the whole church, an opportunity to elect the people our congregation want to represent them on their Parochial Church Council (PCC). It is an opportunity to ask questions about the finances of the church, the state of the buildings, or about any matter of concern in the life of the parish. The PCC takes account of views expressed at the APCM and matters are taken forward into the subsequent PCC for discussion. Thorpe PCC meets six times a year to conduct the business of the church. Please read these reports thoroughly and come to the meeting with questions, as we share together as the family of faith in our life together, in sacramental worship and fellowship – Transforming Church, Transforming Lives. We do this in a Christian spirit of mutual respect and love, as friends and pilgrims. We come prepared to look forward as well as reflect upon the past year. May the Lord of all guide our thoughts, words and actions to his Glory and the building up of the Kingdom in Thorpe.

Agenda for the Vestry Meeting (Meeting of Parishioners)

Sunday 2nd April 2023, 11:30am (*following the Eucharist*)

1. The opening of proceedings with Prayers
 2. Apologies for absence
 3. Minutes of 10th April 2022 and any matters arising
 4. Election of Churchwardens
 5. Nomination for approval of four Deputy Wardens (honorary supportive role)
- End of Vestry Meeting

(At this point those not named on the Church Electoral Roll cannot vote if they remain.)

Agenda for the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) Sunday 2nd April 2023, 11:30am (*immediately following the Vestry Meeting*)

Apologies for absence

Minutes of the previous APCM held in Church on 10th April 2022 11:30am.

Matters arising

1. Elections & Appointments

- Annual election of PCC Members
- Election of Deanery Synod Representatives
- Approval of Sides-persons (to assist Wardens with service duties)
- Appointment of Sides-person to assist the Treasurer with banking
- Confirmation of appointment of the Electoral Roll Officer
- *Note that the PCC Secretary, Treasurer and Vice Chair of the PCC will be formally agreed at the next Parochial Church Council meeting (to be held on Monday 22nd May 2023, 7:30pm) as they are Officers of the PCC.*
- Appointment of the Independent Examiner for 2023 Financial Accounts (Mr Paul Whitlock)

2. Reports – see written reports

- (i) Report on Electoral Roll
- (ii) PCC Secretary's Report on the proceedings of PCC
- (iii) Parish reports – *printed & distributed*
Summary of reports from the Chair
- (iv) Churchwardens' Report including Fabric/Terrier
- (v) Accounts – Financial Report 2022
Acceptance of Financial Report 2022
- (vi) Note on the Deanery Synod Report – *printed & distributed*

3. Any other business

- (i) Questions & Answers Session – *questions please at least 24 hours in advance stmaryschurchthorpe@outlook.com*
- (ii) Announcements

The meeting concludes in prayer and with the Grace.

**Minutes of the Vestry Meeting /Annual Parochial Church Meeting
of St Mary's Church, Thorpe – Sunday 10th April 2022
(Held via Zoom and in Church)**

Vestry Meeting

Present: Fr. D. Harrison-Miles – Chair (DHM)

Present in Church: Fr. G. Mee, Mtr J. Winn-Smith, B. Huxley, P. Gruncell, A. West. A. Kelly, S. Bruce, C. Wareham, D. Lees, J. Rook, M. Lilley, B. Grove, T. Grove, J. Mitchiner, M. Herne, D. Kidd, G. Brown, J. Brown, L. Pike, H. Cunningham, L. Gillham, K. Wade, E. Gill, B. Germany, P. Whitlock, J. de Ville, K. Stangroom, Susi Thornton, T. Leighton, A. Leighton, M. Harnden, P. Alder, J. Collinson, J. Carter, A. Corfield, C. Cobbold, J. Gruncell.

Absent: All electoral roll members not listed as Present or having submitted apologies

Meeting commenced: 11.30 a.m

1. Father Damian opened the meeting with prayers.

2. Apologies for Absence:

J. Mookherjee, M. Winn-Smith, J. Bradley, J. Brittain, H. Brittain, Jane Lowe, Jim Lowe, B. Nixon, B. Williams, J. Whitfield, D. Gough, E. Gough. I. Rigazzi-Tarling, J. Taylor, J. Richardson, M. Morris, P. Hudson, N. Brothwell.

3. Minutes and Matters Arising

Minutes for the Vestry Meeting held 9th May 2021 were accepted and no matters were arising.

4. Re-election of Wardens

Barry Huxley and Peter Gruncell confirmed their agreement to stand as Church Wardens. Barry Huxley pointed out that he will by 2023 have completed 4 years of the 6 years he is eligible to stand as church warden. Peter Gruncell confirmed his enjoyment of the role and was happy to offer his services for another year.
Unanimously re-elected

5. Nominations for approval Deputy Wardens

There were eight Deputy Warden nominations from:
Margaret Harnden, Susi Thornton, Helen Cunningham, Bev Germany, Jill Collinson, Deborah Kidd, Margaret Roberts and Kim Stangroom.
All eight candidates were unanimously accepted.
Fr Gerard Mee expressed his thanks and gratitude for support offered by the Deputy Wardens.

7. Any Other Business

None

Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting of St Mary's Church, Thorpe Sunday 10th April 2022 11:45am

There were four additions to the electoral roll for approval before the commencement of the meeting:

Ann Frances Corfield, Norman Stuart McNichol, Alice Turner, Benjamin Turner
Unanimously approved for inclusion on the electoral roll.

Minutes from the APCM held 9th May 2021 were accepted with no amendments.

Matters Arising

DHM updated those present with regards to the AV project. He confirmed that legal planning permission had been received, although the scope of work is to be scaled back to 1 central screen & projector, with two further projections onto walls, enhancement to the sound system and an upgrade to electrical works. Electrical work is estimated to be approximately £10,000. The original AV work was approximately £34,000, we currently have £23,000 available for the work. DHM and churchwardens are to meet this coming week to discuss a scaled down quotation, although this may be higher than expected due to delays and scarcity of components. Additional items can then be added at a later date when monies allow. The electrical work will be done forthwith, again hopefully with a revised quotation.

1. Elections and Appointments

There were 6 nominations for PCC:

Andy West, Allison Kelly, Margaret Harnden, Jenny Bright, Susi Thornton and Diane Lees.

All 6 nominations were unanimously confirmed.

- Election of Deanery Synod Representatives

The three representatives had indicated their wish to continue serving as Deanery Synod Representatives:

Mary Morris

Clare Cobbold

Catherine Wareham

Unanimously approved.

- Approval of Sides-persons

The list which had been left for sign up in the porch has been removed. A new list will be provided by Easter Sunday for sign ups. This will be voted in by PCC at May 22 meeting.

DHM pointed out that anyone holding keys to the buildings is a sides person and they should make themselves aware of the current Health and Safety policy.

- Appointment of Sides Person to Assist the Treasurer with banking

This role will be carried out by Andy West, Treasurer.

- Confirmation of appointment of the Electoral Roll Officer

Claire Cobbold confirmed that she would like to stand as the new Electoral Roll Officer.

Claire pointed out that this was a learning role and she would be taking information on board as the year progresses.

Unanimously approved.

DHM passed his thanks to Sarah Bolton who has now stepped down for her valued work over the last few years.

- Appointment of the Independent Examiner for 2022 Financial Accounts

Paul Whitlock was unanimously confirmed.

2. Vicar's Address

DHM pointed out that whilst he was away on holiday the previous Sunday, the 10am service had been attended by only 22 people, which was the lowest number in his 11 years as incumbent. He went on to explain that the Church of England are reviewing all parishes and amalgamations are considered where attendance on a Sunday, falls under 50 people attending, or where there are financial challenges, or both. Average attendance along with our reduction in parish share, currently makes St. Mary's viable for consideration, although only just. Over the last year only 3 families have moved away and there have been 2 deaths from those on the electoral roll, so where are the regular attendees? Indeed, the electoral roll is up but attendance is down. Finances are in the best place in 11 years and we have so far met the increase year on year requested and not received any additional support. Other local churches report both their electoral roll and finances are in decline. "You are the church, not the clergy, who are shepherds, what is going on?" DHM pointed out that he asked everyone to bring someone with them on Mothering Sunday. Some people did, it was a lovely service, it was joyous, then the following week there were 22 attendees only. This seems to be a bigger trend and is a danger zone. Nearby churches are being asked to share stipendiary ministry and it is possible he will be asked to look after an additional church at some stage and therefore not be based at St. Mary's only. This could have implications for the future of the Vicarage and car park – they could in theory be sold. Our Diocese is doing better than others, in Leicester DHM is aware that a significant number of parishes are under threat, as in many other Diocese. He believes that St Mary's and wider Thorpe does need a priest living adjacent and we need a curate full time too – there is no shortage of ministry for us to be about.

DHM suggested that some of the change in attendance is the impact post Covid – that changes were happening before the pandemic hit but that seems to have accelerated that change. We need to grow the church quickly, but we must be realistic that it took 6 – 7 years to grow the main 10am congregation to 60 – 70 weekly. We need to re-double our efforts to draw people in within the next few years and it is everyone's responsibility to share faith as disciples today. We start with prayer – the equipping of the Holy Spirit for growth. But it is also possible that something has shifted in our society. We did not have additional attendees on Mothering Sunday because of advertising, even with posters up all around the village – so we need to connect to people personally, to invite them. The number one way people will come is because of an invitation from someone who already attends worship. People come to enjoy community and faith – shared by you. The feedback on Mothering Sunday was great. So, think about how to share your faith and bring people into church. Not all will stick, not all will enjoy our mixture of contemporary and traditional worship – but some will. Encourage people to stay for refreshments, where they can form friendships, to know they are loved and feel part of our community. We need to seek to rebuild and renew. Every member of a family has different gifts, not gifts that define them but different strengths. Church life, mirrored in Christ must always be inclusive, and all talents count.

Looking ahead, DHM intends to come out to visit the congregation at home, and the PCC needs to grow. Teams are to be formed to achieve small but important things - family and children's work, flowers, stewardship etc. An example is the after school club, there is no-one to run it, the 7 trained and checked persons previously involved have moved away or their children have grown up. There are gaps appearing in leadership which must be filled, as things are not getting done. We need new relationships and new starts and re-invigorated teams of people working together.

It takes a significant amount of money to run a church, we will need £75,000 PA eventually to have a full time vicar. Heating and lighting, and general building costs will rise to £10,000 PA. So the financial challenge is there – and will get harder if our congregations decline.

Phil Alder pointed out that people will get fed up with no full time vicar and will simply stop attending. DHM pointed out that the Vicarage is the only asset that can be sold, but once liquidated and money spent churches will decline so we need to keep the Vicarage next to the church even if the vicar is shared with another church. Jane Carter asked if we would be joined with another parish in this deanery. DHM advised the aim would be to try and cluster churches together that are a similar tradition but not necessarily close in distance, although it would be in the same diocese.

Bev Germany asked how sharing a priest would work. DHM could not answer as this had not been in done Runnymede Deanery before, but would expect it to be a

50/50 split with Sunday worship in both churches but service times split over both buildings. But there are many other possibilities.

Paul Whitlock confirmed this had been the norm where he previously lived and asked if, for the children's work, younger families could be asked to assist. DHM pointed out that mothers/fathers today can't just help, for instance the Lego club, new in the life of our church was growing, but the clergy lead this and will need to hand this over and so far there have been no offers of leadership. DHM also reminded the meeting that all those who assist or lead children and youth work must be appropriately recruited and checks completed in line with the national safeguarding policy.

It was asked if the people who view services online count as part of the attendance to services. DHM confirmed no. Vimeo (our live-streaming broadcaster) has been renewed at an expense of £850.00 and income from online services is greater than the annual fee but views of worship do not count in figures as things presently stand. He also believed hub churches may be approached to broadcast services, rather than all churches offering their own, but this was yet to be decided. Claire Cobbold enquired if two churches were joined would there be only one PCC?

DHM confirmed there were various possibilities, with 2 churches remaining independent or a combined PCC. In our case there is the Anglo-Catholic tradition that needs to be retained. John Rook enquired if DHM had views on why people were not attending. DHM felt this was down to commitments/ possibly Covid/lifestyle changes. Most people now come once monthly and not once weekly. The Scout groups in Thorpe are gone as there were no leaders, and this is a trend throughout society. Christianity is a weekly commitment as a minimum. However, standing orders have helped us to budget, so even if people are not present we receive contributions. Kim Stangroom asked what would happen if Mtr Jo and Fr Gerard could not do services. DHM confirmed Mtr Jo's curacy ends in July and she will probably move on this year. Fr Gerard has to work, plus now lives in Dorking. St. Mary's have applied for another training curate and we hope will have a replacement in July 23.

DHM wanted people to note that there is no formal plan for us to share a vicar at present, but over the next 3 years the Diocese will be looking at the figures and exploring possibilities.

3. Reports

(i) Electoral Roll

DHM confirmed that there were currently 121 on the roll, but there would be a complete renewal in 2023*, which will drop numbers as people had moved away.

*Incorrect - complete renewal will be undertaken in 2026.

(ii) PCC Secretary's Report

There were no questions raised.

(iii) Parish Reports

Margaret Harnden pointed out there was an error on her name on the Flower Guild Report.

There were no questions raised.

(iv) Churchwardens Report

There were no questions raised.

(v) Accounts – Financial Report 2021

Andy West briefly outlined the highlights of 2021. Finances had ended the year in a good position, due to the generosity of people giving regularly by standing order, he felt this was part of why people did not feel the need to attend weekly. There are reserves in the Works Account to fund the AV works (or part of). The Education Fund has monies to support young people on the path to faith.

Jane Carter queried the costs shown for marketing at £1,161.00 for the year. AW confirmed that posters for fairs (such as the roundabout one), Vimeo, the broadcast service, Thorpe Together and anything IT related, i.e digitally published or printed were covered in these costs.

Margaret Harnden asked why there was a cost for flowers shown as these were usually met by donation. AW confirmed that donations had only partly covered flowers but expenses were £165.00 for the year.

Linda Gillham asked why postage was so high. DHM confirmed that items such as the APCM booklet had been sent digitally in 2021 – no-one had read it, so it had been chosen to print and send this year as we need to make people aware.

AW advised that utilities are under 'parish buying', which makes it slightly cheaper, although no bill has been received as yet. Electricity costs have always been low, the main cost being gas, which will increase. The Parish Buying scheme covers 1000 buildings across the UK, it is not zero carbon but greener energy. We are expecting the first increased gas bill at the end of April.

DHM proposed acceptance of the Accounts for 2021.

Margaret Roberts and Susi Thornton seconded.

Accounts unanimously accepted.

(vi) Deanery Synod Report

There were no questions raised.

4. Any Other Business

No questions had been submitted before meeting.

DHM confirmed that Margaret Harnden is to become Mayor of Runnymede from 18.05.22, taking over from Elaine Gill.

Elaine confirmed it had been a strange time to be mayor, but felt she had achieved the best she could. She was proud and privileged to represent Runnymede, it is a jewel in Surrey's crown. She had been called the 'Covid Mayor' in schools. She was delighted to report that two independent councillors, herself and Margaret, had followed into the mayoral roll.

Jane Carter wished to draw attention to the lovely brickwork on the patio. DHM also confirmed thanks to Pete Gruncell and Barry Huxley for their behind the scenes work on the project.

Jill Collinson wished to thank DHM for his Covid safe work and getting us all back into church. She reported that the Foodbank collection had had tremendous response and thanked the congregation for their generosity. DHM confirmed that the Foodbank will count as part of our Eco Church work, for which we now hold a Silver Award.

Susi Thornton wished to pass thanks to Mtr Jo and Fr Gerard for all that they do. Mtr Jo passed thanks to DHM for all that he does to support them in their roles.

DHM confirmed that he and Jason have been trying to adopt Sophia's brother over the last year, which had been delayed again because of the pandemic and a legal challenge (Somerset Ruling) which had impacted Surrey and the adoption process. They had been asked before he was born if they would take him and he has now been with foster parents for the last 12 months. They are hoping he will arrive sometime in May.

DHM further advised he had applied to take a sabbatical last year and has now received response agreeing to two months leave, being July and August, he is not however allowed to take leave for a month before going on sabbatical. Hopefully he will be on two weeks paternity mid-May to June and then off on sabbatical July and August. Mtr Jo will be in charge while he is absent.

DHM closed in prayer

Meeting concluded at 1.00 p.m.

RECEPTION OF THE ELECTORAL ROLL IN ADVANCE OF THE APCM 2023

The revision of the Electoral Roll is taking place. Notices were posted 13 February 2023 for 21 days and the revised Roll will be displayed for 14 days at Church, as prepared and approved.

Under the Church Representation Rules any persons are entitled to have their names entered on the roll if they—

- (i) are baptised and aged 16 or over.
- (ii) have signed a form of application for enrolment.
and either
- (iii) are members of the Church of England or of any Church in communion with the Church of England being resident in the parish or (not being resident in the parish) having habitually attended public worship in the parish during the six months prior to the application for enrolment;
or:
- (iv) are members in good standing of a Church (not in communion with the Church of England) which subscribes to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity declaring themselves also to be members of the Church of England and having habitually attended public worship in the parish during the period of six months prior to enrolment.

Clare Cobbold, *Electoral Roll Officer*

Vicar's Report on 2022

We had all anticipated that 2022 would be a year of steady as she goes, as we at St Mary's prayed for renewal and growth following the devastating impact upon the Church during the height of the pandemic. We began the year preparing for Jubilee celebrations, and a really positive growth in numbers at our Noah's Ark group and the launch and great success of our Lego Club. However we were unable to staff-up 'Faith and Fun' groups, with much of that group's leadership now working or unavailable, which was a disappointment both to the church community and Thorpe Primary School, where the group prior to Covid had been double over subscribed. We were joined for 4 months by Sue Phillips who was on placement with us and was such a wonderful member of our community. But we also had our worst period of regular attendance at 10am for many years, leading up to Easter 2022 when attendance on Easter Eve/Day was less than in 2021, partly because fewer people attended the Family Service / Easter Egg hunt. The comparable number of communicants in 2021/22 being exactly the same at 98. Holy Week itself was more positive, with a good attendance on Good Friday for both services but especially 'Children at the foot of the Cross.' We began on Palm Sunday with our APCM and a challenging discussion around attendance in church, live-streaming and our need to overcome our fears post Covid and come back together again in person as one family of faith.

We recognised our need to gather around the altar, where Jesus meets us, indeed feeds us spiritually in the Holy Sacrament. From then onwards numbers began to recover as we prayed for renewal. Numbers began to start to recover with 8am services reaching a regular 11 people in attendance and 10am moving back over the 30 mark and sometimes into the 40's. The fortnightly Family Service recovered somewhat too, back to a regular 20 present.

The clergy team continued to prepare family packs which were distributed to children in church. Indeed there was not a Sunday between August and December 2022 without children in church for at least one service. As more returned to in person worship, online attendance dropped to 30 devices on a Sunday with only 15 actually following worship live, leading the PCC towards a review of continued viability. Once again the operation of live streaming fell to clergy, and largely me, as the Vimeo platform was upgraded and the process for setting-up each live stream became increasingly more complicated and fraught with problems. This has meant that without a volunteer to take on this work, live streaming of services has become impossible to continue into 2023.

The Jubilee celebrations were a lot of work for those involved but so very positive. Our MP Dr Ben Spencer was present for an hour and was blown away by the scale and attendance, he felt making Thorpe's effort the largest gathering in his constituency. Elaine Gill's leadership was sublime, supported by such a brilliant team with our own Parish Treasurer, Andy West, a key player and the Social Committee and their input and vast amounts of time. TESIS did us and Thorpe proud, with use of their South Campus Grounds and support in so many ways, not least with parking and security and we are so blessed to have them, and Mr Bryan Nixon as neighbours and friends.

However, spring 2022 was also marked by loss, with the sudden death of Barry Huxley who had served as churchwarden for 4 years and is dearly missed, along with some members of the Church family moving to pastures new around the UK, including the Alderson, Christie and Wareham families. Then there was Fr Gerard's appointment to Prison Chaplaincy and the end of Mother Jo's Curacy meaning the Winn-Smith family left at the end of November. Jo is now the Chaplain to the Bishop of Guildford. Then it was also announced that I had been appointed by the Lord Chancellor as the next Rector of Weybridge, with a move planned for January 2023, meaning the Christmas season was also a time of goodbyes.

In 2022 we also marked the death of HM Queen Elizabeth II, with her funeral shown live in church on our newly installed screens and lunch for all in the Rutherwyke Room. It was a real privilege to share the nation's loss together at St Mary's and there were still people here watching on the screen in the Rutherwyke Room at 6pm!

The upgrade to technology, including the projection in church has been a very successful addition to church life and used regularly by Thorpe Primary School for their services and each class visit to St Mary's and has been much appreciated. Likewise, we have upgraded the electrical system with RCD protection now in place for critical circuits and additional protection for the boiler house and vestry. We also now have emergency lighting above the porch doors. And the new sound desk arrived and was installed, having been on a boat around the world for months!

So 2022 became a year of transitions and change as we began to prepare for a vacancy and urgently prayed for the right appointment of a second churchwarden to support Pete. Autumn 2022 saw continued growth in Sunday attendances as we prepared for a festive season without restrictions. Winter Wonderland Fair was glorious, with a busy Christingle service and a brightly coloured roundabout stationed in the Vicarage Car Park. Our Christmas lights twinkled beautifully throughout December, drawing in many people. The white lights will remain in place ready for lighting in celebration of the King's Coronation in May 2023. Christmas services were well attended, continuing St Mary's recovery post the pandemic, with a packed 3pm Crib Service and over 450 people attending worship over Christmas itself.

I have written this report while preparing for my move to Weybridge and I leave Thorpe with a heavy heart. This community has been a very happy place to be and Jason and I started a family here with so much support and love. I will treasure in my heart this time of ministry as your priest. Both Jason and I reflected that we have lived longer in St Mary's Vicarage than anywhere else in our lives so far – nearly 12 years! I am delighted to leave St Mary's in a much better place than I found it, in so many ways and am thankful for your gift of time and support. But I realise the goalposts have moved and the challenge of maintaining a full-time vicar for just one church has become more difficult post Covid. The Church of England and Thorpe Parish are not alone in the 21st century challenges faced today. All voluntary organisations are ageing. Many groups have already folded, and charities are struggling. The ongoing cost of living crisis which impacts us all is yet another layer of complexity to navigate. The way in which St Mary's has recovered post pandemic, even in the face of dramatic shifts in society, is remarkable. This truly is a place of dedication, faithfulness, prayer and Christian flourishing. The Modern catholic approach to worship, community and inclusivity is drawing new people and gifts into the life of St Mary's and the way forward is continued growth if you, those reading this report, are faithful in your prayers and regular worship, your inclusive welcome and pastoral care.

As with all times of transition, there will be change, some things will come to an end but other new opportunities will emerge and I am confident your Vacancy will be a productive and positive time. You can, by prayer, find the right priest to lead you forward. I will always keep Thorpe and St Mary's Church in my prayers and consider having been your priest and guardian of this community the greatest privilege of my working life.

God bless, with prayers, *Father Damian Harrison-Miles.*

Electoral Roll Report – January-December 2022

The Electoral Roll for St Mary's Thorpe at the end of December 2021 was 117 and of this figure there are 19 households where there are 2 members.

The figure at the beginning of April 2022 was 121 so there has been an overall slight decrease of four this year, which has included some additions and some members of our church family passing on or moving away.

In the summer Fr Damian and I did a review of the electoral roll, when some entries were removed. Knowing this, I believe the electoral roll figures to be quite positive. This is my first year serving as an electoral officer. I am grateful for the encouragement I have received during this first year.

Electoral Roll Officer, Clare Cobbold

PCC Secretary's Report 2022 on the work of the Parochial Church Council

The Parochial Church Council met seven times over 2022 excluding the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on Sunday 10th April 2022. Evening meetings were preceded by the Eucharist at 7pm. The meetings started just after 7:30pm and it was aimed to conclude each meeting by 9:15pm.

In January PCC approved the Faculty for the reduced AV Installation, to cover only one screen and the full electrical upgrade required to support this. In April PCC approved the work to be undertaken and this was completed in 2022 and the screen has been used to good effect during Thorpe Primary School attendances and for Barry Huxley's funeral.

PCC discussed Covid at meetings during the year and approved changes to the Covid protocol being undertaken in church in line with government guidelines and local infection rates.

In March approval was given for application for a future non-stipendiary curate, which was duly submitted.

In September the Church Development Plan was approved and sub-committees moved to new 'teams', with a team leader for each group from PCC. The new teams are Administration, Deputy Wardens, Eco-Church, Fabric, Families and Children's Team and Safeguarding, Health and Safety, Liturgy Worship and Ministry, Organ Project, Social and Fundraising and Standing and Finance – which subsequently became Standing, Finance and Vacancy following the resignation of Fr. Damian. Each team will meet 4 times per year and report back to PCC at regular meetings.

All other regular business and approval of Policies were conducted as normal.

PCC Secretary, Allison Kelly

Church Wardens' Annual Report, including St Mary's Church, Terrier and Fabric, 2022

This year has seen a number of challenges but St Mary's continues to thrive and enjoy the support of our congregations and local community. Thankfully we have been able to move on from the years of Covid restrictions and have resumed normal services. We do still maintain a careful watch on the levels of infection in the wider community and will react as necessary.

In May we were deeply shocked and saddened by the sudden death of Barry Huxley, beloved friend and churchwarden of St Mary's, Thorpe. He has been sorely missed as he was such a support for St Mary's, giving so much of his time and expertise to his role as churchwarden. As well as taking responsibility for keeping all the checks up to date, it was thanks to Barry that the new patio was completed and the paths widened. During Covid he ensured that all seating was spaced correctly and was responsible for the installation of the audio system, the improvement of the sound system and the audio screen but sadly never lived to see them being used, especially by the school children. Having to manage without him so unexpectedly was very difficult but assistance by others was much appreciated. The Huxley family have donated a defibrillator to the church in memory of Barry. This has been installed on the wall of the new patio.

The St Mary's family would like to record our heartfelt thanks to Pete Gruncell, who supported by his wife Joan, has carried the burden of being sole churchwarden for the majority of the year. He has dedicated himself unstintingly to fulfilling the role and has done it superbly well. Thank you, Pete and Joan, for all the hours and all the effort.

St Mary's has continued to be actively involved in the community through regular social activities and interaction with local organisations and schools, in particular TASIS and Thorpe Church of England Primary School. We thank them all for their constant support and look forward to working with them in 2023.

We would like to thank Fr Damian, Fr Gerard and Mother Jo for their unfailing dedication and commitment in providing leadership and care in our services throughout 2022. In the last months of the year, we had to say goodbye to Mother Jo and Fr Gerard as they moved on to take up new roles within their Christian ministries. Mother Jo was appointed Chaplain to the Bishop of Guildford and Fr Gerard has taken the post of part-time Chaplain at Downview Prison. We are sad to see them leave St Mary's but we wish them every success in their new jobs. Happily, we will see them now and again as they will still be leading some services for us in 2023.

We are further saddened to have to bid farewell to Fr Damian who taken up the position of Rector at St James' Church in Weybridge. We will miss him greatly and we thank him sincerely for the tremendous work he has done developing the worship and fellowship at St Mary's Church, and in the wider community of Thorpe. He has been a great leader and teacher encouraging all age groups to get involved at church and interacting with local community groups for the benefit of us all. We wish him all the best in his new role.

Special thanks go to the following people: Andy West, Treasurer, for his skilled oversight and handling of the church's finances; Mary Morris, Parish Administrator, and Allison Kelly, PCC Secretary, for their dedication and hard work. They all work unfailingly to keep us up to date, and on course as a church and a regulated charitable organisation.

We would like to thank everyone who is involved in supporting the church as a member or helper of the many groups and committees that facilitate the running of the church. Whether it is cleaning, flower arranging, welcoming, serving, Eco Church development, choir and music preparation, rota planning, gardening, planning and running children's clubs and activities, the list is endless and we value everything you do and are so grateful. Thank you to you all.

Peter Gruncell & Diana Lees

Property Register Report (Formerly Terrier and inventory) 2022

The Quinquennial Inspection in August identified some broken roof tiles at the top of the tower. These have been replaced and all cracks filled with silicon.

Church Bells: A full service of the bells and clock was carried out in August which involved realignment and tightening of the bells to facilitate correct ringing.

Church Organ: The organ suffers from its location in the west end of the church. It is still working but occasionally suffers from "stuck" keys. Pete and our organists have developed techniques to free the keys as needed. The organ bench has been shortened and the additional support brackets fitted to provide more room for the organist to dismount by the steps. This has increased the organist's safety considerably. The organ gate has also been strengthened by the addition of L shaped metal plates at the joints.

Church Grounds:

The grounds are kept tidy with the help of students from TASIS who give up two hours of their time every other Saturday to help sweep and clear leaves from the paths. In spring and autumn, we held churchyard clean ups when many people, including students and teachers, gave up their Saturday mornings for a major tidying and pruning session.

Thank you to Bryan Nixon, Head of TASIS School, and to the students for their support and assistance for which we are very grateful.

This year saw the completion of the planned AV Project which has seen the installation in the church of the following items: Main drop-down screen, 3 x projectors, (1 above the chancel arch and 2 onto North and South aisle walls), mixer, amplifiers, hearing loop, wireless microphones and receivers and all the necessary power wiring for the above. This facility now offers opportunities for hosting a greater range of social events and outreach, and has greatly improved sound quality within the church,

Forthcoming work is required in 2023 to:

- Reset some tiles on the porch roof where we had a small leak and check the flashing
- Clear rubbish from the guttering
- Investigate cracked glass in the second window on the north side of the church, probably caused by a stone kicked up by the mower
- Investigate the automatic system for the bells which has developed a fault

The Church Inventory is being updated by Jill Collinson and an Administration Team. This is detailed time-consuming work and we are very grateful for their endeavours.

Peter Gruncell & Diana Lees

Financial Report 2022

(including the PCC Treasurer's report) PCC accounts can be found at page 34.

Receipts

Regular Giving

2022 Planned Giving was 3% up on the previous year and income from Gift-Aided collections was up 33% at £12.2k. Non-Gift Aid donations (up by 195%) benefitted from a considerable donation towards the electronic organ as well as continuing donations toward the AV project. These were transferred to the Works Account (see Expenditure>Fund Transfers>Transfer to Works Acc). When this is taken into consideration Regular Giving for 2022 was £51,318 compared with £53,114 in 2021 (down 3.4%).

Other voluntary receipts

Income from general donations in 2022 was significantly lower than 2021 which had benefitted from a large donation towards the audio-visual project. Income from wall boxes and that raised for charity increased YOY but overall receipts were expectedly down by £17.8k.

Fund-generating activities

Receipts from fund-raising events were considerably higher for the second year running amounting to more than £19.7k compared to £15.2k the previous year. Income from both the Platinum Jubilee and Christmas Fayre and the other activities organised by the Social Committee were a very considerable bonus. Generous individual donations also meant that the Audio/Visual project could be completed to a high standard. Receipts from hire were 60% higher than 2021 as the impact of the pandemic receded. Total income from this sector was £22.7k, 32.8% higher than last year.

Income from Church activities

Income from fees (weddings & funerals) was 83% more than last year (£15.7k versus £8.6k in 2020) due to the higher number of funerals throughout the year. Overall income was up by 73% (£7k).

Receipts from Investments & Other Income

Income from church activities dropped by just under £3k in 2022 due to fewer Weddings taking place. Receipts from refreshments, Noah's Ark, Lego club, flowers and sundry items like cards and gifts all increased YOY.

The dividend from our CBF shares rose by 3.3% year on year providing an annual return of £505 compared to £489 in 2021.

Inter-account transfers (shown as income from the Works and Education deposit accounts) were to pay suppliers for the AV project and shared resource costs for Youth work.

The Tax reclaim from HMRC for 2021 (received in 2022) was artificially high due to an over-claim error. This was corrected and this figure should be viewed alongside the repayment (see Payments>Other Costs>Tax Repayment).

Total receipts for 2022 were £202,349 compared to £140,964 in 2021 (+43% or £61,376)

Payments

Church Activities

Our Parish Share for 2022 was paid in full. Parish running costs such as travel, telephone and related expenses were £360 (27%) less than 2021. Organist's fees were higher due to the number of funerals this year (money in/out). Costs related to services in church dropped by 27% YOY. Overall, the cost of church activities rose by just under £5k (8.2%).

Maintenance

Maintenance costs were 63% lower this year compared to last. As well as regular weekly cleaning, the main areas of expenditure were electrical works (AV), the Quinquennial Inspection, boiler and clock servicing and churchyard/car park tree maintenance.

Church running expenses

The cost of insurance rose by 3.4% (£90) compared to last year and Utility costs rose by 15.7% (£1,081). Overall running costs rose by 17% (£1,171) but we can expect these to be significantly higher yet again in 2023 due to the rise in energy costs from April.

Administration

Costs across administration, computer and office supplies were £6.6k higher than 2021. Apart from secretarial costs this was mainly due to acquiring two replacement computers (Office & Vicarage) and the supporting software and connectivity which were one-off costs. Standard office supplies such as photocopier charges, paper, BT phone line and annual subscriptions are also included here.

Other costs

Total expenditure in this sector rose by £46.9k compared to last year. Most of this increased expenditure (£36k) was on fixed assets i.e., the AV system and accompanying electrical works. Events & Fundraising costs saw a significant increase over the previous year but £4.8k of this was payment to TWRA for their 2/3rds share of the Platinum Jubilee income. Tax Repayment was the refund to HMRC for the over-payment of Gift Aid (see Receipts from Other Income & Investments above)

Fund transfers

A total of £43,938 was transferred from the Current Account to the Works Deposit Account in 2022. As usual all donations specifically identified as project specific were recorded as income when received into the Current account (see Other Voluntary Receipts and Receipts from Fund-generating Activities) and then as expenditure upon transfer to the Works Account (Deposit). Of the £2,324 transferred to the Education Account, £1,500 was its 50% share of the Marshall Grant (AV) and £824 was from Noah's Ark and Lego Club receipts. These transfers impact both Income and Expenditure totals and so should be taken into consideration for any comparison of the two.

Total payments in 2022 were £201,741 compared to £140,126 in 2021.

This is the second year that St Mary's has faced difficult circumstances as a result of the pandemic but I am pleased to report that the church finances are in a stable position which is solely due to the outstanding generosity, hard work and commitment of our faithful parishioners, the PCC and the church's leadership.

Andy West, Treasurer

Safeguarding Officer's Report 2022

National and Diocesan resources over the last year have been strained because of the Covid 19 restrictions but attention to safeguarding requirements at St Mary's has not been compromised in any way. The Diocese has struggled with a reduction in staff and also with the changes being implemented by the National Churches Institutions' Safeguarding Department, resulting in new guidelines being set. These guidelines have now been passed on to the parishes. At the end of October 2021 the Bishop of Guildford's Leadership Team issued a new set of safeguarding training instructions in the form of a 'Parish Dashboard'. Each parish has been given its own 'Dashboard' - traffic light system to record and monitor its parish safeguarding training.

With effect from January 2022, significant changes have been made to the training requirements and courses, most of which are by online training. Although obligatory for PCC members, others might find the *Basic Awareness and Foundation modules* beneficial. These courses are accessible via the Diocese of Guildford website and access is available on the Diocesan Website under the 'Safeguarding' section https://www.cofeguildford.org.uk_Safeguarding

DBS

Significant changes to the DBS process were issued by APCS (the Diocesan provider) to the parishes at the end of January 2022. DBS checks now have to be renewed every three years rather than every five years. The 2022 changes include new guidance on those whose role requires a DBS check.

The Diocese will no longer issue a Disclosure Outcome letter and outcome of DBS checks will now go direct to the Validator (Vicar/Safeguarding Officer) rather than to the Diocesan office. We are assured this will make the return process more efficient.

All clergy DBS renewals and Safeguarding training records are dealt with by the Diocesan office.

Mary Morris, Parish Safeguarding Officer

Runnymede Deanery Synod Report 2022



Deanery Synods

Synod meetings in 2022 were held at St Paul Egham-Hythe (Spring), Christ Church Virginia Water (Summer) and St Paul Addlestone (Autumn), as usual presenting “Parish Focus” reports about the church life and community involvement of the hosting parish, with prayer requests/updates.

In Spring, Runnymede Deanery Climate Champion Clem Jones gave a Climate Challenge Update.

The June meeting was an outdoor synod in the Vicarage garden, with a well-attended and appreciated Bring & Share social, followed by an enthusiastic presentation and lively discussion on “Lay People in the Church of England” facilitated by Sarah Slater (Mission Team, Diocese of Guildford).

October Synod saw the Ven. Paul Davies (Archdeacon of Surrey) speaking passionately to lay members on “How Clergy Thrive”, including a useful group work session, while clergy gathered for a prayer meeting. Runnymede Deanery Eco Church Champion Ben Niblett presented “Eco Church 101”.

All three meetings were open to the public and detailed Minutes are available via the Deanery Administrator whose e mail address is runnymededeanery@gmail.com and on the Deanery website.

Restructuring

The leading bodies of the deanery (Standing Committee and Growth & Strategy Group) have, as per CofE strategy, been incorporated into the new Deanery Leadership Team, which had its first meeting in April 2022. It consists of the Area Dean, Lay Chair and incumbents of the parishes (or their nominated core leadership delegates)/churchwardens in case of vacancy.

Kebbi Link

Archbishop Henry of Nigeria invited Bishop Andrew of Guildford to speak at a plenary session of the Nigerian National Conference in November 2022, renewing the longstanding link with our diocese. Nigeria is the largest member of the Anglican Communion with over 20 million people. Details on the visit will hopefully be shared at the next synod meeting.

Finance

Runnymede Deanery accounts continue to be sound and Parish Contributions were confirmed to remain at the same level as in recent years (individual parish amounts are determined by three-year rolling average of Sunday attendance, combined with Relative Prosperity Index), plus an invitation for 30% additional as donations towards the Deanery Growth Fund.

A £500 Deanery Growth Fund grant was awarded to Egham Hythe in support of their work with local Magna Carta Secondary School.

Other Business

- o 2022 was the last year of the current Lay Membership cycle with the next Triennial Lay Representatives Election coming up for APCMs in 2023.
- o Former Lay Chair Keith Malcouronne stepped down after over 20 years of good work in his leading function. Steve Baynes of Egham Hythe was duly and unanimously elected as new Lay Chair, with Roy Gouriet of Englefield Green as deputy. Ben Beecroft, Vicar in Addlestone, remains Area Dean, with Rosie Hoad, Vicar in Egham Hythe, as deputy.
- o Runnymede Deanery Synod voted in favour of a motion for Diocesan Synod: "For Church of England clergy to marry parishioners and couples with a valid link to their churches in a Church of England ceremony at their chosen, legally correct venues other than a Parish church/chapel/place of worship."

*Claire Cobbold, Mary Morris
St Mary's Representatives on Runnymede Deanery Synod*

OTHER REPORTS IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

Children's Church Report 2022

Noah's Ark, the toddler group, continues with lively meetings every Thursday from 9am to 11.30am Children have a range of toys and activities they can undertake and we finish with a singing session. Average attendance is approximately 16 children with their parents/carers each week.

Allison Kelly

Church Cleaning Report 2022

The cleaning team of Hannah and Jill meet on an ad hoc basis to clean the church. We would welcome anyone wishing to assist with this and can be flexible on timing. Please let me know if you are able to help

Clare continues to do a sterling job in washing the church floor on a weekly basis. A small group of the congregation contribute £30 on an ad hoc basis to the cleaning of the church

If anyone is able to contribute at any time please put the contribution in a Gift Aid envelope marked CLEANING.

Jill Collinson

Contemplative Prayer Group Report 2022

The Contemplative Prayer Group, has been meeting weekly on Monday afternoons, 2.15 to 4.15. It is a means of keeping a Flame of Light and Love alive, which connects us with the Wholeness of Creation and the Creator.

We have a 'getting ready' Reading which leads us into a time of Silence.....a time of waiting, listening, letting go of earthly worries and anxieties.....then we move to pray for individuals, incidents, troubled places. We finish with the Blessing. We often take time to reflect on what may have occurred for us in the Silence but this comes when it is right to do so. Over tea and cake we feel the joy of the group - a safe place. We are very small in number. If anyone would like to know more about the CPG do talk to Margaret H, Jane C or Susi.

Jane Carter, Margaret Harnden, Marie Jedla, Susi Thornton

For further information contact the Parish Office.

Flower Guild Report 2022

The Flower Guild is still operating with four main group members, Jane, Helen, Elaine and myself, but we have had help for special occasions from Grace, Jenni and Valery. Special thanks go to them. Valery is at present living with a host family in Thorpe, having fled her home in Ukraine due to the war.

Margaret Alderson continues to spend some time with us in Thorpe, despite now living in Scotland, but is always keen to help us with church flowers when here. Jane is not able to be with us all year now so please, if you would like to join us you would be made most welcome.

Easter saw St Mary's decorated beautifully with white lilies, many donated in memory of a loved one or in thanks for the blessing of a family member.

One of our saddest, but poignant tasks was decorating the church for the funeral of our dear churchwarden, Barry's funeral – something we would never have expected to be doing. The family was very complimentary about our efforts and we were happy to play our part in what was a very moving service.

The Platinum Jubilee of the Late Queen Elizabeth II, was a particularly special time for us, when we encouraged all in the congregation and beyond, across the ages, to bring an arrangement to church, however simple, to celebrate that unique occasion. The response was brilliant! They were both simple and beautiful, with some spectacular, and were much admired by the hundreds of people who visited the church over the extended four day Bank Holiday.

Christmas is always a highlight for us arrangers and the feedback we had in 2022 about the festive floral decorations was particularly positive. St Mary's is a beautiful church to worship in, and the Flower Guild is here to enhance that beauty. We feel privileged to be involved and look forward to adding to our number in 2023. Come and join us!

Margaret Harnden

Liturgy Group Report 2022

Why do we feel the need to physically gather together publicly, when in recent years 'online' worship has for many become the norm? Why do we devote huge amounts of our time, energy and financial resources in maintaining a physical structure, if the old adage is true and The Church is the people and not the building!

Let's turn this around, why did sensible people sacrifice their lives, just so future generations, could log into worship, when it was convenient. Surely, because the transformative love of God which burns in our hearts, is not about us 'getting our fix' but rather about a public statement, a witness to the wider community, which simply says, 'God is so special, he deserve us to pull out all the stops, to do everything at our disposal to scripturally and emotionally show others that the chance to come together and the living fellow of God's kingdom, at this time, in this place, is just as important as the food we eat or the clothes we wear.'

Without falling into the current trap of constantly using Management Talk, the truth is we unfortunately, live in a world of Numbers, Targets Viability Charts or in everyday language 'Bums on Seats'. For over 1000 years, people from all different walks of life, from different social backgrounds, have felt called to St. Mary's to offer uplifting and accessible worship that gives us a foretaste of Heaven. The effort and devotion which people give willingly for the good of others makes St. Mary's a beacon of hope and encouragement in a world that often feels as though it has lost its way.

Change can be scary, however it can and should also be seen as God's gift to allow the Holy Spirit to equip and inspire the lives of other disciples. Yes, St. Mary's took a big hit this year, when God called the resident priests to pastures new, but this is the beginning of a new chapter, so let's continue to fly the flag here at St. Mary's, let's ensure that this community in Thorpe continues to present worship in such a way that the action of coming here to worship is simply a part of who and what we are, of what makes us tick.

Fr Gerard Mee

Music Secretary's Report 2022

It has been a pleasure to return to unrestricted singing in St Mary's after the constraints of the last couple of years. We sang at 24 services, 9 funerals and 6 weddings and were joined by some of The Hythe Singers for Lessons and Carols. We are fortunate to have the services of our splendid organists, David Howard and Lionel Pike, and thank them for their excellent music and support. We also thank Petra Hudson for cantoring on many occasions. We were invited to sing at St Paul's Church in Addlestone on four occasions. In September we opened St Mary's after the sad loss of our Queen. Father Damian set up the screens and provided Order of Services for us to follow a very moving the service. Some 40 people attended. The Knights Templar celebrated their annual service with us on the 9th October. We joined All Saints at Woodham for their Patronal Service on the 30th October. Thank you to all the choir for giving up their time to rehearse and sing at St Mary's it is greatly appreciated and enhances our services. We welcomed a new member, Linda, to our choir this year and are always looking for new members. Please contact me if you would like to know more about singing at St Mary's

Jill Collinson

Social and Fundraising Team Report 2022

Our social and fundraising activities are now "back to normal" after considerable "stops and starts" during the two years of the pandemic.

Our major event of the year was the Platinum Jubilee party on the 3 June. TASIS kindly let us use their massive garden in the South Campus so our Churchyard was a thoroughfare to TASIS. It was a huge success, not least because people felt comfortable at coming out to such a large scale fete after two years of being very careful when the pandemic was at its peak. Also it was an amazing day weather wise, so much so we had to send out for several reinforcements of PIMMS and other beverages. The teas were served in the Rutherwyke Room and went down very well. The Platinum Committee worked so hard to make it a success and TASIS worked with us as a team. The proceeds were split so two thirds went to the TWRA and one third to our Church - the proceeds for our Church were nearly £2,500. It was a great community activity; thanks to Elaine for chairing the Committee.

In October we held a barn dance in the Village Hall but despite efforts to sell more tickets there were only 36 of us. However we still made a profit of nearly £400 and it was a great evening.

We continue to look for ideas to fundraise so we hired the British Legion Hall in Pooley Green for a nearly new sale. Unfortunately very few people attended but we managed to make a net profit of £160 and we had great fun doing it.

After that came our Winter Wonderland. As it was so cold outside last year we restricted the number of stalls outside for the brave hearted! It was a very jolly affair. We still managed to make a good profit of around £1,500 and we did well on the Grand Draw this year.

Then came all the events at Christmas, i.e. lessons and carols, Egham Band, crib services for which we provided refreshments. We had been sponsored for two licences which meant we could charge for mulled wine and mince pies and we managed to add to the fundraising pot.

At the Remembrance Service we learned that our priest Fr Damian was leaving us in January. Because of the numbers we decided to hold his leaving party in the Village Hall. TESIS very kindly supplied a hot dish and various Church members made puddings. It was very successful.

Our next venture is our annual quiz on March 11th and we are hoping for good attendance.

Jenny Bright

Environmental Stewardship Report 2022

As a mark of our achievements in 2021, we were able to apply for the Eco Church Silver Award which was granted on 29 March 2022. You can now find us on the Eco Church map at <https://app.ecochurch.org/map> with a silver marker and our award certificate is displayed on the Link pin board.

At the beginning of 2022, following request from PCC, St Mary's Eco Team was formed, consisting of Ann Corfield, Susi Thornton and Petra Hudson, with an inaugural meeting in March. The team has overseen the following events in 2022:

- Tearfund "Renew Our World" speaker at Lent Lunch
- St Mary's Eco Church stall – with a hedgehog theme and link to Harper Asprey Wildlife Rescue – at the big Jubilee Fete
- Eco Church section on St Mary's stall at the school fair
- Counsellor Linda Gilham speaking on Bee Conservation at November Community Lunch

Further activities in 2022:

- Introduction of St Mary's Eco Church Mascot "Hoopy Hannah Hedgehog", kindly knitted by Jenny Pike and named as a prize game at the two fairs mentioned above
- Introduction of an occasional St Mary's Eco Church Info publication with tips and ideas on environmental topics, plus fun challenges for Creation Appreciation, Creation Conservation and Creation Kids

- “Creation Care” Household Eco Survey as a church-family-wide activity, sadly with poor uptake – if you have not yet done this survey please go to Creation Care (see notes below) and do it now because your personal (anonymous!) participation in this is a crucial part of our journey towards food bank
- Installation of a variety of bug hotels and bird boxes, kindly made by Pete Gruncell
- Information on and promotion of bumblebee hives for gardens
- Participation in The Queen’s Green Canopy scheme in conjunction with TESIS
- Pledging “Renew Our World” as St Mary’s Environmental Prayer Charity – please keep remembering their projects in your prayers regularly (both at home and for Intercessions at worship)

“Going for Gold”:

SM Eco Team has created a complete overview of how St Mary’s can achieve the Eco Church Gold Award going forward – yes it’s possible without undue pressure on resources, both financial and volunteering! This was lodged with PCC for the upcoming Parish Needs Process and vision building.

As a reminder: Eco Church is an ecumenical environmental stewardship programme, run by Christian environmental charity A Rocha UK. Our Diocese of Guildford has signed up as an Eco Diocese, has achieved Bronze level and is strongly encouraging all parishes to progress through these awards, so they can progress as a diocese. The Eco Church programme guides churches towards a more creation-centred and environmentally sustainable future within a balanced scheme. You can read about it in more detail at <https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk>.

Please join the Creation Care register at <https://creationcare.org.uk> – linking to St Mary’s Church Thorpe! – and complete the survey.

They also feature an excellent webinar recording on their HOME page which explains everything about why as Christians we should be concerned with environmental stewardship (scroll down the HOME page and especially listen to the Bishop of Horsham). She explains why Eco Church is not simply a box ticking, award hunting exercise – those are only the markers of progression! It’s a learning process towards increasing Eco Awareness (Creation Appreciation) and Eco Stewardship (Creation Care), both as Church and as individuals who make up that Church.

The Eco Team thanks everybody who has helped in any way with the events and activities mentioned above. Your support is very much appreciated.

Petra Hudson

Thorpe Church of England Primary School Report 2022

We are all very sad that **Fr Damian** has left us but very grateful for the close partnership with St Mary's PCC. We had a productive meeting with Churchwardens Peter, Diana and Andy this term and hope to work closely with all those at St Mary's Thorpe to ensure the school and children continue with the great links between church and school.

Again, big thanks to the **Churchwardens** and volunteers who have supported the children with their church visits for curriculum and services. It would be very difficult to manage these visits without your support at Church and walking back to school. You are very much appreciated and we will need your support even more so in the coming months.

We have continued to work closely with The **Grace Learning Partnership** to enhance practice and our offer to children. These schools include; Lyne and Longcross, St Jude's Infant and Junior School. We are working with wider school community in North West Surrey.

We are committed to **safeguarding** children's welfare and all checks on regular helpers are carried out. Our Single Central List is checked by our Safeguarding Governor Mr Bryan Nixon every term. Head teacher trains governors and every member of staff on an annual basis and visitors who volunteer also have training before they work with children.

FOTSA has raised a lot of money - they work hard, often with other job roles, for the benefit of all the children in the school.

We have a very successful **Breakfast Club - Earlybirds**, starting at 7.30am. **After School Club – Owl Club** (from 3pm to 5.30pm). We also have a variety of other clubs; dance, coding, football, Warhammer, multi skills and judo. Again, we would love Faith and Fun to return to Thorpe when St Mary's has capacity.

Opal Play continues to support children with their play but this needs regular replenishment with donations of various items such as sand, dressing up clothes, construction items.

We are very pleased with the **admissions** to our school for 2023 and although we have seen quite a bit of movement to and from school; children have joined our school and settled well. Infant classes are full and we have 10 spaces across the Junior classes, most in Y6

If you have any questions, or would like to come for a visit, please do not hesitate to contact me.

01932 562329 or head@thorpe.surrey.sch.uk



.Mrs Helen Southgate, Head teacher Faith, Love and Excellence

God's Kingdom in our School
Faith – Love – Excellence

Runnymede Foodbank

A monthly list of “needs” is received from the Foodbank and displayed within the Church and Rutherwyke Room and the congregation of St Marys continue to contribute generously which helps meet the increasing needs in the area. In the first 10 months of 2022 over 59,000 meals were distributed in the Runnymede area, a 20% increase on 2021.

Thank you all for your generous support which is needed now more than ever

Jill Collinson

Part 2

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of St Mary, Thorpe – Charity No: 5116755 Annual Report & Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2022

On Sunday 7th June 2015, the Right Reverend Andrew Watson, Bishop of Guildford, led a service of Institution and Induction at which The Very Reverend Paul Bryer, Archdeacon of Dorking, made Father Damian Stewart Miles BTh the Vicar of Thorpe under ‘Common Tenure’ – with the agreement of our Parish Patrons Keble College Oxford. This was following a period of five years when the ‘Living’ was suspended under the pastoral measure. From 31 January 2011, all appointments are made under ‘Common Tenure’ and the ‘Living’ has ceased to exist. Father Damian’s appointment as Vicar of Thorpe is under Common Tenure and is not time limited. Fr Damian had served Thorpe as Priest in Charge from February 2011 until he was made the Vicar in 2015.

Review of the Year *Please refer to the Vicar’s and PCC Secretary’s reports.*

The Parochial Church Council and Responsibilities

St Mary’s Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of co-operating with and assisting the Vicar in promoting, in the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission to which Christ Jesus calls his Church; worship, pastoral care, evangelistic outreach, fellowship as well as engaging fully within our local Deanery of Runnymede. Our PCC has responsibility for the fabric of St Mary’s Historic Medieval Church, the Rutherwyke Room with Wallace Room (Parish Office) and closed churchyard surrounding the church buildings (including the Leigh Bennett Enclosure, and the southern end of Church Approach including the lych-gate, flowerbed and entrance to the Vicarage in Church Approach). By agreement St Mary’s PCC maintains the Vicarage front garden for use as a church car park. This land remains the property of the Diocesan Parsonage Board and the agreement allows for car parking on the red gravel area only (approximately 13 spaces). The red surfaced part of the driveway must always be kept clear for emergency vehicles and access to the Vicarage.

Governance

Churchwardens are elected at the Vestry Meeting (meeting of parishioners) and serve for a period of no longer than six years. They are then disqualified from being churchwardens for the next two years, after which they are free to stand for another term of six years. In 2008 the APCM voted to allow an extension of up to two years' service before disqualification under the rules. Members of the PCC are either elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) or ex officio in accordance with the Church Representation Rules. Up to 2018 elected members have served on a three-year term for up to two terms, before being disqualified for a year, as agreed by a previous APCM. This was reviewed at our 2018 APCM and a motion carried for a change to block elections for the PCC annually.

From 2019 APCM all those intending to stand for the PCC need to complete an application form and be proposed and seconded in the customary way. If there are more proposed people than places an election will be held. Additional members may be co-opted at the PCC's discretion for a specific purpose, up to two at any one time. (Church Representation Rules 46A and 46B) A person shall be disqualified from being nominated, chosen, or elected or from serving as a member of a parochial church council, a district church council or any synod under these rules if the person:

- is disqualified from being a charity trustee under section 72(1) of the Charities Act 1993 and the disqualification is not for the time being subject to a waiver by the Charity Commissioners.
- is included in a barred list (within the meaning of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006).
- has been convicted of an offence mentioned in Schedule 1 to the Children and Young Persons Act 1933 (unless the person's disqualification under this sub-section has been waived in writing by the bishop of the diocese in question).
- has been so disqualified from holding office under section 10(6) of the Incumbents (Vacation of Benefices) Measure [1997].

A person is disqualified from being a charity trustee under the Charities Act if they have been convicted of an offence involving deception or dishonesty (unless any such conviction is legally regarded as spent), if they are an undischarged bankrupt, have made compositions or arrangements with any creditors from which they have not been discharged or have been removed from serving as a charity trustee, or been stopped from acting in a management position within a charity.

Charity Registration

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of St. Mary, Thorpe is a registered charity no: 1176929. See www.stmaryschurchthorpe.co.uk/policies for Thorpe Governing Documents and PCC Trustee Guidance, as well as other parish policies and role descriptions for elected, voluntary and employed staff.

Parish Share 2020 – 2023

In 2018 the Diocese of Guildford voted to adopt a new Parish Share calculation from 2019. For Thorpe Parish, if the new calculation were implemented in full, from day one, we would have needed to find nearly 80k each year, an increase of 35k annually. Negotiations followed with the PCC and Standing Committee, and a revised calculation for Thorpe was proposed by the Diocesan Board of Finance, which sees an increase in our contribution of 40% phased over five years. In 2019 we were asked to contribute £50,121. (+5k on 2018) In 2020 we are asked to contribute = £54,439. This should have increased in 2021 to £58,769, 2022 to £63,281 and 2023 to £67,982. However, due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, the Parish Share has been frozen across the Diocese. It is unclear what the position will be beyond 2023, but we are aware the Diocesan Board of Finance has significant financial challenges, so regrettably we can expect the annual rises to continue.

The Parish Share calculation is made up of two component parts: 'Ministry Costs' at £56,300 includes the stipend for a full-time Vicar - Fr Damian is actually paid £27,000k before deductions – this amount has been frozen for two years with no % increase expected any time soon, so in effect, the clergy have taken a pay cut. Other aspects of the parish share calculation include pension liabilities (including historical pension costs), housing, training (including curates) and the cost of maintaining vicarages, etc. 'Shared Costs' are then calculated on the top, and these include money for mission and the National Church, church schools, diocesan costs and much more besides. As our share contribution rises annually, we will not only pay the full ministry cost but begin to pay the shared costs component, which had previously been subsidised by other churches.

Church Attendance

It is impossible to make an accurate comparison between 2022 and recent years due to the nature of the Covid-19 pandemic and the heavy restrictions which were placed upon society – the church has in no way been immune to this. Although 2022 was restrictions free, the impact of social distancing was felt at worship throughout much of the year. Thorpe PCC are so thankful for the support of so many in achieving all we did this year. It will take some time to recover numbers in Church, but we have made a good start and must remain determined to work at growing St Mary's once more through personal evangelism and discipleship, as we share the blessings of what we have here far and wide.

GDPR & Privacy Policy

Your privacy is especially important to Thorpe PCC and we are committed to keeping your information and data secure and safe. Visit our website to read our Privacy Notice: <https://www.stmaryschurchthorpe.co.uk/copy-of-safeguarding>

**ST MARY'S PARISH CHURCH
STATISTICS FOR MISSION 2016–2022**

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Mothering Sunday	77	97	157	8	25	68
Easter Day	259	257	249	(closed)	149	124
Harvest	84	106	112	41	79	93
Advent/Carol/School Services	916	1133	1082	181	569	684
Christmas Eve/Day	638	639	627	161	258	438
<i>Occasional Offices:</i>						
Funerals (Crematorium)	9	10	15	20	20	10
(In Church)	11	9	9	9	14	12
Burial of Ashes	5	3	4	1	3	4
Baptisms	22	17	25	3	4	19
Weddings	10	6	6	2	7	7
Wedding Blessings	0	0	1	0	1	0
Wedding Banns Only	2	2	3	2	2	2
Electoral Roll (Dec year-end)	140	142	107	119	118	117
Average 10am attendance at worship ONLINE (devices) during 2022						30

National Church – continuing to decline

According to the British Attitudes Survey (September 2018), the number of people in society who describe themselves as part of the Church of England has more than halved since 2002, from 31% to 14%. This is a worrying statistic and should give us cause for concern with the number who attend regular Sunday worship thought to be far lower. Anecdotally, we have seen more people connected to St Mary's (known as the 'fringe' of the church community) but overall, people are less regular in their commitment to worship with the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdowns exacerbating this trend. Nationally, the decline in attendance among 45 – 54-year olds is most acute and again reflects the challenge we have in meeting this age group and their spiritual needs. The national average decline in Church of England attendance is said to be around 2% but could well be higher because of Covid and St Mary's Church has not been immune to this, with a number of people moving away, or choosing to remain online for regular worship. We were one of a handful of churches in the Diocese of Guildford which showed up as growing consistently over a three-year period to October 2016, however that is no longer the case and we must redouble our efforts to reverse Covid-related decline.

Our numbers have fallen in recent years, partly attributable to deaths, some Covid related and others moving away. During 2022, Sunday attendances varied dramatically from over 50 at 10am to just 22 on the 5th Sunday of Lent – a record low. As some joined the electoral roll, we have overall remained relatively level at 121. Considering the national challenge, we must not be complacent. 2022 saw new faces join our regular community, although a number of families and two of our

clergy team move away, so there is a lot to celebrate amidst the challenges of our time.

Church Development Plan (CDP) for Thorpe

Approved at our November PCC.

As we look to the future, we always hold in mind that:

"Unless The Lord builds the house, the builders labour in vain." Psalm 127:1

We turn to the Trinity of love in faith for inspiration. All our discussion are rooted in prayer and trust in the God from whom all good things come in the first place. (See 1 Chronicles 29:14)

We will embed our Diocesan Vision TCTL into our priorities. Laying sound foundations at our September 2022 PCC meeting, we agreed to renew teams of people to lead our innovation. With about 6 people in each, we hope these groups will meet quarterly and deliver our vision 2023-2025. Each of these teams is asked to report back to the PCC. They cover every aspect of our church life together.

Vision Priorities:

- i) Work to ensure the musical tradition of the church is maintained with a working organ.
- ii) Secure a children and families worker part time to lead Lego Club and re-introduce Faith & Fun activities on a Sunday morning and after school club at Thorpe Primary.
- iii) Establish new Whatsapp groups and a bible study group. (End use of the Workplace communication platform before charging begins).
- iv) Develop discipleship and personal evangelism with continued courses.
- v) Migrate financial management over to the Planned Giving Scheme.
- vi) Eco-Church - strive for the Gold award.

Gift Aid

As a charity this is especially important in meeting the costs of ministry and the maintenance of our historic medieval church here in Thorpe. We ask every member of the church family who can do so, to complete and sign an annual Gift Aid declaration. Thank you for your help and support.

St Mary's Church, Thorpe
 Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31
 December 2022

General Receipts & Payments

Receipts	2022	2021
	£	£
<i>Regular Giving</i>		
Planned giving	30,474	29,545
Collections and other giving (non gift aid)	52,576	14,435
Collections and other giving (gift aid)	12,206	9,134
	95,256	53,114
<i>Other Voluntary Receipts</i>		
Donations/ <i>In Memoriam</i>	2,095	20,164
Charities	199	10
Wall boxes & Candles	231	172
	2,525	20,346
<i>Receipts from Fund-generating Activities</i>		
Fund-raising Events & Activities	19,771	15,272
Hire of Church and Rutherwyke Room	3,012	1,878
	22,783	17,150

Receipts from Church Activities

Fees (Banns, Weddings, Funerals)	11,513	15,762
Refreshments	1,131	615
Noah's Ark & Lego Club	739	114
Flowers	224	99
Books	-	-
Sundry (Stall, Cards, Gift etc.)	448	263
	14,054	16,853

Receipts from Investments

CBF Dividends	505	489
	505	489

Other Income

Works Account (inter a/c transfers)	24,723	14,330
Education Account (inter a/c transfers)	12,679	6,050
Tax reclaims (2021 Gift Aid)	29,816	12,633
Receipts from insurance	-	-
	67,218	33,013

Total Receipts	202,340	140,964
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Payments	2022	2021
	£	£
<i>Church Activities</i>		
Diocesan Parish Share	58,617	54,375
Parish Costs (Expenses, Travel, Telephone)	985	1,345
Organists	3,320	1,270
Cost of services	2,537	3,496
	65,459	60,486
<i>Maintenance</i>		
Facilities maint. Cleaning, Fees etc	8,738	23,532
	8,738	23,532
<i>Church running expenses</i>		
Insurance	2,762	2,672
Gas, Electricity, Water	5,163	4,082
	7,925	6,754
<i>Administration</i>		
Admin, computer & office supplies	10,129	3,564
Bank charges	10	-
Postage	69	33
	10,209	3,597

Other Costs

Books	10	80
Music & Subscriptions	91	-
Children's Resources	264	-
Charities	208	-
Parish Fees to Diocese	3,682	6,808
Events & Fund-raising costs	8,251	1,666
Refreshments	903	480
Marketing	1,655	1,161
Flowers	399	167
Tax repayment	11,394	-
Sundry payments (training, misc)	192	30
Fixed assets	36,100	5,822
	63,149	16,214

Fund Transfers

Transfer to Works Acc	43,938	29,543
Transfer to Education Acc	2,324	-
	46,262	29,543

Total Payments

201,740.89	140,126
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Balance (Income less Expenditure)

599	837
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Statement of Assets and Liabilities

		2022 £	2021 £
Cash Funds			
at 31 Dec 2022	Bank: Current Account	1 23,760	23,161
	Bank: Business Reserve Account:		
	Education	2 23,976	34,308
	Bank: Business Saver: Works	3 44,481	25,251
Investment Assets			
	CBF: Thorpe St. Mary PCC - value of shares	4 16,983	19,249
	<i>821.00 shares @ £20.66.14 each on 31/12/22</i>		
		109,201	101,969
Other Monetary Assets			
	Estimated refund for 2022 GA donations	5 12,985	12,437
		12,985	12,437
Breakdown of Cash Funds			
	Unrestricted (1+4+5)	53,729	54,847
	Restricted (2+3)	68,457	59,559
		122,186	114,406

Approved by the PCC on Monday 20th March 2023
and signed on their behalf by:



**CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES**

**Independent examiner's
report on the accounts**

Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/ members of	Charity Name THORPE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL		
On accounts for the year ended	31 ST DECEMBER	Charity no (if any)	1176929
Set out on pages	1 & 2		



I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended **31/12/2022**.

**Responsibilities and
basis of report**

As the charity trustees of the Trust, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

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

**Independent
examiner's statement**

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention (other than that disclosed below *) in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

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

** Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.*

Signed:

Date: 25th Feb 2023

Name: Paul Whitlock

**Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):**

[Empty box for professional qualification]

Address: 47, ASHINGTON AVENUE, EGHAM, SURREY TW20 8LE

[Empty box for address]

Part 3 Appendix Section

Sunday Worship at St Mary's

8am Said Eucharist, 10am Sung Parish Eucharist

1st & 3rd Sunday monthly 11:30am Family Service

2nd Sunday monthly 11am Healing Ministry

[4th Sunday 12noon Baptism Service]

6pm Compline – check the newsletter for details.

Weekdays

Weekday Said Eucharist: 11am Wednesday

Evening Sung Festival Eucharist

at 7.30pm on select occasions.



St Mary's Church, Thorpe
Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2022

General Receipts & Payments

Receipts

	2022 £	2021 £
<i>Regular Giving</i>		
Planned giving	30,474	29,545
Collections and other giving (non gift aid)	52,576	14,435
Collections and other giving (gift aid)	12,206	9,134
	95,256	53,114
<i>Other Voluntary Receipts</i>		
Donations/ <i>In Memoriam</i>	2,095	20,164
Charities	199	10
Wall boxes & Candles	231	172
	2,525	20,346
<i>Receipts from Fund-generating Activities</i>		
Fund-raising Events & Activities	19,771	15,272
Hire of Church and Rutherwyke Room	3,012	1,878
	22,783	17,150
<i>Receipts from Church Activities</i>		
Fees (Banns, Weddings, Funerals)	11,513	15,762
Refreshments	1,131	615
Noah's Ark & Lego Club	739	114
Flowers	224	99
Books	-	-
Sundry (Stall, Cards, Gift etc.)	448	263
	14,054	16,853
<i>Receipts from Investments</i>		
CBF Dividends	505	489
	505	489
<i>Other Income</i>		
Works Account (inter a/c transfers)	24,723	14,330
Education Account (inter a/c transfers)	12,679	6,050
Tax reclaims (2021 Gift Aid)	29,816	12,633

	Receipts from insurance	-	-
		67,218	33,013
Total Receipts		202,340	140,964

Payments

		2022	2021
		£	£
<i>Church Activities</i>			
	Diocesan Parish Share	58,617	54,375
	Parish Costs (Expenses, Travel, Telephone)	985	1,345
	Organists	3,320	1,270
	Cost of services	<u>2,537</u>	<u>3,496</u>
		65,459	60,486
<i>Maintenance</i>			
	Facilities maint. Cleaning, Fees etc	<u>8,738</u>	<u>23,532</u>
		8,738	23,532
<i>Church running expenses</i>			
	Insurance	2,762	2,672
	Gas, Electricity, Water	<u>5,163</u>	<u>4,082</u>
		7,925	6,754
<i>Administration</i>			
	Admin, computer & office supplies	10,129	3,564
	Bank charges	10	-
	Postage	<u>69</u>	<u>33</u>
		10,209	3,597
<i>Other Costs</i>			
	Books	10	80
	Music & Subscriptions	91	-
	Children's Resources	264	-
	Charities	208	-
	Parish Fees to Diocese	3,682	6,808
	Events & Fund-raising costs	8,251	1,666
	Refreshments	903	480
	Marketing	1,655	1,161
	Flowers	399	167
	Tax repayment	11,394	-
	Sundry payments (training, misc)		30

		192	
	Fixed assets	36,100	5,822
		63,149	16,214
<i>Fund Transfers</i>			
	Transfer to Works Acc	43,938	29,543
	Transfer to Education Acc	2,324	-
		46,262	29,543
Total Payments			
		201,740.89	140,126
Balance (Income less Expenditure)			
		599	837

Statement of Assets and Liabilities

		2022	2021
		£	£
Cash Funds			
at 31 Dec 2022	Bank: Current Account	1 23,760	23,161
	Bank: Business Reserve Account: Education	2 23,976	34,308
	Bank: Business Saver: Works	3 44,481	25,251
Investment Assets			
	CBF: Thorpe St. Mary PCC - value of shares <i>821.00 shares @ £20.66.14 each on 31/12/22</i>	4 16,983	19,249
		109,201	101,969
Other Monetary Assets			
	Estimated refund for 2022 GA donations	5 12,985	12,437
		12,985	12,437
Breakdown of Cash Funds			
	Unrestricted (1+4+5)	53,729	54,847
	Restricted (2+3)	68,457	59,559
		122,186	114,406

Approved by the PCC on

and signed on their behalf by:



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/ members of

THORPE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

On accounts for the year ended

31ST DECEMBER 2022

Charity no (if any)

1176929

Set out on pages

1 & 2

(Remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/12/2022.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

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

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention (other than that disclosed below *) in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

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

* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

Signed:

P. H. Whitlock

Date:

25th Feb 2023

Name:

Paul Whitlock

Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any):

Address:

47, ASHLEY AVENUE, EGHAM, SURREY TW20 9LE

Accounts

St Mary's Medieval Church, Thorpe



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

Diocese of
Guildford

TRANSFORMING CHURCH
TRANSFORMING LIVES

VESTRY MEETING
and reports for the

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

Sunday 9th May 2021 11:30am

including the

**ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL
STATEMENTS OF THE PAROCHIAL
CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE
ECCLESIASTICAL**

**PARISH OF ST. MARY, THORPE
Charity No: 1176929**

for the year ending 31 December 2020

Vicar: The Revd Damian Stewart Harrison-Miles, BTh
St Mary's Vicarage, Church Approach,
Thorpe Village, Surrey TW20 8TQ

**St Mary's Thorpe VESTRY MEETING and reports for the
ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING**

Contents

Part 1

- p. 2 What is an Annual Parish Church Meeting?
- p. 3 Agenda for the Meeting of Parishioners (Vestry Meeting)
- p. 3 Agenda for the Annual Parochial Church Meeting
- p. 4 Minutes of the Meeting of Parishioners held Sunday 20th September 2020
- p. 5-11 Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held Sunday 20th September 2020
- p.11-16 Reports – starting with the Vicar's Report on 2020
- p. 16 Electoral Roll Officer's Report on 2020
- p. 16 PCC Secretary's Report on the proceedings of the PCC during 2020
- p. 17 Church Wardens' Report on 2020 (*Fabric Report is included here*)
- p. 18-19 Financial Report (Treasurer's Report) 2020
- p. 19 Safeguarding
- p. 20-21 Deanery Synod Report & Diocesan Synod Report
- p. 22-27 **OTHER REPORTS IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH**
(alphabetical)

Part 2

- p. 28-29 PCC Responsibilities and Governance
- p. 29 Parish Share Figures for phased increase projected over 5 years
- p 30-31 Statistics for Mission, National Church, Thorpe Together & Mission
- p. 33-37 Financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2020
- p. 38 Independent Examiner's Report

Part 3 Appendix Section

- p.39 Regular Worship at St Mary's – Covid-19 planned and suspended activities
- p.40 Post 20:20 – what does our vision look like?

What is the Annual Parish Meeting (APCM) all about? A brief introduction

The APCM is an important meeting for the whole church, an opportunity to elect the people our congregation want to represent them on their Parochial Church Council (PCC). It is an opportunity to ask questions about the finances of the church, the state of the buildings, or about any matter of concern to the life of the parish. The PCC takes account of views expressed at the APCM, and matters are taken forward into the subsequent PCC for discussion. Thorpe PCC meets six times a year to conduct the business of the church. Please read these reports thoroughly

and come to the meeting with questions, as we share together as the family of faith in our life together, in sacramental worship and fellowship – Transforming, Church, Transforming Lives. We do this in a Christian spirit of mutual respect and love, friends, and pilgrims. We come prepared to look forward, as well as reflect upon the past year. May the Lord of all guide our thoughts, words, and actions to his Glory; the building up of the Kingdom in Thorpe.

Agenda for the Vestry Meeting (Meeting of Parishioners) via Zoom

Sunday 9th May 2021, 11:30am (*following the ONLINE Eucharist*)

1. The opening of proceedings with Prayers
 2. Apologies for absence
 3. Minutes of 20 September 2020 and any matters arising
 4. Election of Churchwardens
 5. Nomination for approval of four Deputy Wardens (honorary supportive role)
- End of Vestry Meeting

(At this point those not named on the Church Electoral Roll cannot vote if they remain.)

Agenda for the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) via Zoom
Sunday 9th May 2021, 11:30am (*immediately following the Vestry Meeting*)

Apologies for absence

Minutes of the previous APCM held in Church on 20 September 2020
11:30am.

Matters arising

1. **Elections & Appointments**

- Annual election of PCC Members
- Election of Deanery Synod Representatives
- Approval of Sides-persons (to assist Wardens with service duties)
- Appointment of Sides-person to assist the Treasurer with banking
- Confirmation of appointment of the Electoral Roll Officer
- *Note that the PCC Secretary, Treasurer and Vice Chair of the PCC will be formally agreed at the next Parochial Church Council meeting (to be held on Monday 17th May 2021, 7:30pm) as they are Officers of the PCC.*

- Appointment of the Independent Examiner for 2021/22 Financial Accounts (Mr Alan Alderson)
2. **Reports - see written reports**
 - (i) Report on Electoral Roll
 - (ii) PCC Secretary's Report on the proceedings of PCC
 - (iii) Parish reports – *printed & distributed Summary of reports from the Chair*
 - (iv) Church Wardens' Report including Fabric/Terrier
 - (v) Accounts – Financial Report 2020
Acceptance of Financial Report 2020
 - (vi) Note on the Deanery Synod Report – *printed & distributed*
 3. **Any other business - to be notified at least 24 hours in advance**
 - (i) Questions & Answers Session – *questions please at least **24 hours** in advance stmaryschurchthorpe@outlook.com*
 - (ii) Announcements

The meeting concludes in prayer and with the Grace.

**Minutes of the Meeting of Parishioners (Vestry Meeting)
of St Mary's Church Thorpe, Sunday 20th September 2020,
11:30am**

Present: Fr. D. Miles – Chair (DM)

Present in Church:

B. Huxley, A. West, A. Kelly, A. Carter, B. Lowe, M. Roberts, J. Collinson, J. Mitchiner,

T. Leighton, A. Leighton, J. deVille, C. Cobbold, P. Gruncell, J. Gruncell

Present via Zoom:

Mthr J. Winn-Smith, Fr. G. Mee, S. Bolton, M. Morris, J. Bates, S. Bruce, P. Hudson, D. Kidd,

J. Bright, M. Harnden, K. Flanagan, S. Thornton, Jim Lowe, Jane Lowe, A. Falconer,

B. Grove, T. Grove, C. Wareham-Davis, J. Harrison-Miles, K. Wade (via Facebook).

Absent: All electoral roll members not listed as Present or having submitted apologies

Meeting commenced: 11.31 a.m

1. Father Damian opened the meeting with prayers.

2. Apologies for Absence:

B. Syradd, H. Southgate, B. Mixham

3. Minutes and Matters Arising

Minutes for the APCM Meeting held 14th April 2019 were accepted and no matters were arising.

4. Re-election of Wardens

Barry Huxley and Peter Gruncell confirmed their agreement to stand as Church Wardens.

Unanimously re-elected

Margaret Roberts has stood down after 7 years' service. She was thanked on behalf of St. Mary's by Fr Damian and presented with flowers. Margaret thanked all and confirmed that the role of Church Warden was a good thing to undertake and wished Peter all the best in his new role.

5. Nominations for approval Deputy Wardens

There were seven Deputy Warden nominations, from:

Margaret Harnden, Susi Thornton, Helen Cunningham, Bev Syradd, Jill Collinson,

Deborah Kidd, and Margaret Roberts.

All seven candidates were unanimously accepted.

7. Any Other Business - None

The meeting therefore continued with the Annual Parochial Church Meeting of St Mary's Church, Thorpe. A vote was taken and passed unanimously to allow any non-members of St Mary's Electoral church Roll to remain (without voting rights).

The attendance at both meetings was therefore the same.

Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting of St Mary's Church, Thorpe

Sunday 20th September 2020, 11:45am

Minutes from the APCM held 14th April 2019 were accepted with no amendments.

1. Elections and Appointments

9 persons had submitted written nominations:

Bev Syradd, Mary Morris, Allison Kelly, Margaret Harnden, Deborah Kidd, Sarah Bolton,

Andrew Falconer, Jenny Bright, Catherine Wareham-Davis,

All 9 nominations were unanimously confirmed.

Fr D. Harrison-Miles gave thanks to Jane Lowe who was stepping down after 9 years and welcomed Catherine Wareham-Davis to the PCC.

- Election of Deanery Synod Representatives

Two written nominations had been received:

Bryan Lowe and Claire Cobbold

Unanimously approved.

- Approval of Sides-persons

The following persons had put their names forward for appointment as sides persons:

S. Thornton, B. Lowe, J. Mitchiner, B. Grove, T. Grove, K. Stangroom, E. Gill, J. Gruncell,

P. Gruncell, A. West, D. Kidd, M. Roberts, M. Harnden, B. Huxley A. Leighton, T. Leighton,

C. Wareham-Davies, Jane Lowe, Jim Lowe, A. Falconer, B. Syradd

All persons were unanimously confirmed.

- Appointment of Sides Person to Assist the Treasurer with banking

John Brittain is unwell and it was agreed to discuss the matter further at the PCC meeting 21st September 2020.

- Confirmation of appointment of the Electoral Roll Officer

Sarah Bolton was unanimously confirmed.

- Appointment of the Independent Examiner for 2020 Financial Accounts

Alan Alderson was unanimously confirmed.

2. Reports

Fr Damian felt that most of the reports in the booklet were now dated, due to the lockdown, which had prevented the APCM meeting being held as usual in spring, but this was especially true of the Vicar's Report and he wished to read a report which he felt summarised the current climate.

Fr Damian reiterated the measures taken regarding Covid-19:

- Posters around the church advising on social distancing
- Face masks to be worn
- Hand washing
- Sign in sheets for test and trace
- Service sheet collection - you may keep this after the service if you wish
- Regular worship could accommodate 48 persons maximum
- Group attendance in the Rutherwyke Room was for 10 at a 2metre Distance. 6 people maximum at any time for meetings.

Address to the APCM, 20th September 2020.

By Father Damian Stewart Harrison-Miles – Vicar of Thorpe.

An APCM is meant to be a reflection upon the previous year – in this case 2019, and a chance to set the agenda for what is to come – 2020! But we had to postpone our meeting in April, and we are already 9 months into 2020. So, we look back, perhaps with glassy eyes to the world of 2019 but face the realities of our present time, when life is different. So, this is no ordinary APCM, and we are not living through normal times. Our lives have been disrupted like never before, we are effectively at war with a virus, Covid 19, and since the last APCM we have been thrown into lock-down, with Holy Week and Easter 2020 delivered from the Vicarage study. What a strange time we are living through.

Less than a year ago we had not heard of Covid-19 and we all had plans – for our families, among friends, in our work context and of course our beautiful Church. For our PCC it was delivering that last part of our 2020 vision for Thorpe. We wanted to find and appoint a Family & Children's worker. We had quotations ready to seek a faculty for the installation of technology, including screens and projection fitted inside St Mary's, along with some improvements to our sound system. We had a full drain survey completed, to see why we were having problems with groundwater flooding and we were looking to improve drainage and our footpaths. We had long desired to create an outdoor surface for social and fundraising events and had met with our church architect to think about and draw-up plans. 2019 was a good year for St Mary's with another increase in some congregations and finances remaining strong, meeting our second increase in Parish Share in full.

We had built up our finances, not least following a successful Christmas season 2019, and were able to pay a chunk of Parish Share up-front at the start of 2020, but from then on finance remained on balance tight. 2019 had been a good year, and a sure foundation for 2020. Our PCC asked several tree surgeons to inspect the great Canadian soft-wood, a form of Yew that graced the front of our building since Victorian times, but had no idea it would come crashing down in freak gales in March, just as lock-down started. It was a marker of the kind of significant change to come. Our dear John Brittain falling ill, and still without a full diagnosis now – just one of many people who have deteriorated in health or struggled in this pandemic, even if not directly attributable to Covid-19. We lost Bob Castledine to cancer and were unable to gather as a faith family to say goodbye and support Jenny as we would have liked. Our buildings fell silent – locked, with groups and activities suspended and no idea when they may return.

Worship was conducted from our homes with the Vicarage study transformed in just 24hours into a chapel for live filming. The team

worked exceptionally hard to keep our worship as regular and as normal as possible, with the Eucharist – the Mass at the heart of our faith family. Andrew spent hours recording and preparing tracks so the voices of our congregation could be heard with readings and prayers in worship, and David with his daughter Annie recorded hymns, songs, and anthems from York, that have inspired us. The clergy zoomed into worship as we experimented with technology to see what was best, but we soon found Facebook Live offered a missional approach, drawing new people into our liturgical life – some who had not been to church in many years.

We were busy conducting many funerals, re-arranging weddings and baptisms with pastoral care and support became a number one priority. We wrote monthly to those without internet, we delivered food packs, toilet rolls and crosswords, puzzles and even some jokes to keep spirits up. We created a buddy-up scheme and phoned the lonely and housebound, took prescriptions to those in need and shopping where possible. I know we couldn't meet everyone's needs and I have to say I am sorry we couldn't do more, but I am so thankful for what we have achieved together – well done team.

We moved meetings onto Zoom and Messenger, we set up various trial systems for managing data and communication, with Workplace by Facebook proving the easiest to use and having the largest take-up, with 42 members of the congregation now engaged in teams from Communication to Deputy Wardens. Our Social Committee plan to expand upon that with the bubbles project, creating small groups of six people who make it their task to keep in touch with each other and pray with and for one another. We will make Workplace available for those bubbles, as a free communication tool.

Many have found the past 6 months to be a time of real challenge; emotionally, personally, spiritually, mentally, physically and in many other ways, but I realise that not everyone disliked it – there are mixed feelings and experiences. For some they found peace, quiet and safety alone. But for many I have talked to it was the opposite, a time of isolation and struggle, of loss and loneliness, of burdens that couldn't be shared and of financial hardship too – and of course fear, which hasn't gone away. This pandemic affects different people in different ways, and we must all be sensitive to that reality. Friends, there is no room for, "I'm alright jack," in the Christian faith – pastorally and spiritually, we are all in this together.

We were busy in a practical sense too, with damage caused by the fallen tree our priority. Then Barry, Margaret and I set about jobs, finding tradespeople where possible, such as repairing stonework and the front

pathway, and doing a lot of work ourselves with help from Pete, Terry, Jane and others – you know who you are! Pete refurbished the Lych-gate and began re-painting the black metal memorials around our churchyard. Jason and I repainted the Rutherwyke Room, Barry and Terry added new kitchen flooring and Jane set about a thorough spring-clean and together we achieved a complete re-configuring of our facilities to create a one-way system, in line with national Covid-secure guidance. It is hard to over-play the enormity of the challenges we have faced this last six months, with a lock-down and then the gradual re-opening of some services and activities.

The PCC agreed to put the Audio-Visual project on hold, but we did purchase new equipment to help with live-streaming services, so we could move back into Church for worship at the earliest opportunity. The PCC, still meeting but via Zoom, also agreed to progress the footpaths and patio project to planning, knowing we would have two years to complete the work if approved by faculty. But we also had to make tough decisions about where to spend any money, which at times has felt like Hobson's choice. We prioritised paying the Parish Share in full – we didn't accept the offer of a grant from the Diocesan Board of Finance because we believed this money should go to church communities in poorer areas. We also prioritised church cleaning, re-employing our cleaner for more hours each week, so we could get the church open again at the earliest opportunity.

Your response to our financial challenge has been a real blessing. Some of you have set-up monthly standing orders to ensure our finances were not destroyed by Covid and others handed over a wodge of green envelopes for all the weeks the church was closed, or made a one-off additional donation – thank you. I know that not everyone can carry that burden, but I ask everyone to reflect upon their giving and to see what can be done, so those less able to carry the load moving forward are supported by those who can.

And now, we have worship back in church, the art class will be back soon, and we are trying to find a new normal. Of course, we have got nowhere near the maximum 48 people in church for the Sunday Eucharist so far, with general attendance at services very small, and hardly any families and children, not least because so many fear a resurgence of this vile virus, which it seems we are now seeing internationally. But also, people are out of the habit of attending worship and that could have longer term consequences for St Mary's. Attendances for all services and activities is limited – new blue posters remind us of the numbers permitted, with Covid-secure protocols in place, and we are reviewing what that could mean for the run-up to

Christmas, with some events and festivals needing to be ticketed for the first time ever – some services like Remembrance almost impossible and some, like our annual Memorial Service we will have to re-imagine. Although ever hopeful things may get better, we must be prepared for any future lock-down, or for some or even many of us to fall ill and what that could mean moving forward. We simply must keep everyone who uses our church safe. We can do this by maintaining our welcome teams, ensuring all hands are washed at entry, wearing a face mask, social distancing and keeping 2 meters apart where possible, not singing in church, and using copious amounts of hand gel! I know not everyone likes or agrees with these protocols, but they are important, and we will maintain them for as long as is necessary to keep people safe. Thank you for your forbearance.

The truth is that our church community is made up of different, diverse people, whose lives, priorities, and personalities are unique – wonderfully so! I have used this past few months to reflect further on mission and what it means to be a church community today. We have very suddenly lost most of our church ‘fringe’ – the 200 or more people of all ages and backgrounds who call St Mary’s their church but have a tentative connection. In essence this group have all but melted away as regular activities ceased. It will take some time to draw people back and we need to face the missional challenges of Covid head-on. This situation won’t improve any time soon.

I know these times have weighed heavily upon some of you and I am so proud of you and of St Mary’s and what we have achieved these past 9 months. Recognising our differences is essential for maintaining and growing our church family moving forward. I’m afraid we can’t always be everything to everyone – we have limited resources. As our new PCC sets priorities in the coming months, we will endeavour to take the whole church on a journey, united. We face a barrage of new and changing legislation from the government, with Church of England guidance updated at a moment’s notice, and we are trying to communicate to the best of our ability – and while we are at it trying to navigate wider church politics too. We will all need to pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to lead us safely into all truth – for discernment to know what to prioritise and for a further deepening of our corporate and private prayer.

We have only achieved so much this year because of the excellent foundations we laid in 2019 and because of you, the part you have played. Thank you. So, we also look to the future, with some fear and trepidation, that we may we build on our strengths and draw everyone together in our diversity, which makes us stronger. Now more than ever we need your commitment, your time, and your ideas – please complete

and return those questionnaires because they will be the basis of discussion as we re-set our Church development plan post 2020.

This is your church – not mine. I will only be here to guard and to guide for a time, but I do believe that together we can grow again and be stronger than ever – because we have a Lord who loves us and who longs to reconcile us into his very presence, his kingdom. We are building the church of tomorrow, upon the foundations of today and I do believe there is a lot to look forward to in Thorpe. Thank you for your part in that journey. And may the prayers of Blessed Mary, our Patron be with us as we move through this time of great challenge. Amen.

(i) Electoral Roll

The electoral roll has 116 members subsequent to the 7th September 2020 PCC meeting. There were no questions raised.

(ii) PCC Secretary's Report - There were no questions raised.

(iii) Parish Reports - There were no questions raised.

Fr Damian requested more information in the Liturgy and Worship report for 2020.

Jane Carter enquired if the Deanery Event, a prayer evening at Lyne Church could be held at St. Mary's in future. Fr Damian advised that this had clashed with the confirmation class at the time, any future event would be advertised on the notice board in the link which has all Deanery information.

Jane Carter further enquired if the children who had been prepared for communion had been back to church. Fr Damian confirmed they had as they are part of the Family Service and that it was a priority moving forward to re-instate the service but current guidance was not to run children's groups.

(iv) Church Wardens Report - There were no questions raised.

(v) Accounts – Financial Report 2019

Andy West enquired if there were any questions on the report. There were none.

He advised that income had exceeded expenditure in 2019. There had been a rise in giving of some 20%. Total receipts for the year were £111,573.00 gross. The only area in which there had been no reduction in costs were with utilities, all other areas were below that of 2018. It has been a financially positive year.

AW requested that any recipients of an early draft of the booklet corrected the date of the Independent Examiners Report to 31st May 2020, which was correct.

AW proposed acceptance of the Financial Report.
The accounts were unanimously accepted.

Fr Damian asked for the situation on accounts as at 20.09.20. AW stated £8,000 in the current account, which was low as we had paid the parish share for 2020 in full in July. Fr Damian explained that we should not expect the normal November and December increases as per last year, due to predicted reduced attendance. 2021 will be a much more challenging year financially and even though the parish share will remain the same next year, this will rise by £6,000 in 2022. Andy West confirmed there would be a payment of £54,000 required in 2021.

(vi) Deanery Synod Report

Fr Damian expressed thanks to Deborah Kidd who having represented St. Mary's at Deanery Synod for several years was now standing down. Her role is to be taken up by Bryan Lowe. There were no questions raised.

3. Any Other Business

No questions had been submitted before the meeting. No questions were raised at the meeting. Fr Damian passed the thanks of all at St. Mary's to Petra Hudson who had stepped down as Office Administrator. There was a round of applause and Fr Damian confirmed that he had a gift and flowers for Petra, which would be delivered. The meeting concluded with prayers at 12.34 p.m.

RECEPTION OF THE ELECTORAL ROLL IN ADVANCE OF THE APCM 2021

The revision of the Electoral Roll is taking place. Notices are posted from **Easter Sunday 4th April** for 21 days and the revised Roll will be displayed for 14 days at Church, as prepared and approved.

Under the Church Representation Rules any persons are entitled to have their names entered on the roll if they—

- (i) are baptised and aged 16 or over.
- (ii) have signed a form of application for enrolment.
and either

(iii) are members of the Church of England or of any Church in communion with the Church of England being resident in the parish or (not being resident in the parish) having habitually attended public worship in the parish during the six months prior to the application for enrolment;

or:

(iv) are members in good standing of a Church (not in communion with the Church of England) which subscribes to the doctrine

of the Holy Trinity declaring themselves also to be members of the Church of England and having habitually attended public worship in the parish during the period of six months prior to enrolment.

Sarah Bolton, Electoral Roll Officer

Vicar's report on 2020

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted; a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; a time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to seek, and a time to loose; a time to keep, and a time to throw away; a time to tear, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; a time to love, and a time to hate; a time for war, and a time for peace. Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 (NRSV)

Over recent years this bible reading from the Old Testament book of Ecclesiastes has been more requested than any other. I found the text somewhat uncomfortable, the way it mixes metaphors and includes words and phrases like pluck up, die, hate and to kill. And then 2020 happened, and all our lives changed almost overnight. Everything we had planned as a Church community, like that of our national life was put on hold, postponed or cancelled. Now those words, "For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heavens" make so much more sense than they did before. Especially considering Covid-19, these ring true of our experience in the 21st century.

We started 2020 with the usual mixture of liturgy, meetings, and social events. Relate were using the Rutherwyke Room facilities on a Tuesday for counselling have recently extended their hours and our Noah's Ark toddler group was going strong, with suggestions we may need to split it into two to manage numbers. We held a wonderful Candlemas celebration followed by a meal at the Red Lion with 30 in attendance at the pub. On hearing about the mystery illness in parts of China, we introduced hand sanitiser points in the porch and link and encouraged people to sanitise as often as possible. Several people fell ill early on, unsure of what was behind it, losing their sense of taste and smell. At the vicarage we took a week off work, with no idea the virus causing our flu-like symptoms was to be so deadly for so many. Thankfully, as far as we can tell, we didn't pass it on.

As we entered March, the situation across the UK worsened, and by Mothering Sunday we had closed our Sunday worship to just a small team. With Barry and Margaret and their helpful inspiration, we worked

as a team to try and deliver worship from church. Jane and Jim Lowe were just brilliant, with ideas on setting-up filming equipment, and procedures for the building to help keep those of us inside safe. We quickly realised that we needed to create a one-way system for entry and exit, before such recommendations were published by the government. But we were guessing, and I have to say I for one was listening out for ideas. As government guidance was released, so we updated our plans and our PCC prepared a 'lockdown plan.' At our last meeting together we shared sherry and biscuits, and we raised a toast. It was a very strange moment, but I will always treasure that time together. Within hours a lockdown was announced and with that we were told by the Archbishops that clergy could no longer lead worship from the church buildings. The rationale was that the 'church' should pilgrimage with the nation from home, keeping people safe and facing the challenges in the same way as everyone else. But I can't deny it was a devastating blow.

Mother Jo set to work establishing our buddy-up scheme, whereby members of our community volunteered to be 'connected' by phone to those without the internet or Facebook, to keep in touch. New friendships blossomed as we sought to keep everyone connected. I began a process of collecting news, stories and jokes and writing to the elderly and those who lived on their own sending newsletters and much more. The first 'care pack' even included toilet rolls. Thanks to those who helped distribute our first pack which was a near military operation. We began producing a weekly 'Family pack' of online resources for children, young people - indeed for all ages to see us through the lockdown with a bit of Christian input.

Our pattern of regular worship continued online, with a service of Morning Prayer at 10am and with the Eucharist on a Wednesday, Saturday, and Sunday. Having a Eucharistic tradition, we continued to gather around the altar to encounter Christ Jesus present among us, and I believed strongly, and even more so do today, that 'Real Presence' is not simply about consuming the Consecrated Elements, but participation in the whole Mass, 'Spiritual Communion,' be that in person or online. The Vicarage study was converted into a chapel for live-streaming worship from home, with Father Gerard doing something similar. Mother Jo was unable to participate in the Eucharist as fully as we would have liked, like all Deacons waiting to be priested. However, the Ministry Team watched the worship offered from each other's homes faithfully.

The amount of work involved for the team was enormous. Jason commented that he saw less of me in lockdown than before! Hours were spent behind the scenes preparing each service, managing the technology (which at this time involved experimenting and a lot of sticky

tape) and so much more as the Study was now a small film studio. We set-up a rota of readers and intercessors and Andrew Falconer brilliantly, and with great generosity of time, captured voices so our worship included many from the Church Family. David Howard and his daughter Annie, (based in York for lockdown) set about recording music, which spiritually enhanced our worship and brought great joy to many and still does.

We had no idea at this point quite how much lockdown would change the life of the Church, with Holy Week and Easter needing to be streamed from the Vicarage study. I couldn't quite take it all in. The number of people participating online at that time was hard to quantify, but we believe it was well over 200 at some services, with over 1000 views of Easter Day.

Robert Castledine passed away, and the true hardship of lockdown hit, with only a small service at the crematorium possible. Jenny Bright was amazing as she coped with the loss. The Church Family supported her as much as we could within the strict rules and her family were in touch. She, like many others at that time, had to walk the long road of bereavement alone. At this time we began streaming weekly worship for Thorpe Primary School.

As lockdown continued, the Churchwardens and I set about re-decorating the halls complex, with Barry (supported by Terry Leighton) working on the kitchen floor, Jason and I repainting walls and washing carpets and Jane Lowe kindly gave the kitchen a thorough clean and sort-out. A full tidy-up of the Wallace Room followed. We moved the large blue notice board out into the Link and set the Rutherwyke Room up in accordance with government guidelines. This was to be our way into Church, the reception area, and needed to function as a safe place for signing-in and collecting recyclable service sheets, the kitchen becoming a hand-washing station. At the first opportunity to re-open for funerals we did so and tested out our new Covid-secure protocols. They worked well, and quickly we were able to introduce times of Open Prayer. Thanks go to our team of Wardens and Deputies for training up the Welcome Team and managing our new Covid-secure protocols - what a brilliant team we have. We replaced the internet cables that link the Vicarage and Church, and thanks to a kind donation were able to purchase a new lap-top for the church which was up to the task of handling the data needed to live stream from inside the building. As children returned to school, I had the privilege of meeting with the staff teaching and support team outdoors and praying with them.

Mother Jo's Ordination to the priesthood was postponed, and discussion followed about how and when this could happen. Jo was stoic and held

strong, but I know this was an additional challenge in the midst of all that was already going on. Bishop Andrew joined us for worship at Pentecost and we said goodbye to the collage of people's Easter Crosses which had decorated the study wall behind the Cross at the end of Easter season. The Vicarage study had served us well for several months and what a privilege that time was, to welcome you into my home. That space will always feel holy and set-apart. Returning to worship from the Church was such a real blessing. The 30-year-old sound system struggled to cope; it was never built for the tasks we were performing, but for the most part has held up, with a little adaptation. By summer, restrictions on Communal Worship were lifted, and we managed to get much of our worshipping life up and running. We re-introduced the 8am Said Eucharist with a congregation in Church and a few weeks later, the 10am and 7pm Compline with a maximum of 40 people allowed. With an online quiz and other activities, we all worked to keep our community, and the fringe of our church in touch and continued to send-out our care packs.

The PCC continued to meet via Zoom on the dates already planned with the standing committee meeting in between and regular meetings with the churchwardens. Faculties were prepared for footpath works around the Church Building including a new level surface between the Wallace Room, Link and South aisle of St Mary's, creating a patio area. (This was approved in October 2020). By the start of Autumn, we had re-drafted the risk assessment 8 times! The situation kept evolving and our priority, as always, is to keep everyone safe to the best of our ability and knowledge. The APCM was held in September, the third possible date set, and it was a blessing it could go ahead with a combination of in church and Zoom attendance, although we were only just quorate. We thanked Margaret Roberts for her six years as churchwarden and elected Peter Gruncell to take over.

Harvest Festival was joyful with 39 adults and one child in Church for the main service – the only time we reached our maximum allowed capacity. On Sunday 11th October Mother Jo was ordained priest at St John's Church Egham and celebrated her First Eucharist that same evening in St Mary's and what a joy that was.

However, some of the toughest days of the pandemic were ahead. The second lockdown during November closed St Mary's to Communal Worship with Remembrance Sunday and our Memorial Service moved online.

We continued to open for Funerals and Private Prayer. The Leadership Team felt uneasy, as we believed Communal Worship was inherently safer. Looking ahead to the Festive Season and unsure of what would happen next, we prepared for various scenarios. Indeed, plans had to be amended as Covid cases rose. More members of our Church Family died including Rita Johns, Joan Rollason, Sam Thornton and Pat Harnden,

along with more from the wider Thorpe community with a lot of us in mourning. Christmas was not going to be different! The beautiful outdoor Crib Scene designed and built by Simon Steele, next door neighbour to Bridgett and Tony Grove, was installed in the churchyard. It was magical, with lights twinkling around our buildings throughout December and many families attending in the early evening to listen to the Carol Service. Throughout this period we prayed, 'Maranatha, Come Lord Jesus' with a daily reading streamed online. Andrew Falconer worked hard behind the scenes collecting the recordings, editing and unloading them to our website and Facebook page. Daily over 30 people participated, what an achievement! We delivered as much of our usual Christmas offerings as possible, but with heavy hearts as the Funerals continued and another lockdown, in the form of tier 4 hit and our planned socially-distanced Fair was cancelled. This time our PCC voted to remain open for Communal Worship and we continued to be a Runnymede Food Bank donation point, helping to provide families in need with Christmas goodies as well as essentials, and many making online financial gifts too.

Financially, 2020 was not so bad for St Mary's. Largely due to the hard work and dedication of some who gave generously, to cover the cost of essential temporary repairs to our audio equipment, allowing us to install new streaming devices, repaired, and decorated the halls complex, crucially employed our cleaner Claire weekly for 3 hours (to meet covid-secure protocols) and importantly paid our Parish Share in full by the end of July (itself an act of faith as the PCC were left with just £1k in the current account!) We trusted God with everything and were right to do so. There is so much more I could write about here, and in time perhaps there will be a way of recording more stories. What is certain is that 2020 has seen mixed emotions and experiences like none of us would have dared to imagine, but perhaps the Old Testament writer of Ecclesiastes understood after a long life of many challenges: There is indeed a time to live and to die, to weep and to laugh, to tear and to mend, to mourn and to dance, for war and for peace. The pandemic is far from over, and 2021 will continue to be a year of much challenge. From 2020 we can take away some certainties that can help us with the year to come, and the first is that Prayer is answered. The way our community has come together to support others has been outstanding, and to pay our Parish Share in full by the end of July was an answer to Prayer, as we sought to help the wider Church. The miracle of science and the vaccine roll-out, at the heart of much Prayer in 2020 has also been realised. And some of those who have fallen sick have recovered, although not all by any means. There is so much to be thankful for, even if we must still 'refrain from embracing.'

Today, social distancing remains important as we must work to keep everyone as safe as possible, and so we can't yet return to normal, whatever that will look like. So, we live with great loss, but also with hope for what lies ahead. God is faithful, as are many in our Church Community, for which I am so grateful. Our pilgrimage through this time of International Pandemic continues, but the end of this journey, is perhaps closer. There is indeed a time for everything. May our Prayers be for those who carry the scars of loss, bereavement, mental health and long Covid (and much more besides). It has been heart-breaking to witness, and I will forever feel that I haven't or perhaps couldn't do enough for everyone, even if I know I did all I could at the time. I know many of us feel the same - a sense of powerlessness. May we look forward to the future as we learn from the past, for God has a plan for this community of Thorpe beyond Covid, for the months and years ahead. Thank you for being a part of this story - this journey together in faith.

Your friend in faith and Vicar Father Damian Harrison-Miles

Electoral Roll Report - January-December 2020

The Electoral Roll for St Mary's Thorpe at the end of December 2020 was 112, and of this figure there are 22 households where there are 2 members.

The figure at the beginning of January 2021 remained 112. There could be some work to be done to encourage those who have joined us for online worship to join the Electoral Roll and this will be explored as lockdown starts to lift.

Electoral Roll Officer, Sarah Bolton

PCC Secretary's Report 2020 on the work of the Parochial Church Council

The Parochial Church Council met seven times during 2020, which includes a brief meeting on 7th September to agree the electoral roll in advance of the APCM but excluding the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on Sunday 20th September. Meetings were preceded by the Eucharist at 7pm. The meetings started just after 7:30pm and it was aimed to conclude each meeting by 9:15pm. Only the January and March meetings were held in the Rutherwyke Room, all others moving to Zoom in line with Covid/lockdown regulations.

Every meeting in 2020 was dominated by Covid, from planning through to agreeing systems for the church to operate safely. There were many discussions over the year and plans aligned for services and events, which due to circumstances were subsequently cancelled. As a PCC we have all certainly increased our knowledge of technology to attend meetings and communicate with each other. We have as a PCC

continued to execute the business of running St Mary's bringing to meetings our unique, varied experiences and understanding.

The patio project was approved and then subsequently put on hold, but has now been moved to work commencing in 2021, following approval of a grant.

Agreement to pay the balance of the parish share was made in July, in order

to assist Diocesan finances as many local churches were unable to meet their

own parish share. This ensured that the monthly standing order could remain the same for the rest of the year, completing St. Mary's annual financial commitment and enabled better planning capabilities for funds, with the reduced income from church closures. All other regular business and approval of Policies were conducted as normal

*PCC Secretary, Allison
Kelly*

Church Wardens' Annual Report, including St Mary's Church, Thorpe Terrier and Fabric, 2020

This past year could hardly have been more difficult or challenging for us at St Mary's Church - due to the ongoing Covid pandemic. In spite of this we have kept going, pulled together and generally kept our spirits up.

Thank you to everyone, but particularly to our wonderful vicar, Fr Damian who has led us expertly and diligently through these most difficult times. Government covid rules and restrictions have changed many times but Fr D has always managed to keep up-to-date and implement them at St Mary's straight away, thereby complying with the rules and law and importantly, keeping us safe and open as much as possible. It has been a great team effort. Thank you to all who have helped and contributed so much to keep church services going, in their various forms. Thank you Fr Damian, Fr Gerard, Mtr Jo, Andrew Falconer, Andy West, and assistant clergy. Thank you to the great support team of deputy wardens and welcomers, and also those who do so much at the church in their own quiet way, with the music - including all the recordings David Howard has made for us, the cleaning, the flowers and of course the social team who meet regularly and benefit us all and the church so much. Sorry if I have missed someone out. Without you all we just couldn't manage. Thank you. It is of course very sad that we have lost several dear friends from our congregation this past year, particularly recently. Their memories are very special - they were a treasured part of our congregation at St Mary's and will be greatly missed. The maximum term for a churchwarden is 6 years and so last year Margaret Roberts had to stand down having completed her 6 year term of office. Although very much still in attendance at St Mary's, we

miss her warm and friendly presence at meetings, her great wisdom and advice and importantly her sense of humour. Thank you so much Margaret for all you did. I appreciate that you are still there for your opinion and advice when we need it! Last year Pete Gruncell became churchwarden, taking Margaret's place. An excellent appointment! Pete is settling in very well to his new role and continues to contribute a great deal to St Mary's. Thank you for all your hard work (and to Joan as well!) We continue to enjoy excellent relations with our close neighbour, TASIS School. We offer our warmest thanks to headmaster Bryan Nixon for their continued help and support. In particular, the use of their car park for certain services and the kind gift of a magnificent Christmas Tree again which was put in front of the church at the start of December as usual and looked beautiful. Thank you Bryan.

Terrier & Fabric Report 2020

The Churchyard: Normally twice a year we organise a churchyard weed and clean-up with members of the congregation, however due to Covid it didn't happen last year. However we are most fortunate in having a young helper, Dominic Tatham, who spends 2 hours every fortnight working in the churchyard doing weeding and tidying, which is all part of his Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme. He is aiming for gold! Our grateful thanks to Dominic. He carries out his duties cheerfully in all sorts of weather conditions. He started with us last June, and his work is to last 12 months. We also had the help of a team from TASIS in the autumn, including students and teachers (about 12) who kindly volunteered and worked in the churchyard for a morning, doing a great job tidying and sweeping up leaves. Pete has been starting to remove the ivy which has taken over some of the gravestones and the walls. This needs to be kept going to stop it spreading. The half-moon flower bed next to the lych-gate continues to look nice and is a pleasant welcome to all who approach the church. Fr Damian has worked hard making it tidy and attractive. Thank you, Fr Damian, for once again going above and beyond this year. Some of the proposed footpath work was carried out in October 2020 which you may have noticed. Soon we hope to start work on the patio/pathway project outside the Rutherwyke Room. And we are hopeful also of going ahead soon with the new audio-visual project inside the church, although we are waiting for grants to hopefully make this possible. More about this to follow shortly. We have appointed a contractor to clean out all the church gutters and gullies and tidy the roof spaces. This should happen soon.

Barry Huxley and Peter Gruncell

Financial Report 2020

*(including the PCC Treasurer's report) **PCC accounts can be found at page 33.***

Receipts

Regular Giving increased by over 8% (£4.3k) compared to last year. Increased giving by GA and NGA direct donations more than compensated (+23% and +49%) for the expected fall in planned giving (green & yellow envelopes) due to the church closure and the more recent reduced capacity of the church due to occupancy regulations.

Other voluntary receipts

Income from general donations, *In Memoriam*, charity fund-raising and wall boxes was down 50% year on year.

Fund-generating activities

Receipts from hire and fund-raising events were considerably reduced this year for obvious reasons. Income from this sector was down by 57% (£10.2k) compared to 2019.

Income from Church activities

Income from fees (specifically Weddings) was 29% less than 2019 and all receipts in this area showed a drop on last year. Overall income was down by 41% (£6.9k).

Receipts from Investments & Other Income

Income from share dividends rose by 3% yoy whilst other income fell by 18%. This, however, was due to yoy differences in the amounts transferred from the Works and Education accounts into the current account. Also, the GA reclaim for 2019 (received in 2020) was 24% less than that for 2018 (received in 2019). Overall income from this sector was £4k down yoy.

Total receipts for 2020 were £94,152 compared to £111,573 in 2019 (-15.6%)

Payments

Church Activities

Our Parish Share (£54,395) was paid in full by July last year. Other church activity costs either remained static or dropped. Total expenditure was 1% (-£600) down compared to 2019.

Maintenance

Maintenance costs rose by 52% (+£3,965) compared to last year. This was off-set by a recoupment of £1,943 from Ecclesiastical Insurance which is shown in Income and draw-downs from the Works account where applicable. Projects covered were: drainage & path work, architect's fees, tree removal and roof repair.

Church running expenses

Insurance costs remained relatively static at £2,619 (£2,600 in 2019) and Utility costs fell by 12% or £473. Overall running costs fell by 7% (-£454).

Administration

Administrative, computer and office supply costs were 15% lower (£758) this year than last but postage costs increased by £65 due to the increased need to support our parishioners during lock-down.

Other costs

Total expenditure in this sector fell by just under £7,900 (-50%) yoy. Whilst fees due to the Diocese rose by over 95% because of the increased number of funerals that took place, nearly every other area saw much-reduced expenditure, e.g. events & fund-raising costs fell by 89%.

Fund transfers

A total of £10,049 was transferred from the deposit accounts (Works & Education) in 2020 compared to £14,044 in 2019. As usual, all donations specifically identified as, for example, Works project specific were recorded as income when received into the Current account (Receipts from Fund-generating Activities & Donations) and then as expenditure upon transfer to the Works Account (Deposit). This should be taken into consideration for any comparison of Total Income versus Total Expenditure.

Total payments in 2020 were £98,430 compared to £106,903 in 2019.

Considering the unique and difficult circumstances we have faced during the last year I am pleased to report that the church finances are in a good position which is a direct reflection of the outstanding generosity, hard work and commitment of the PCC, our parishioners and the church's leadership.

*Andy West,
Treasurer*

Safeguarding Officer's Report 2020

Initially lockdown slowed up the DBS and Safeguarding training processes in 2020 but transferring some of the training online helped to reduce the backlog around the diocese. Unfortunately, as the year developed the National Churches Institutions' training programme changed yet again, the plus side being that some of the rules and regulations for parish officer training are no longer required.

Virtually all church clubs, entertainment and hospitality were put on hold in 2020, but vigilance on the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults remained a priority. Recruitment of Deanery Safeguarding Representatives enabled a wider point of contact throughout the Deanery. We are optimistic that the Diocesan office will have produced a new guidance report on DBS and Safeguarding Training by the time this report is published.

Safeguarding Officer, Mary Morris

Runnymede Deanery Synod Report 2020
Deanery Events



Due to pandemic restrictions, our only physical Synod meeting in 2020 took place at All Saints New Haw in early March. Revd Craig Holmes, former Curate at St John Egham and now Director of Ordinands at Guildford Diocese, and his colleague, Mrs Glynis Beazley, presented an engaging talk on “Creating a Culture of Vocation”. June Synod was cancelled owing to the extended lockdown and in October we met via Zoom, facilitated by St Mary Thorpe and hosted by St Paul Addlestone, with our new Archdeacon Ven Martin Breadmore giving an introduction to himself and Q&A session as focal point.

Both meetings were open to the public and detailed Minutes are available via the Deanery Administrator runnymededeanery@gmail.com.

Deanery Growth & Strategy Group

The workgroup met once in early 2020, with the main focus being the continuation of the Deanery Growth Fund, hosting of a Kenyan Bishop on the occasion of the Lambeth Conference which was subsequently cancelled due to the pandemic outbreak, and brainstorming deanery-wide opportunities for mission which may yet be realised in the future but were not pursued further in 2020, again due to the circumstances. Encouraging feedback reports on the second round of 2019 grant allocations were presented at March Synod, concerning £150 each given to St Paul Egham Hythe for an upgrade of their toddler group equipment and to All Saints New Haw for Christian diaries to give away at their local Village Christmas Fair. Although the Fund was open for applications in 2020, none were received, no doubt due to the uncertainties around the pandemic preventing any longer term planning.

Kebbi Link

Runnymede Deanery donated £500 from its reserves to support Kebbi clergy and their families during this particularly trying time (African clergy are generally self-supporting/relying on donations). Sad news was received from Kebbi Diocese, our contact Bishop Edmund having been diagnosed with prostate cancer. Lay Chair Keith Malcouronne, also Non-executive Director of St Peter’s & Ashford Hospitals, has been able to arrange for robotically controlled surgery at the Royal Surrey hospital (a procedure not available in Nigeria), although this, too, is on hold because of the pandemic. Meanwhile a collection is open via Runnymede Deanery to support Bishop Edmund financially for his travels and stay in England – donations from churches and individuals are welcome; contact runnymededeanery@gmail.com.

Finance

Runnymede Deanery accounts continue to be sound and Parish Contributions were confirmed to remain at the same level as in recent

years (individual parish amounts are determined by three-year rolling average of Sunday attendance, combined with Relative Prosperity Index), without donations towards the Deanery Growth Fund.

Other Business

- o Revd Ben Beecroft, Vicar in Addlestone, was installed as Area Dean in September; thanks given to Revd Sandra Faccini for her sterling work as previous Area Dean. 2020 also saw the Triennial Election of Deanery Representatives who were welcomed during the Zoom meeting in October. Keith Malcouronne as Lay Chair and Sheila Bardell as Treasurer were confirmed for another term.
- o 2021 Open Synod dates were set as 4 Mar (Ottershaw), 8 Jun (Virginia Water) & 6 Oct (Chertsey).

Newsletters continued to be produced but on a more irregular basis, owing to lack of activities during lockdowns, and with an emphasis more on sharing experiences. The mailing list is open to anybody interested; requests via runnymededeanery@gmail.com

*Claire Cobbold, Deborah Kidd, Bryan Lowe
St Mary's Representatives on Runnymede Deanery Synod*

Diocesan Synod Report

In the face of the pandemic, it was clear that decisions would need to be taken at a corporate level that could impact all our churches, so Diocesan Synod was convened via Zoom from June 2020 and an emergency budget introduced with support for struggling parishes available. (Thorpe did not take up the offer of financial support, indeed we paid our Parish Share for 2020 in full by mid-July, trusting God would provide for the rest of the year, which indeed was the case). The Bishop of Guildford introduced his Health and Viability review which has begun to look at struggling parishes and ask questions about their resources and staffing levels. The implication is that some churches will need to share a clergy person in future. Sadly, the financial challenges of 2020 left the Diocesan Board of Finance with no choice but to furlough staff and make some redundant to cut costs quickly.

It is a privilege to represent clergy from Runnymede Borough at Diocesan Synod. I enjoyed the support of Bryan Lowe (who passed away in March 2021) at those meetings, who was always an ally and took the minutes for over 8 years. Bryan will be missed and our prayers are with Mary.
Fr Damian.

OTHER REPORTS IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

Emmaus Online Spring/Summer 2020

It was a joy to share the lead with Father Gerard, Mother Jo and Andrew Falconer for our Emmaus course. We had an average of 6 adults taking part. We hope that post pandemic this will lead to the confirmation of several candidates. Like our Faith Confirmed course, Emmaus explores various themes of Christian teaching, doctrine and experience from understanding God and creation to Jesus life, death and resurrection, the creeds, the Eucharist and 7 sacraments of the Church, St Mary's catholic-Anglican tradition, matters of financial stewardship and commitment to worship and fellowship, faith and life after death. We hope to run the course again in Autumn this year.

Fr Damian

Preparation for Communion before Confirmation

Because of the ongoing pandemic we were unable to prepare any children from school during 2020. Previously the children studied the theological meaning of the Sunday Eucharist and our tradition belief that Jesus meets us and is present in the consecrated bread and wine - the Holy Sacrament of the Altar. It is our hope that we can re-start this work in September 2021.

Fr Damian

Charities Engagement & Craft Group Report 2020

Sadly, all our booked charity events in 2020 had to be cancelled due to the pandemic restrictions and our customary crafts sales table in the Rutherwyke Room had to shut down for the same reason. However, there were still some things we were able to carry on and some new ideas tried successfully:

During one of our last pre-pandemic social events, the Lent Lunch in February, Sue Bruce kindly drew attention to the Koala Wildfire Crisis and organised a collection which raised £332.

Just before the November lockdown, our Social Team prepared the very popular "Memorials Sponsored Walk", taking participants to memorials and plaques around Thorpe and Virginia Water. 50% of monies raised were dedicated to the British Legion who happily received £305 from this fundraiser. We also managed for most of the year to continue our support of Runnymede Foodbank, implementing various procedures at different times to accommodate changing pandemic rules.

Our Foodbank Link Jill Collinson did a sterling job of delivering huge amounts of food and hygiene items to their Chertsey base during these months (or at times overseeing their pickup at St Mary's), for which the Foodbank was extremely grateful. Many of our members made online financial contributions to Runnymede Foodbank instead during weeks when we were unable to collect goods or they were unable to bring donations to Thorpe.

Harvest collection for Runnymede Foodbank and the White Lodge also went ahead, though sadly without the lovely display around the Altar. Fiona Rouse did a car boot sale for White Lodge in the autumn to which we contributed a large bag of handcrafted goods, raising £133 in total. Our thanks go to all who organised, participated and donated to any of these activities or online in any way.

Petra Hudson

Children's Church Report

This is a very brief report this year due to the Covid-19 pandemic which curtailed all our activities from mid- March 2020.

Up to that date, from early January, we had resumed our baby and toddler group, Noah's Ark after the Christmas break and welcomed back families to the Thursday morning sessions with good attendances despite an increase of charges from £1 per child to £2. We also resumed the Children's Church Sunday Club sessions at the 10am Sunday morning service, led by myself and Liza Overin on alternate Sundays. Throughout January, February and early March we also offered Faith 'n' **Fun** on Monday, our after school sessions at Thorpe School, although our take up was reduced by other clubs which started up on the same afternoon and which attracted some of our regular children. We had introduced new strategies to encourage a wider net of children when the school closures were announced by the government. In September, when the school reopened, the regulations and safeguarding arrangements prohibited any resumption of the after school club for the rest of the year. Since mid- March, it has not been possible to run any children's activities. However, we keep in touch with some of the families through phone calls, some garden visits when they were allowed, and contacts at school drop off and pick up time. We hope that 2021 will eventually restore the work of Children's Church and it will flourish once more.

During periods of lockdown from March to June and then recommencing in November 2020, Family Packs, giving children's bible readings and activities have been sent out each week with the mailer and made available via Facebook and our church website. These have proved popular and are worth the hard work to prepare as they are downloaded on average 25 times each week.

Margaret

Alderson

Church Cleaning Group Report 2020

The cleaning team of three volunteers has met on the third Saturday of the month over the last year. General dusting, polishing and floor washing has been carried out with the help of the regular church cleaning lady, independent of the voluntary cleaning team. With the imposition of the recent lockdown regulations, cleaning will now take

place with only one volunteer on each occasion, in place of all three volunteers.

Deborah Kidd

Contemplative Prayer Group Report 2020

At the beginning of the first lockdown the prayer group members decided to meet weekly instead of monthly and agreed a time each week to light a candle and sit down to pray together, each in our own homes. As the weather improved, and restrictions were relaxed, we were able to meet in Susi's garden where we found an ideal corner surrounded by trees and shrubs, one of which became known as the *Burning Bush* due to its flaming red foliage.

Our structure of prayer is always the same. We start with a short reading often by Fr. Richard Rohr, Fr Anthony de Mello and other Sources, which leads us into a time of silent meditation. This is followed by intercessions for the sick and any others known to us who are in need. We finish by saying the Grace together.

With further lockdowns and cooler weather we returned each to our own home but we remain in contact by telephone at the start, and again after the time of silence, for the intercessions.

This is our work to keep a regular weekly time of prayer for our Parish, the Church, the World and ourselves.

Would you like to join us?

Jane Carter, Margaret Harden, Susi Thornton

For further information contact Jane Carter on 01344 843033 or Susi Thornton on susi@thorntonclan.com or 01784 433480.

Flower Guild Report 2020

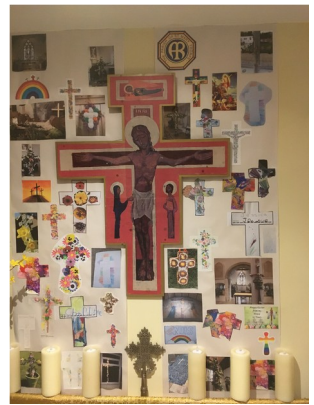
As you can probably imagine, the past year has been a very quiet one for the Flower Guild. Due to government regulations regarding the Covid-19 pandemic we were unable to decorate the church with the usual Easter lily and white flower arrangements, something we all enjoy doing at that special time. One highlight for us was providing the flowers for the wedding of two of our church family, Bev Syradd and Dave Germany - a really happy occasion in what has been an extremely difficult year.

In Advent and at Christmas, our floral contributions were restricted to producing the Advent Wreath, decorating the windowsills with greenery and one pedestal arrangement at the altar. We hope very much that restrictions will be lifted when safe to do so, allowing us to do what we love, that is adding beauty to our wonderful church building and doing so together, as a team. My thanks as always go to Jane, Margaret, Elaine, Helen and Sarah for their continued, and much appreciated, support.

Margaret Harden

Liturgy Group Report 2020

What does it mean to gather for worship? Our Liturgy Group have been reflecting upon that question over the past year as we have endeavoured to keep offering the very best of who we are back to God. During times of lockdown and social distancing, this has been a significant challenge. But we have worked to uphold and honour our sacramental foundations. We have been so thankful for the prayers of our church family. We have been shaken out of our comfort zone and through God's gracious wisdom and the ever-guiding presence of the Holy Spirit, we have been able to deliver almost all of what we would like, with a combination of online and services with a congregation present. Fr Damian has worked hard to produce printed service sheets for the seasons and festivals, with no administrative support from the end of September 2020, although Andrew Falconer did step into the breach and help with printing, as well as coordinating the brilliant "Maranatha, Come Lord Jesus" season of reflections during Advent, Christmas and Epiphany. Offering beautiful and reverent worship, fitting for our Lord and Saviour, has at times had to be delivered from our own homes with Fr Damian converting his study into a chapel for services during Holy Week and Eastertide 2020. Use of technology including Zoom and Facebook Live, and latterly Vimeo has been a new experience for most of us and has required patience and humility for all - we know it hasn't always been easy to hear, or the video stream successful and the team are so thankful for your patience. Significant numbers of people have and continue to tune in to regular worship from as far afield as India, New Zealand, California USA and Canada. Thanks to all who, behind the scenes, have ensured our worship is a living witness and testimony that has cast the St. Mary's net across a wide inclusive range of people living locally, nationally and overseas. The dedication and skill set of our occasional preacher, Andrew Falconer, has been a real blessing, especially to a techo dinosaur such as me! Likewise, those who have led intercessions and bible readings, both in person and pre-recorded, served the Altar and kept our linen up to scratch have truly been a God send over this past twelve months. As they say, there is no letter 'l' in the word team, for that's what we have here at Thorpe, a team of whom I am proud to be a member.



Fr Gerard Mee

Music Secretary's Report 2020

A very different year due to the Coronavirus. In January/February St Mary's choir performed at three Sunday morning services and one wedding accompanied by David Howard or Lionel Pike on the organ.

Unfortunately, due to lockdown no more were permitted. With the exception of a cantor singing behind a plastic screen singing was banned in all church services. Most services were available on Facebook live and subsequently on the St Mary's website which permitted singing at home. Sadly many funerals have been held and, with a few exceptions when David was able to play, the music has been provided from pre-recorded sources (iPod). In September the Knights Templar celebrated their annual service and David played the organ for the first time for many months. David Howard recorded a large amount of music and Andrew Falconer then spent hours preparing it for use on the iPod. Father Damian, Mother Jo and Petra Hudson cantored. David and his daughter Annie recorded the Mass and some hymns for regular use. The Hythe Singers with David recorded carols for the Christmas services which were very much appreciated. This was a heroic exercise in ensuring all covid restrictions were adhered to. Myra Owen stepped in at the last moment to sing at the Midnight mass for which we were extremely grateful. A difficult year for all with many making herculean efforts to ensure music was able to enhance our services. Thank You

Jill Collinson

Social and Fundraising Team Report 2020

Our "A" team continue to meet up on Zoom to try and think of ways to fundraise in these unprecedented times. Just before the first lockdown we held a quiz at the Thorpe Community Hall and raised nearly £1,000. We thought the lockdown was only going to be temporary but then it went on and various planned functions had to be cancelled. We tried a quiz initially with KAHOOT which Andrew and Ritchie kindly organised but this was poorly subscribed. The Summer went on and whilst a few restrictions were lifted it was not possible to organise a social function due to social distancing etc. In November we organised a sponsored walk which again had to be "watered down" but we managed to raise £600. Christmas came and again our hands were tied and our lovely Xmas Fayre around the village for which we had done a lot of planning had to be cancelled as there were too many risk factors. In January we organised another quiz this time only on ZOOM which again Andrew and Ritchie kindly organised: this was better subscribed and we raised £225. We plan to do another one and let's hope we are able to organise some more fundraising events in the not-too-distant future!

*Jenny
Bright*

Stewardship Committee Report 2020

The Stewardship Committee works to enable the financial sustainability of St. Mary's and our parish activities. The significant annual increases in Parish Share and higher utility costs must be met by additional financial commitments from the congregation and other income streams. We are

committed under the St. Mary's strategic objectives and "Transforming Church, Transforming Lives" from the Diocese to ensure funds are available for sustainable growth. Regular ("Planned Giving") donations through Standing Orders have largely sustained despite Covid19. There has been a year-on-year increase in such donations since 2012 and this is vital for the PCC to be able to project and plan expenditure. We actively encourage the whole congregation to donate using this method. The amount given ranges from £8 to £250 per month. It costs us over £10k per month to run St. Mary's and we are grateful for any increases in amounts donated. Following on from the success of the colourful stewardship infographic, the Diocese has adopted the model as "Best Practice" and is encouraging other parishes to replicate it. Andrew Falconer was invited to take part in a Diocesan webinar to share experiences of stewardship. We had planned to focus on legacies in 2020 but given the circumstances it wasn't the most appropriate campaign but one we'll focus on in the future. The church signed up to Amazon Smile so a small amount of money can be raised through everyday purchases online - smile.amazon.co.uk and this is already providing additional revenue.

Andrew

Falconer

Thorpe Church of England Primary School Report 2020

We are incredibly proud of the way our school community has responded to the challenges that the pandemic has brought us. Our school staff have all stepped up to support each other as well as the children and families at our school. Several members of staff have been working longer hours or extra days for those colleagues who have suffered from Covid-19. Parents and well-wishers have funded vouchers for parents in need to buy groceries and presents for their children at Christmas.

Our Governors continue to be very supportive and visionary and are an asset to the school. Our Co-Chair of Governors, Margaret Alderson and Linda Gillham are both very experienced governors and work hard for the children at our school.

From the Church Fr Damian has offered Worship weekly over Zoom and during the lockdowns, we together have offered a weekly worship to include parents and carers at home, also streamed in school for all to join in. We currently pray virtually ~ 'together but apart'. We stand by our strong **Christian ethos** which permeates throughout everything we do.

Children at our school are very motivated and want to join in with prayers during the school day.

The Grace Learning Partnership continues to work closely together for school improvement, resources and sharing good practice.

We are an **inclusive school** where we welcome all children and provide the best opportunities for them.

We are committed to **safeguarding** children's welfare and all checks on regular helpers are carried out. Our Single Central List is checked by our Safeguarding Governor Mr Bryan Nixon every term. Headteacher trains governors and every member of staff on an annual basis and visitors who volunteer also have training before they work with children.

Our parent body is very active; **FOTSA** have raised a lot of money for the school and is run by a very creative, cohesive group of parents who work tirelessly for the benefit of all the children in the school.

Our strong transition programme continues with **The Magna Carta School - TMCS** where most of our children will go on to, and also to **Chertsey High School**.

We have a successful **Breakfast Club**; Earlybirds and **After School Club**; Owl Club.

In February 2020 the Headteacher visited The Gateway Primary School, a Christian School in Freetown, **Sierra Leone** and will be progressing a project to raise money for them. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to let me know. 01932 562329 or head@thorpe.surrey.sch.uk



.Mrs Helen Southgate, Headteacher Faith, Love and Excellence

God's Kingdom in our School
Faith - Love - Excellence

Part 2

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of St Mary, Thorpe - Charity No: 5116755 Annual Report & Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2020

On Sunday 7th June 2015, the Right Reverend Andrew Watson, Bishop of Guildford, led a service of Institution and Induction at which The Very Reverend Paul Bryer, Archdeacon of Dorking, made Father Damian Stewart Miles BTh the Vicar of Thorpe under 'Common Tenure' - with the agreement of our Parish Patrons Keble College Oxford. This was following a period of five years when the 'Living' was suspended under the pastoral measure. From 31 January 2011, all appointments are made

under 'Common Tenure' and the 'Living' has ceased to exist. Father Damian's appointment as Vicar of Thorpe is under Common Tenure and is not time limited. Fr Damian had served Thorpe as Priest in Charge from February 2011 until he was made the Vicar in 2015.

Review of the Year *Please refer to the Vicar's and PCC Secretary's reports.*

The Parochial Church Council and Responsibilities

St Mary's Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of co-operating with and assisting the Vicar in promoting, in the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission to which Christ Jesus calls his Church; worship, pastoral care, evangelistic outreach, fellowship as well as engaging fully within our local Deanery of Runnymede. Our PCC has responsibility for the fabric of St Mary's Historic Medieval Church, the Rutherwyke Room with Wallace Room (Parish Office) and closed churchyard surrounding the church buildings (including the Leigh Bennett Enclosure, and the southern end of Church Approach including the lych-gate, flowerbed and entrance to the Vicarage in Church Approach). By agreement St Mary's PCC maintains the Vicarage front garden for use as a church car park. This land remains the property of the Diocesan Parsonage Board and the agreement allows for car parking on the red gravel area only (approximately 13 spaces). The red surfaced driveway must always be kept clear for emergency vehicles and access to the Vicarage.

Governance

Churchwardens are elected at the Vestry Meeting (meeting of parishioners) and serve for a period of no longer than six years. They are then disqualified from being churchwardens for the next two years, after which they are free to stand for another term of six years. In 2008 the APCM voted to allow an extension of up to two years' service before disqualification under the rules. Members of the PCC are either elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) or ex officio in accordance with the Church Representation Rules. Up to 2018 elected members have served on a three-year term for up to two terms, before being disqualified for a year, as agreed by a previous APCM. This was reviewed at our 2018 APCM and a motion carried for a change to block elections for the PCC annually. From 2019 APCM all those intending to stand for the PCC need to complete an application form and be proposed and seconded in the customary way. If there are more proposed people than places an election will be held. Additional members may be co-opted at the PCC's discretion for a specific purpose, up to two at any one time. (Church Representation Rules 46A and 46B) A person shall be disqualified from being nominated, chosen, or elected or from serving as a member of a parochial church council, a district church council or any synod under these rules if the person:

- is disqualified from being a charity trustee under section 72(1) of the Charities Act 1993 and the disqualification is not for the time being subject to a waiver by the Charity Commissioners.
- is included in a barred list (within the meaning of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006).
- has been convicted of an offence mentioned in Schedule 1 to the Children and Young Persons Act 1933 (unless the person's disqualification under this sub-section has been waived in writing by the bishop of the diocese in question).
- has been so disqualified from holding office under section 10(6) of the Incumbents (Vacation of Benefices) Measure [1997].

A person is disqualified from being a charity trustee under the Charities Act if they have been convicted of an offence involving deception or dishonesty (unless any such conviction is legally regarded as spent), if they are an undischarged bankrupt, have made compositions or arrangements with any creditors from which they have not been discharged or have been removed from serving as a charity trustee, or been stopped from acting in a management position within a charity.

Charity Registration

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of St. Mary, Thorpe is a registered charity no: 1176929. See www.stmaryschurchthorpe.co.uk/policies for Thorpe Governing Documents and PCC Trustee Guidance, as well as other parish policies and role descriptions for elected, voluntary and employed staff.

Parish Share 2020 - 2023

In 2018 the Diocese of Guildford voted to adopt a new Parish Share calculation from 2019. For Thorpe Parish, if the new calculation were implemented in full, from day one, we would have needed to find nearly 80k each year, an increase of 35k annually. Negotiations followed with the PCC and Standing Committee, and a revised calculation for Thorpe was proposed by the Diocesan Board of Finance, which sees an increase in our contribution of 40% phased over five years. In 2019 we were asked to contribute £50,121. (+5k on 2018) In 2020 we are asked to contribute = £54,439. This should have increased in 2021 to £58,769, 2022 to £63,281 and 2023 to £67,982. However, due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, the Parish Share has been frozen at 2020 level. It is unclear what the position will be in 2022, but we are aware the Diocesan Board of Finance has significant financial challenges, so we should expect the annual rises to be re-introduced. The Parish Share calculation is made up of two component parts: 'Ministry Costs' at £56,300 includes the stipend for a full-time Vicar - Fr Damian is actually paid £27,000k before deductions - this amount has been frozen for two years with no % increase expected any time soon, so in effect, the clergy have taken a

pay cut. Other aspects of the parish share calculation include pension liabilities (including historical pension costs), housing, training (including curates) and the cost of maintaining vicarages, etc. 'Shared Costs' are then calculated on the top, and these include money for mission and the National Church, church schools, diocesan costs and much more besides. As our share contribution rises annually, we will not only pay the full ministry cost but begin to pay the shared costs component, which had previously been subsidised by other churches.

2020 - a year of pandemic many challenges

Last year several of our older members moved away to accommodation further afield, and some gave-up driving. With no public transport into Thorpe on a Sunday this disproportionately impacts our attendances and to some degree income. The ministry team are committed to taking communion monthly to those who cannot attend regular Sunday worship, but none the less, a decrease in income from these people is to be expected. Since March we have produced care packs and distributed newsletters, sermons and much more to over 15 households every other month. It is still unclear exactly what impact the coronavirus will have longer-term. The PCC strongly encourage everyone who can, to set-up a regular monthly standing order in place of cash donations at worship. In addition, we ask everyone to look prayerfully at their giving to see if there is any room for a small increase again this year 2021 to help us through this difficult period.

Church Attendance

It is impossible to make an accurate comparison between 2020 and 2019 due to the nature of the Covid-19 pandemic and the heavy restrictions which have been placed upon St Mary's. After the first lockdown in mid-March 2020, the most well-attended service was Harvest Festival with 38 adults and 4 children. For much of Autumn 2020 our risk-assessment allowed for 40 people (plus 8 staff) to be present for any individual service. We did all we could to stay open and are thankful for the support of so many in achieving all we did.

GDPR & Privacy Policy

Your privacy is especially important to Thorpe PCC and we are committed to keeping your information and data secure and safe. Visit our website to read our Privacy Notice:

<https://www.stmaryschurchthorpe.co.uk/copy-of-safeguarding>

ST MARY'S PARISH CHURCH

(S) = Sunday Christmas with additional worship/service included in the figures.

STATISTICS FOR MISSION 2015-2020

2015	2016	2017	2018
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	2019	2020				
Mothering Sunday	205	194	77	97	157	8
Easter Day (closed)	222	183	259	257	249	
Harvest 41	104	86	84	106	112	
Advent Carol Services 181	<i>(new from 2017)</i>		916	1133	1082	
Christmas Eve/Day	661	697(s)	638	639	627	161
<i>Occasional Offices:</i>						
Funerals (Crematorium) 20	6	10	9	10	15	
(In Church)	9	11	11	9	9	
Burial of Ashes	2	4	5	3	4	1
Baptisms	26	17	22	17	25	3
Weddings	10	9	10	6	6	2
Wedding Blessings	0	2	0	0	1	0
Wedding Banns Only	3	4	2	2	3	2
Electoral Roll (Dec year-end)	108	122	140	142	107	119
Average 10am attendance at worship ONLINE (devices) during 2020	69					

National Church - continuing to decline

According to the British Attitudes Survey (September 2018), the number of people in society who describe themselves as part of the Church of England has more than halved since 2002, from 31% to 14%. This is a worrying statistic and should give us cause for concern with the number who attend regular Sunday worship thought to be far lower. Anecdotally, we have seen more people connected to St Mary's (known as the 'fringe' of the church community) but overall, people are less regular in their commitment to worship and lockdowns have exacerbated this trend. Nationally, the decline in attendance among 45 - 54-year olds is most acute and again reflects the challenge we have in meeting this age group and their spiritual needs. The national average decline in Church of England attendance is said to be around 2% and St Mary's Church managed overall to come out level. We were one of a handful of churches in the Diocese of Guildford which showed up as growing consistently over a three-year period to October 2016.

Our numbers then fell (directly attributable to several parishioners dying or moving away) and since then we have remained relatively stable with encouraging signs towards the end of 2018 through 2019 of a new period of growth in Sunday attendances. This is also reflected in an increase in the Electoral Roll, rising above 140 for the first time in decades, although that fell back to 107 following the full revision in

2019. Considering the national challenge, we must not be complacent. We need to do more to encourage committed faith and disciple regular worshippers in view of the continuing and challenging change in wider society. Our post 20:20 Church Development Plan must prioritise our missional activity; recognising who we are and our catholic-Anglican foundation, with the proclamation of the Gospel our top priority in a changing world and context. Whilst we all know that increasing the number of worshippers is not the sole aim of leading a healthy church community, it is still a measure that something is going well, especially given the national backdrop of decline. We have a lot to give thanks for at St Mary's Church but also much more work to still do. To have remained level this year with some modest growth, against all the odds, is a real achievement. Let us all pray for renewed growth during 2021 as we seek to offer a new invitation to people within and beyond Thorpe to worship with us at St Mary's and discover the living God who longs to touch their lives with deep faith and his real presence.

Looking ahead - Mission!

As we review our post 2020 Church Development Plan, our PCC set us the challenge of reaching out during 2020 and promoting St Mary's to a wider constituency beyond the parish of Thorpe, because we recognise that many people who are drawn to our inclusive catholic-Anglican tradition live outside Thorpe Parish. There is no doubt the use of new technology and internet live-streaming has done just that, but it remains to be seen what the long-term impact will be upon attendance and involvement and therefore finance.

Thorpe Together

The usual Spring edition 2020 was not produced as we were in lockdown due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Margaret Harnden (as editor) with Fr Damian and Petra (up to September) and the support of the Wardens and Social Committee have continued to draw together a list of events, services and activities to be included in Thorpe Together magazine. Due to the pandemic it has not been physically distributed to every household in Thorpe Ward, instead digitally circulated, and printed copies have been sent to those members of our church community who don't have a

Gift Aid

As a charity and the main ask every member sign an annual

statements of ministry in Thorpe. We complete and support.



The Vicarage study was used for live streaming worship from the start of Lockdown in March 2020 until we were allowed back into Church at the end of May. The was the scene at Compline on Easter Day 2020, Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

St Mary's Church, Thorpe

Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2020

General Receipts & Payments			
Receipts		2020	2019
		£	£
Regular Giving			
	Planned Giving	32 ,467	3 4,692
	Collections and other giving (non GA)	8 ,809	7,165
	Collections and other giving (GA)	15 ,340	1 0,448
		5 6,616	5 2,305
Other Voluntary Receipts			
	Donations/In Memoriam	60	77
	Charities	332	731
	Wall boxes & Candles	146	268

			538	1,076
Receipts from Fund-generating Activities				
	Fund-raising Events & Activities		5 ,031	1 3,192
	Hire of Church and Rutherwyke Room		2 ,806	4,936
			7,837	8,128

Receipts from Church Activities			
	Fees (Banns, Weddings, Funerals)	8 ,629	1 2,091
	Refreshments	341	1,887
	Noah's Ark	196	913
	Flowers	45	361
	Books	15	-
	Sundry (Stall, Cards, Gift etc.)	504	1,353
		9,729	6,604
Receipts from Investments			
	CBF Dividends	472	458
		472	458
Other Income			
	Works Account (inter a/c transfers)	4 ,677	4,183
	Education Account (inter a/c transfers)	1 ,140	4,011
	Tax reclaims (2019 Gift Aid)	11 ,199	1 4,807
	Receipts from insurance	1 ,943	-
		1 8,960	2 3,001
Total Receipts		9 4,152	11 1,573
Payments		2020	2019
		£	£
Church Activities			
	Diocesan parish share	54 ,395	5 0,121
	Parish Costs (Expenses, Travel,	1	

	Telephone)		,635	1,599
	Organists		560	2,935
	Cost of services		¹ ,826	3,159
			⁵ 8,415	⁵ 7,814
Maintenan ce				
	Facilities maint. Cleaning, Fees etc		11 ,634	7,669
			¹ 1,634	7,669
Church running expenses				
	Insurance		² ,619	2,600
	Gas, Electricity, Water		³ ,529	4,002
			6,148	6,601
Administra tion				
	Admin, computer & office supplies		⁴ ,323	5,081
	Postage		72	7
			4,395	5,088
Other Costs				
	Books		172	136
	Music & Subscriptions		302	132
	Charities		305	454
	Parish Fees to Diocese		⁵ ,774	2,953
	Events & Fund-raising costs		566	5,191
	Refreshments			

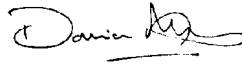
			141	708
	Marketing		529	922
	Flowers		-	533
	Sundry payments (training, misc)		-	3,665
	Fixed assets		-	992
			7,790	5,686
				1
Fund Transfers				
	Transfer to Works Acc		10,020	1,3814
	Transfer to Education Acc		29	230
			1	1
			0,049	4,044
Total Payments			9,8430	10,6903
Balance (Income less Expenditure)			(4,278)	4,670
Statement of Assets and Liabilities			2020	2019
			£	£
Cash Funds				
at 31 Dec 2020	Bank: Current Account	1	22,324	2,6,602
	Bank: Business Reserve Account: Education	2	35,727	3,6,838
	Bank: Business Saver: Works	3	14,663	9,310
Investment Assets				
at 31 Dec 2020	CBF: Thorpe St. Mary PCC - value of shares	4	16,840	1,5,721
	821.00 shares @ £20.4873 each on 31/12/20			
			8,9554	8,8472
Other Monetary Assets				
	Estimated refund for 2020 GA	5	11	1

	donations		,952	1,285
			1	1
			1,952	1,285
Breakdown of Cash Funds				
	Unrestricted (1+4+5)		51	5
			,116	3,608
	Restricted (2+3)		50	4
			,390	6,149
			10	9
			1,506	9,757

Approved by the PCC on Monday 15th March 2021
and signed on their behalf by:



Mr. Andrew West
Treasurer



Fr Damian Harrison-Miles
Vicar



Independent Examiner's Report to the PCC of St Mary's Church, Thorpe

I report on the accounts of the PCC of St Mary's Church, Thorpe for the year ended 31 December 2020.

Respective Responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner

The PCC is responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The PCC considers that an audit is not required for this 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;
- follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of Independent Examiner's Report

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 section 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.

Name: Alan Alderson Date: 13th February 2021

Address: 5 Mead Close, Egham, Surrey TW20 8JA



Part 3 Appendix Section

Sunday Worship at St Mary's & Covid-19 secure protocols

8am Said Eucharist, **10am Parish Eucharist**,

1st, 3rd & 5th Sunday monthly **11:30am Family Service**,

2nd or 4th Sundays by arrangement **12noon Baptism Service,
7pm Compline.**

ALL SUNDAY WORSHIP is with a congregation present, up to 40 people (plus 8 staff maximum). The 10am, 11:30am and 7pm services are also live streamed to Facebook and St Mary's Church website.

Weekdays

**Weekday Said Eucharist: 10am Wednesday
Evening Sung Festival Eucharist (Mass)** at 7.30pm on select occasions.

Noah's Ark Group, Faith & Fun, St Mary's Church Choir, Parish Office & Viewing the Church, Charities Group & lunches & Relate Counselling.

These activities are all suspended but under constant review. The PCC is committed to re-starting these as soon as possible. Please note some services will come from the homes of our ministry team, as circumstances dictate.

Covid-19 Entrance Procedures at St Mary's Church

We aim to keep everyone safe and have introduced the following procedure:

1. A one-way system around the Church is in operation, with entrance to worship via the Rutherwyke Room Kitchen door ONLY.
2. On entering ALL must WASH THEIR HANDS. You should wear a face mask (unless prevented from doing so by a medical condition).
3. All must sign-in with their name and a contact phone number. (This information may be passed to TEST AND TRACE if requested by HM Government).
4. Place your financial offering / gift-aid envelope into the glass jar provided.
5. Collect a service sheet, weekly newsletter and post-it note, and make your way up the Link into Church via the Chancel.
6. Maintain social distancing of 2 metres at all times. ALL 2 SEATS ARE SET AT 2M SPACING – MANY IN PAIRS. Don't move or change seats during worship.
7. Place your post-it sticky note onto the top of the chair you have chosen (to identify this for cleaning purposes after the service).
8. The sharing of the Peace has been suspended. Singing is not permitted.
9. Communion is distributed by the priest, stood by the FONT. Please follow the one-way system around the church (marked on the floor) directed by the warden on duty – you will be offered hand gel on your way to the Communion station – please keep your mask on. The consecrated bread dipped in wine will be placed into your hands. Consume on your way back to your seat.

10. Additional hand sanitiser is available in the Link and Church Porch.
11. Exit St Mary's via the BLUE MAIN DOORS / Church porch.
12. Places used service sheets into the BLU re-cycling box as you leave.
13. Please don't stay in church to socialise. Please exit in silence.

Visit our Parish Website for more information:

www.stmaryschurchthorpe.co.uk

What does our Church Development Plan look like post 2020/21?

We are nearing the end of our 20:20 vision / Church Development Plan, so it is time to ask questions about the next phase in our pilgrimage of faith and mission in Thorpe. The PCC would like every member of our church community to participate as we review where we have come from and celebrate so many achievements and seek to prioritise projects and ambitions for the coming years, post 2021.

As Christian people, we are called by God to service, just as Jesus' first disciples were called to gather people into God's Kingdom. This is our mission to Thorpe and beyond! To achieve this God has made each one of us unique with different and varied gifts. These gifts, or talents, are the building blocks of our Christian common life and we hope you will be willing to share those gifts with the church family for the building-up of faith. After all everything we have comes from God first:



Who am I, and what are my people, that we should be able to make this freewill offering? For all things come from you, and of your own have we given you." (1 Chronicles 29:14)



For the past three years our 2020 vision plan (Church Development Plan) has delivered renewal in our life together, fabric improvements, increased discipleship, and improved finances. We should celebrate and give thanks to God for the many achievements of the past five years - what an achievement. Over the next year our Church Teams will be contributing towards a new vision plan, taking us beyond 2020 towards 2024/5. But we need your ideas and help too, so we are asking:

What is God calling us to, as His Church corporate and His people here at St Mary's Thorpe, beyond 2020/21?

Our giving in the service of God is not simply about financial support (although that is one important aspect) but practical gifts of time and spiritual commitment to the Church including regular attendance at worship. Indeed, there are so many ways in which we can all play a part in the life of our Christian fellowship in Thorpe. Thank you for the part you already play in our life together and for being willing to support this wonderful community of faith into the future. Please help us plan for 2020+.

FOUR QUESTIONS TO PONDER AND RESPOND TO:

1. Are there any suggestions or comments you would like to make as our PCC begins to plan our Church Development Plan post 2020?
2. What should our priorities be beyond 2020?
3. What skills, talents, time, or gifts could **YOU** offer/bring to the life of this Parish and the mission of our Church in Thorpe?
4. Considering the Covid-19 pandemic, should we change our priorities and if so how and why? Any reflections upon our Church response so far?

Please return the response slip enclosed with this booklet at the APCM or email your response to stmaryschurchthorpe@outlook.com to have your say.

Accounts

St Mary's Medieval Church, Thorpe



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND



TRANSFORMING CHURCH
TRANSFORMING LIVES

VESTRY MEETING

and reports for the

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

Sunday 9th May 2021 11:30am

including the

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ST. MARY, THORPE

Charity No: 1176929

for the year ending 31 December 2020

Vicar: The Revd Damian Stewart Harrison-Miles, BTh
St Mary's Vicarage, Church Approach,
Thorpe Village, Surrey TW20 8TQ

www.stmaryschurchthorpe.co.uk

St Mary's Thorpe VESTRY MEETING and reports for the ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

Contents

Part 1

- p. 2 What is an Annual Parish Church Meeting?
- p. 3 Agenda for the Meeting of Parishioners (Vestry Meeting)
- p. 3 Agenda for the Annual Parochial Church Meeting
- p. 4 Minutes of the Meeting of Parishioners held Sunday 20th September 2020
- p. 5-11 Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held Sunday 20th September 2020
- p.11-16 Reports – starting with the Vicar's Report on 2020
- p. 16 Electoral Roll Officer's Report on 2020
- p. 16 PCC Secretary's Report on the proceedings of the PCC during 2020
- p. 17 Church Wardens' Report on 2020 (*Fabric Report is included here*)
- p. 18-19 Financial Report (Treasurer's Report) 2020
- p. 19 Safeguarding
- p. 20-21 Deanery Synod Report & Diocesan Synod Report
- p. 22-27 **OTHER REPORTS IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH** (alphabetical)

Part 2

- p. 28-29 PCC Responsibilities and Governance
- p. 29 Parish Share Figures for phased increase projected over 5 years
- p 30-31 Statistics for Mission, National Church, Thorpe Together & Mission
- p. 33-37 Financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2020
- p. 38 Independent Examiner's Report

Part 3 Appendix Section

- p.39 Regular Worship at St Mary's – Covid-19 planned and suspended activities
- p.40 Post 20:20 – what does our vision look like?

What is the Annual Parish Meeting (APCM) all about? A brief introduction

The APCM is an important meeting for the whole church, an opportunity to elect the people our congregation want to represent them on their Parochial Church Council (PCC). It is an opportunity to ask questions about the finances of the church, the state of the buildings, or about any matter of concern to the life of the parish. The PCC takes account of views expressed at the APCM, and matters are taken forward into the subsequent PCC for discussion. Thorpe PCC meets six times a year to conduct the business of the church. Please read these reports thoroughly and come to the meeting with questions, as we share together as the family of faith in our life together, in sacramental worship and fellowship – Transforming, Church, Transforming Lives. We do this in a Christian spirit of mutual respect and love, friends, and pilgrims. We come prepared to look forward, as well as reflect upon the past year. May the Lord of all guide our thoughts, words, and actions to his Glory; the building up of the Kingdom in Thorpe.

Agenda for the Vestry Meeting (Meeting of Parishioners) via Zoom

Sunday 9th May 2021, 11:30am (*following the ONLINE Eucharist*)

1. The opening of proceedings with Prayers
 2. Apologies for absence
 3. Minutes of 20 September 2020 and any matters arising
 4. Election of Churchwardens
 5. Nomination for approval of four Deputy Wardens (honorary supportive role)
- End of Vestry Meeting

(At this point those not named on the Church Electoral Roll cannot vote if they remain.)

Agenda for the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) via Zoom

Sunday 9th May 2021, 11:30am (*immediately following the Vestry Meeting*)

Apologies for absence

Minutes of the previous APCM held in Church on 20 September 2020 11:30am.

Matters arising

1. Elections & Appointments

- Annual election of PCC Members
- Election of Deanery Synod Representatives
- Approval of Sides-persons (to assist Wardens with service duties)
- Appointment of Sides-person to assist the Treasurer with banking
- Confirmation of appointment of the Electoral Roll Officer
- *Note that the PCC Secretary, Treasurer and Vice Chair of the PCC will be formally agreed at the next Parochial Church Council meeting (to be held on Monday 17th May 2021, 7:30pm) as they are Officers of the PCC.*
- Appointment of the Independent Examiner for 2021/22 Financial Accounts (Mr Alan Alderson)

2. Reports – see written reports

- (i) Report on Electoral Roll
- (ii) PCC Secretary's Report on the proceedings of PCC
- (iii) Parish reports – *printed & distributed*
Summary of reports from the Chair
- (iv) Church Wardens' Report including Fabric/Terrier
- (v) Accounts – Financial Report 2020
Acceptance of Financial Report 2020
- (vi) Note on the Deanery Synod Report – *printed & distributed*

3. Any other business – to be notified at least 24 hours in advance

- (i) Questions & Answers Session – *questions please at least 24 hours in advance stmaryschurchthorpe@outlook.com*
- (ii) Announcements

The meeting concludes in prayer and with the Grace.

**Minutes of the Meeting of Parishioners (Vestry Meeting)
of St Mary's Church Thorpe, Sunday 20th September 2020, 11:30am**

Present: Fr. D. Miles – Chair (DM)

Present in Church:

B. Huxley, A. West. A. Kelly, A. Carter, B. Lowe, M. Roberts, J. Collinson, J. Mitchiner,

T. Leighton, A. Leighton, J. deVille, C. Cobbold, P. Gruncell, J. Gruncell

Present via Zoom:

Mthr J. Winn-Smith, Fr. G. Mee, S. Bolton, M. Morris, J. Bates, S. Bruce, P. Hudson, D. Kidd,

J. Bright, M. Harnden, K. Flanagan, S.Thornton, Jim Lowe, Jane Lowe, A. Falconer,

B. Grove, T. Grove, C. Wareham-Davis, J. Harrison-Miles, K. Wade (via Facebook).

Absent: All electoral roll members not listed as Present or having submitted apologies

Meeting commenced: 11.31 a.m

1. Father Damian opened the meeting with prayers.

2. Apologies for Absence:

B. Syradd, H. Southgate, B. Mixham

3. Minutes and Matters Arising

Minutes for the APCM Meeting held 14th April 2019 were accepted and no matters were arising.

4. Re-election of Wardens

Barry Huxley and Peter Gruncell confirmed their agreement to stand as Church Wardens.

Unanimously re-elected

Margaret Roberts has stood down after 7 years' service. She was thanked on behalf of St. Mary's by Fr Damian and presented with flowers. Margaret thanked all and confirmed that the role of Church Warden was a good thing to undertake and wished Peter all the best in his new role.

5. Nominations for approval Deputy Wardens

There were seven Deputy Warden nominations, from:

Margaret Harnden, Susi Thornton, Helen Cunningham, Bev Syradd, Jill Collinson, Deborah Kidd, and Margaret Roberts.

All seven candidates were unanimously accepted.

7. Any Other Business - None

The meeting therefore continued with the Annual Parochial Church Meeting of St Mary's Church, Thorpe. A vote was taken and passed unanimously to allow any non-members of St Mary's Electoral church Roll to remain (without voting rights).

The attendance at both meetings was therefore the same.

Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting of St Mary's Church, Thorpe Sunday 20th September 2020, 11:45am

Minutes from the APCM held 14th April 2019 were accepted with no amendments.

1. Elections and Appointments

9 persons had submitted written nominations:

Bev Syradd, Mary Morris, Allison Kelly, Margaret Harnden, Deborah Kidd, Sarah Bolton,

Andrew Falconer, Jenny Bright, Catherine Wareham-Davis,

All 9 nominations were unanimously confirmed.

Fr D. Harrison-Miles gave thanks to Jane Lowe who was stepping down after 9 years and welcomed Catherine Wareham-Davis to the PCC.

- Election of Deanery Synod Representatives

Two written nominations had been received:

Bryan Lowe and Claire Cobbold

Unanimously approved.

- Approval of Sides-persons

The following persons had put their names forward for appointment as sides persons:

S. Thornton, B. Lowe, J. Mitchiner, B. Grove, T. Grove, K. Stangroom, E. Gill, J. Gruncell,

P. Gruncell, A. West, D. Kidd, M. Roberts, M. Harnden, B. Huxley A. Leighton, T. Leighton,

C. Wareham-Davies, Jane Lowe, Jim Lowe, A. Falconer, B. Syradd

All persons were unanimously confirmed.

- Appointment of Sides Person to Assist the Treasurer with banking

John Brittain is unwell and it was agreed to discuss the matter further at the PCC meeting 21st September 2020.

- Confirmation of appointment of the Electoral Roll Officer

Sarah Bolton was unanimously confirmed.

- Appointment of the Independent Examiner for 2020 Financial Accounts

Alan Alderson was unanimously confirmed.

2. Reports

Fr Damian felt that most of the reports in the booklet were now dated, due to the lockdown, which had prevented the APCM meeting being held as usual in spring, but this was especially true of the Vicar's Report and he wished to read a report which he felt summarised the current climate.

Fr Damian reiterated the measures taken regarding Covid-19:

- Posters around the church advising on social distancing
- Face masks to be worn
- Hand washing
- Sign in sheets for test and trace
- Service sheet collection – you may keep this after the service if you wish
- Regular worship could accommodate 48 persons maximum
- Group attendance in the Rutherwyke Room was for 10 at a 2metre Distance. 6 people maximum at any time for meetings.

Address to the APCM, 20th September 2020.

By Father Damian Stewart Harrison-Miles – Vicar of Thorpe.

An APCM is meant to be a reflection upon the previous year – in this case 2019, and a chance to set the agenda for what is to come – 2020! But we had to postpone our meeting in April, and we are already 9 months into 2020. So, we look back, perhaps with glassy eyes to the world of 2019 but face the realities of our present time, when life is different. So, this is no ordinary APCM, and we are not living through normal times. Our lives have been disrupted like never before, we are effectively at war with a virus, Covid 19, and since the last APCM we have been thrown into lock-down, with Holy Week and Easter 2020 delivered from the Vicarage study. What a strange time we are living through.

Less than a year ago we had not heard of Covid-19 and we all had plans – for our families, among friends, in our work context and of course our beautiful Church. For our PCC it was delivering that last part of our 2020 vision for Thorpe. We wanted to find and appoint a Family & Children's worker. We had quotations ready to seek a faculty for the installation of technology, including screens and projection fitted inside St Mary's, along with some improvements to our sound system. We had a full drain survey completed, to see why we were having problems with groundwater flooding and we were looking to improve drainage and our footpaths. We had long desired to create an outdoor surface for social and fundraising events and had met with our church architect to think about and draw-up plans. 2019 was a good year for St Mary's with another increase in some congregations and finances remaining strong, meeting our second increase in Parish Share in full. We had built up our finances, not least following a successful Christmas season 2019, and were able to pay a chunk of Parish Share up-front at the start of 2020, but from then on finance remained on balance tight. 2019 had been a good year, and a sure foundation for 2020. Our PCC asked several tree surgeons to inspect the great Canadian soft-wood, a form of Yew that graced the front of our building

since Victorian times, but had no idea it would come crashing down in freak gales in March, just as lock-down started. It was a marker of the kind of significant change to come. Our dear John Brittain falling ill, and still without a full diagnosis now – just one of many people who have deteriorated in health or struggled in this pandemic, even if not directly attributable to Covid-19. We lost Bob Castledine to cancer and were unable to gather as a faith family to say goodbye and support Jenny as we would have liked. Our buildings fell silent – locked, with groups and activities suspended and no idea when they may return.

Worship was conducted from our homes with the Vicarage study transformed in just 24 hours into a chapel for live filming. The team worked exceptionally hard to keep our worship as regular and as normal as possible, with the Eucharist – the Mass at the heart of our faith family. Andrew spent hours recording and preparing tracks so the voices of our congregation could be heard with readings and prayers in worship, and David with his daughter Annie recorded hymns, songs, and anthems from York, that have inspired us. The clergy zoomed into worship as we experimented with technology to see what was best, but we soon found Facebook Live offered a missional approach, drawing new people into our liturgical life – some who had not been to church in many years.

We were busy conducting many funerals, re-arranging weddings and baptisms with pastoral care and support became a number one priority. We wrote monthly to those without internet, we delivered food packs, toilet rolls and crosswords, puzzles and even some jokes to keep spirits up. We created a buddy-up scheme and phoned the lonely and housebound, took prescriptions to those in need and shopping where possible. I know we couldn't meet everyone's needs and I have to say I am sorry we couldn't do more, but I am so thankful for what we have achieved together – well done team.

We moved meetings onto Zoom and Messenger, we set up various trial systems for managing data and communication, with Workplace by Facebook proving the easiest to use and having the largest take-up, with 42 members of the congregation now engaged in teams from Communication to Deputy Wardens. Our Social Committee plan to expand upon that with the bubbles project, creating small groups of six people who make it their task to keep in touch with each other and pray with and for one another. We will make Workplace available for those bubbles, as a free communication tool.

Many have found the past 6 months to be a time of real challenge; emotionally, personally, spiritually, mentally, physically and in many other ways, but I realise that not everyone disliked it – there are mixed feelings and experiences. For some they found peace, quiet and safety alone. But for many I have talked to it was the opposite, a time of isolation and struggle, of loss and loneliness, of burdens that couldn't be shared and of financial hardship too – and of course fear, which hasn't gone away. This pandemic affects different people in different ways, and we must

all be sensitive to that reality. Friends, there is no room for, “I’m alright jack,” in the Christian faith – pastorally and spiritually, we are all in this together.

We were busy in a practical sense too, with damage caused by the fallen tree our priority. Then Barry, Margaret and I set about jobs, finding tradespeople where possible, such as repairing stonework and the front pathway, and doing a lot of work ourselves with help from Pete, Terry, Jane and others – you know who you are! Pete refurbished the Lych-gate and began re-painting the black metal memorials around our churchyard. Jason and I repainted the Rutherwyke Room, Barry and Terry added new kitchen flooring and Jane set about a thorough spring-clean and together we achieved a complete re-configuring of our facilities to create a one-way system, in line with national Covid-secure guidance. It is hard to over-play the enormity of the challenges we have faced this last six months, with a lock-down and then the gradual re-opening of some services and activities.

The PCC agreed to put the Audio-Visual project on hold, but we did purchase new equipment to help with live-streaming services, so we could move back into Church for worship at the earliest opportunity. The PCC, still meeting but via Zoom, also agreed to progress the footpaths and patio project to planning, knowing we would have two years to complete the work if approved by faculty. But we also had to make tough decisions about where to spend any money, which at times has felt like Hobson’s choice. We prioritised paying the Parish Share in full – we didn’t accept the offer of a grant from the Diocesan Board of Finance because we believed this money should go to church communities in poorer areas. We also prioritised church cleaning, re-employing our cleaner for more hours each week, so we could get the church open again at the earliest opportunity.

Your response to our financial challenge has been a real blessing. Some of you have set-up monthly standing orders to ensure our finances were not destroyed by Covid and others handed over a wodge of green envelopes for all the weeks the church was closed, or made a one-off additional donation – thank you. I know that not everyone can carry that burden, but I ask everyone to reflect upon their giving and to see what can be done, so those less able to carry the load moving forward are supported by those who can.

And now, we have worship back in church, the art class will be back soon, and we are trying to find a new normal. Of course, we have got nowhere near the maximum 48 people in church for the Sunday Eucharist so far, with general attendance at services very small, and hardly any families and children, not least because so many fear a resurgence of this vile virus, which it seems we are now seeing internationally. But also, people are out of the habit of attending worship and that could have longer term consequences for St Mary’s. Attendances for all services and activities is limited – new blue posters remind us of the numbers permitted, with Covid-secure protocols in place, and we are reviewing what that could mean for the run-up to Christmas, with some events and festivals needing to

be ticketed for the first time ever – some services like Remembrance almost impossible and some, like our annual Memorial Service we will have to re-imagine. Although ever hopeful things may get better, we must be prepared for any future lock-down, or for some or even many of us to fall ill and what that could mean moving forward. We simply must keep everyone who uses our church safe. We can do this by maintaining our welcome teams, ensuring all hands are washed at entry, wearing a face mask, social distancing and keeping 2 meters apart where possible, not singing in church, and using copious amounts of hand gel! I know not everyone likes or agrees with these protocols, but they are important, and we will maintain them for as long as is necessary to keep people safe. Thank you for your forbearance.

The truth is that our church community is made up of different, diverse people, whose lives, priorities, and personalities are unique – wonderfully so! I have used this past few months to reflect further on mission and what it means to be a church community today. We have very suddenly lost most of our church ‘fringe’ – the 200 or more people of all ages and backgrounds who call St Mary’s their church but have a tentative connection. In essence this group have all but melted away as regular activities ceased. It will take some time to draw people back and we need to face the missional challenges of Covid head-on. This situation won’t improve any time soon.

I know these times have weighed heavily upon some of you and I am so proud of you and of St Mary’s and what we have achieved these past 9 months. Recognising our differences is essential for maintaining and growing our church family moving forward. I’m afraid we can’t always be everything to everyone – we have limited resources. As our new PCC sets priorities in the coming months, we will endeavour to take the whole church on a journey, united. We face a barrage of new and changing legislation from the government, with Church of England guidance updated at a moment’s notice, and we are trying to communicate to the best of our ability – and while we are at it trying to navigate wider church politics too. We will all need to pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to lead us safely into all truth – for discernment to know what to prioritise and for a further deepening of our corporate and private prayer.

We have only achieved so much this year because of the excellent foundations we laid in 2019 and because of you, the part you have played. Thank you. So, we also look to the future, with some fear and trepidation, that we may we build on our strengths and draw everyone together in our diversity, which makes us stronger. Now more than ever we need your commitment, your time, and your ideas – please complete and return those questionnaires because they will be the basis of discussion as we re-set our Church development plan post 2020.

This is your church – not mine. I will only be here to guard and to guide for a time, but I do believe that together we can grow again and be stronger than ever –

because we have a Lord who loves us and who longs to reconcile us into his very presence, his kingdom. We are building the church of tomorrow, upon the foundations of today and I do believe there is a lot to look forward to in Thorpe. Thank you for your part in that journey. And may the prayers of Blessed Mary, our Patron be with us as we move through this time of great challenge. Amen.

(i) Electoral Roll

The electoral roll has 116 members subsequent to the 7th September 2020 PCC meeting. There were no questions raised.

(ii) PCC Secretary's Report - There were no questions raised.

(iii) Parish Reports - There were no questions raised.

Fr Damian requested more information in the Liturgy and Worship report for 2020. Jane Carter enquired if the Deanery Event, a prayer evening at Lyne Church could be held at St. Mary's in future. Fr Damian advised that this had clashed with the confirmation class at the time, any future event would be advertised on the notice board in the link which has all Deanery information.

Jane Carter further enquired if the children who had been prepared for communion had been back to church. Fr Damian confirmed they had as they are part of the Family Service and that it was a priority moving forward to re-instate the service but current guidance was not to run children's groups.

(iv) Church Wardens Report - There were no questions raised.

(v) Accounts – Financial Report 2019

Andy West enquired if there were any questions on the report. There were none. He advised that income had exceeded expenditure in 2019. There had been a rise in giving of some 20%. Total receipts for the year were £111,573.00 gross. The only area in which there had been no reduction in costs were with utilities, all other areas were below that of 2018. It has been a financially positive year.

AW requested that any recipients of an early draft of the booklet corrected the date of the Independent Examiners Report to 31st May 2020, which was correct.

AW proposed acceptance of the Financial Report.

The accounts were unanimously accepted.

Fr Damian asked for the situation on accounts as at 20.09.20. AW stated £8,000 in the current account, which was low as we had paid the parish share for 2020 in full in July. Fr Damian explained that we should not expect the normal November and December increases as per last year, due to predicted reduced attendance. 2021 will be a much more challenging year financially and even though the parish share will remain the same next year, this will rise by £6,000 in 2022. Andy West confirmed there would be a payment of £54,000 required in 2021.

(vi) Deanery Synod Report

Fr Damian expressed thanks to Deborah Kidd who having represented St. Mary's at Deanery Synod for several years was now standing down. Her role is to be taken up by Bryan Lowe. There were no questions raised.

3. Any Other Business

No questions had been submitted before the meeting. No questions were raised at the meeting. Fr Damian passed the thanks of all at St. Mary's to Petra Hudson who had stepped down as Office Administrator. There was a round of applause and Fr Damian confirmed that he had a gift and flowers for Petra, which would be delivered. The meeting concluded with prayers at 12.34 p.m.

RECEPTION OF THE ELECTORAL ROLL IN ADVANCE OF THE APCM 2021

The revision of the Electoral Roll is taking place. Notices are posted from **Easter Sunday 4th April** for 21 days and the revised Roll will be displayed for 14 days at Church, as prepared and approved.

Under the Church Representation Rules any persons are entitled to have their names entered on the roll if they—

- (i) are baptised and aged 16 or over.
- (ii) have signed a form of application for enrolment.
and either

(iii) are members of the Church of England or of any Church in communion with the Church of England being resident in the parish or (not being resident in the parish) having habitually attended public worship in the parish during the six months prior to the application for enrolment;

or:

(iv) are members in good standing of a Church (not in communion with the Church of England) which subscribes to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity declaring themselves also to be members of the Church of England and having habitually attended public worship in the parish during the period of six months prior to enrolment.

Sarah Bolton, Electoral Roll Officer

Vicar's report on 2020

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted; a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; a time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to seek, and a time to loose; a time to keep, and a time to throw away; a time to tear, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; a time to love, and a time to hate; a time for war, and a time for peace. Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 (NRSV)

Over recent years this bible reading from the Old Testament book of Ecclesiastes has been more requested than any other. I found the text somewhat uncomfortable, the way it mixes metaphors and includes words and phrases like pluck up, die, hate and to kill. And then 2020 happened, and all our lives changed almost overnight. Everything we had planned as a Church community, like that of our national life was put on hold, postponed or cancelled. Now those words, “For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heavens” make so much more sense than they did before. Especially considering Covid-19, these ring true of our experience in the 21st century.

We started 2020 with the usual mixture of liturgy, meetings, and social events. Relate were using the Rutherwyke Room facilities on a Tuesday for counselling have recently extended their hours and our Noah’s Ark toddler group was going strong, with suggestions we may need to split it into two to manage numbers. We held a wonderful Candlemas celebration followed by a meal at the Red Lion with 30 in attendance at the pub. On hearing about the mystery illness in parts of China, we introduced hand sanitiser points in the porch and link and encouraged people to sanitise as often as possible. Several people fell ill early on, unsure of what was behind it, losing their sense of taste and smell. At the vicarage we took a week off work, with no idea the virus causing our flu-like symptoms was to be so deadly for so many. Thankfully, as far as we can tell, we didn’t pass it on.

As we entered March, the situation across the UK worsened, and by Mothering Sunday we had closed our Sunday worship to just a small team. With Barry and Margaret and their helpful inspiration, we worked as a team to try and delivery worship from church. Jane and Jim Lowe were just brilliant, with ideas on setting-up filming equipment, and procedures for the building to help keep those of us inside safe. We quickly realised that we needed to create a one-way system for entry and exit, before such recommendations were published by the government. But we were guessing, and I have to say I for one was listening out for ideas. As government guidance was released, so we updated our plans and our PCC prepared a ‘lockdown plan.’ At our last meeting together we shared sherry and biscuits, and we raised a toast. It was a very strange moment, but I will always treasure that time together. Within hours a lockdown was announced and with that we were told by the Archbishops that clergy could no longer lead worship from the church buildings. The rationale was that the ‘church’ should pilgrimage with the nation from home, keeping people safe and facing the challenges in the same way as everyone else. But I can’t deny it was a devastating blow.

Mother Jo set to work establishing our buddy-up scheme, whereby members of our community volunteered to be ‘connected’ by phone to those without the internet or Facebook, to keep in touch. New friendships blossomed as we sought to keep everyone connected. I began a process of collecting news, stories and jokes and writing to the elderly and those who lived on their own sending newsletters and much more. The first ‘care pack’ even included toilet rolls. Thanks to those who

helped distribute our first pack which was a near military operation. We began producing a weekly 'Family pack' of online resources for children, young people – indeed for all ages to see us though the lockdown with a bit of Christian input. Our pattern of regular worship continued online, with a service of Morning Prayer at 10am and with the Eucharist on a Wednesday, Saturday, and Sunday. Having a Eucharistic tradition, we continued to gather around the altar to encounter Christ Jesus present among us, and I believed strongly, and even more so do today, that 'Real Presence' is not simply about consuming the Consecrated Elements, but participation in the whole Mass, 'Spiritual Communion,' be that in person or online. The Vicarage study was converted into a chapel for live-streaming worship from home, with Father Gerard doing something similar. Mother Jo was unable to participate in the Eucharist as fully as we would have liked, like all Deacons waiting to be priested. However, the Ministry Team watched the worship offered from each other's homes faithfully.

The amount of work involved for the team was enormous. Jason commented that he saw less of me in lockdown than before! Hours were spent behind the scenes preparing each service, managing the technology (which at this time involved experimenting and a lot of sticky tape) and so much more as the Study was now a small film studio. We set-up a rota of readers and intercessors and Andrew Falconer brilliantly, and with great generosity of time, captured voices so our worship included many from the Church Family. David Howard and his daughter Annie, (based in York for lockdown) set about recording music, which spiritually enhanced our worship and brought great joy to many and still does. We had no idea at this point quite how much lockdown would change the life of the Church, with Holy Week and Easter needing to be streamed from the Vicarage study. I couldn't quite take it all in. The number of people participating online at that time was hard to quantify, but we believe it was well over 200 at some services, with over 1000 views of Easter Day.

Robert Castledine passed away, and the true hardship of lockdown hit, with only a small service at the crematorium possible. Jenny Bright was amazing as she coped with the loss. The Church Family supported her as much as we could within the strict rules and her family were in touch. She, like many others at that time, had to walk the long road of bereavement alone. At this time we began streaming weekly worship for Thorpe Primary School.

As lockdown continued, the Churchwardens and I set about re-decorating the halls complex, with Barry (supported by Terry Leighton) working on the kitchen floor, Jason and I repainting walls and washing carpets and Jane Lowe kindly gave the kitchen a thorough clean and sort-out. A full tidy-up of the Wallace Room followed. We moved the large blue notice board out into the Link and set the Rutherwyke Room up in accordance with government guidelines. This was to be our way into Church, the reception area, and needed to function as a safe place for signing-in and collecting recyclable service sheets, the kitchen becoming a hand-washing

station. At the first opportunity to re-open for funerals we did so and tested out our new Covid-secure protocols. They worked well, and quickly we were able to introduce times of Open Prayer. Thanks go to our team of Wardens and Deputies for training up the Welcome Team and managing our new Covid-secure protocols – what a brilliant team we have. We replaced the internet cables that link the Vicarage and Church, and thanks to a kind donation were able to purchase a new lap-top for the church which was up to the task of handling the data needed to live stream from inside the building. As children returned to school, I had the privilege of meeting with the staff teaching and support team outdoors and praying with them.

Mother Jo's Ordination to the priesthood was postponed, and discussion followed about how and when this could happen. Jo was stoic and held strong, but I know this was an additional challenge in the midst of all that was already going on. Bishop Andrew joined us for worship at Pentecost and we said goodbye to the collage of people's Easter Crosses which had decorated the study wall behind the Cross at the end of Easter season. The Vicarage study had served us well for several months and what a privilege that time was, to welcome you into my home. That space will always feel holy and set-apart. Returning to worship from the Church was such a real blessing. The 30-year-old sound system struggled to cope; it was never built for the tasks we were performing, but for the most part has held up, with a little adaptation. By summer, restrictions on Communal Worship were lifted, and we managed to get much of our worshipping life up and running. We re-introduced the 8am Said Eucharist with a congregation in Church and a few weeks later, the 10am and 7pm Compline with a maximum of 40 people allowed. With an online quiz and other activities, we all worked to keep our community, and the fringe of our church in touch and continued to send-out our care packs. The PCC continued to meet via Zoom on the dates already planned with the standing committee meeting in between and regular meetings with the churchwardens. Faculties were prepared for footpath works around the Church Building including a new level surface between the Wallace Room, Link and South aisle of St Mary's, creating a patio area. (This was approved in October 2020). By the start of Autumn, we had re-drafted the risk assessment 8 times! The situation kept evolving and our priority, as always, is to keep everyone safe to the best of our ability and knowledge. The APCM was held in September, the third possible date set, and it was a blessing it could go ahead with a combination of in church and Zoom attendance, although we were only just quorate. We thanked Margaret Roberts for her six years as churchwarden and elected Peter Gruncell to take over. Harvest Festival was joyful with 39 adults and one child in Church for the main service – the only time we reached our maximum allowed capacity. On Sunday 11th October Mother Jo was ordained priest at St John's Church Egham and celebrated her First Eucharist that same evening in St Mary's and what a joy that was. However, some of the toughest days of the pandemic were ahead. The second lockdown during November closed St Mary's to Communal Worship with Remembrance Sunday and our Memorial Service moved online.

We continued to open for Funerals and Private Prayer. The Leadership Team felt uneasy, as we believed Communal Worship was inherently safer. Looking ahead to the Festive Season and unsure of what would happen next, we prepared for various scenarios. Indeed, plans had to be amended as Covid cases rose. More members of our Church Family died including Rita Johns, Joan Rollason, Sam Thornton and Pat Harnden, along with more from the wider Thorpe community with a lot of us in mourning. Christmas was not going to be different! The beautiful outdoor Crib Scene designed and built by Simon Steele, next door neighbour to Bridgett and Tony Grove, was installed in the churchyard. It was magical, with lights twinkling around our buildings throughout December and many families attending in the early evening to listen to the Carol Service. Throughout this period we prayed, 'Maranatha, Come Lord Jesus' with a daily reading streamed online. Andrew Falconer worked hard behind the scenes collecting the recordings, editing and unloading them to our website and Facebook page. Daily over 30 people participated, what an achievement! We delivered as much of our usual Christmas offerings as possible, but with heavy hearts as the Funerals continued and another lockdown, in the form of tier 4 hit and our planned socially-distanced Fair was cancelled. This time our PCC voted to remain open for Communal Worship and we continued to be a Runnymede Food Bank donation point, helping to provide families in need with Christmas goodies as well as essentials, and many making online financial gifts too.

Financially, 2020 was not so bad for St Mary's. Largely due to the hard work and dedication of some who gave generously, to cover the cost of essential temporary repairs to our audio equipment, allowing us to install new streaming devices, repaired, and decorated the halls complex, crucially employed our cleaner Claire weekly for 3 hours (to meet covid-secure protocols) and importantly paid our Parish Share in full by the end of July (itself an act of faith as the PCC were left with just £1k in the current account!) We trusted God with everything and were right to do so. There is so much more I could write about here, and in time perhaps there will be a way of recording more stories. What is certain is that 2020 has seen mixed emotions and experiences like none of us would have dared to imagine, but perhaps the Old Testament writer of Ecclesiastes understood after a long life of many challenges: There is indeed a time to live and to die, to weep and to laugh, to tear and to mend, to mourn and to dance, for war and for peace. The pandemic is far from over, and 2021 will continue to be a year of much challenge. From 2020 we can take away some certainties that can help us with the year to come, and the first is that Prayer is answered. The way our community has come together to support others has been outstanding, and to pay our Parish Share in full by the end of July was an answer to Prayer, as we sought to help the wider Church. The miracle of science and the vaccine roll-out, at the heart of much Prayer in 2020 has also been realised. And some of those who have fallen sick have recovered, although not all by any means. There is so much to be thankful for, even if we must still 'refrain from embracing.'

Today, social distancing remains important as we must work to keep everyone as safe as possible, and so we can't yet return to normal, whatever that will look like. So, we live with great loss, but also with hope for what lies ahead. God is faithful, as are many in our Church Community, for which I am so grateful. Our pilgrimage through this time of International Pandemic continues, but the end of this journey, is perhaps closer. There is indeed a time for everything. May our Prayers be for those who carry the scars of loss, bereavement, mental health and long Covid (and much more besides). It has been heart-breaking to witness, and I will forever feel that I haven't or perhaps couldn't do enough for everyone, even if I know I did all I could at the time. I know many of us feel the same – a sense of powerlessness. May we look forward to the future as we learn from the past, for God has a plan for this community of Thorpe beyond Covid, for the months and years ahead. Thank you for being a part of this story – this journey together in faith.

Your friend in faith and Vicar Father Damian Harrison-Miles

Electoral Roll Report – January-December 2020

The Electoral Roll for St Mary's Thorpe at the end of December 2020 was 112, and of this figure there are 22 households where there are 2 members.

The figure at the beginning of January 2021 remained 112. There could be some work to be done to encourage those who have joined us for online worship to join the Electoral Roll and this will be explored as lockdown starts to lift.

Electoral Roll Officer, Sarah Bolton

PCC Secretary's Report 2020 on the work of the Parochial Church Council

The Parochial Church Council met seven times during 2020, which includes a brief meeting on 7th September to agree the electoral roll in advance of the APCM but excluding the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on Sunday 20th September. Meetings were preceded by the Eucharist at 7pm. The meetings started just after 7:30pm and it was aimed to conclude each meeting by 9:15pm. Only the January and March meetings were held in the Rutherwyke Room, all others moving to Zoom in line with Covid/lockdown regulations.

Every meeting in 2020 was dominated by Covid, from planning through to agreeing systems for the church to operate safely. There were many discussions over the year and plans aligned for services and events, which due to circumstances were subsequently cancelled. As a PCC we have all certainly increased our knowledge of technology to attend meetings and communicate with each other. We have as a PCC continued to execute the business of running St Mary's bringing to meetings our unique, varied experiences and understanding.

The patio project was approved and then subsequently put on hold, but has now been moved to work commencing in 2021, following approval of a grant. Agreement to pay the balance of the parish share was made in July, in order to assist Diocesan finances as many local churches were unable to meet their

own parish share. This ensured that the monthly standing order could remain the same for the rest of the year, completing St. Mary's annual financial commitment and enabled better planning capabilities for funds, with the reduced income from church closures. All other regular business and approval of Policies were conducted as normal

PCC Secretary, Allison Kelly

Church Wardens' Annual Report, including St Mary's Church, Thorpe Terrier and Fabric, 2020

This past year could hardly have been more difficult or challenging for us at St Mary's Church - due to the ongoing Covid pandemic. In spite of this we have kept going, pulled together and generally kept our spirits up. Thank you to everyone, but particularly to our wonderful vicar, Fr Damian who has led us expertly and diligently through these most difficult times. Government covid rules and restrictions have changed many times but Fr D has always managed to keep up-to-date and implement them at St Mary's straight away, thereby complying with the rules and law and importantly, keeping us safe and open as much as possible. It has been a great team effort. Thank you to all who have helped and contributed so much to keep church services going, in their various forms. Thank you Fr Damian, Fr Gerard, Mtr Jo, Andrew Falconer, Andy West, and assistant clergy. Thank you to the great support team of deputy wardens and welcomers, and also those who do so much at the church in their own quiet way, with the music – including all the recordings David Howard has made for us, the cleaning, the flowers and of course the social team who meet regularly and benefit us all and the church so much. Sorry if I have missed someone out. Without you all we just couldn't manage. Thank you. It is of course very sad that we have lost several dear friends from our congregation this past year, particularly recently. Their memories are very special - they were a treasured part of our congregation at St Mary's and will be greatly missed. The maximum term for a churchwarden is 6 years and so last year Margaret Roberts had to stand down having completed her 6 year term of office. Although very much still in attendance at St Mary's, we miss her warm and friendly presence at meetings, her great wisdom and advice and importantly her sense of humour. Thank you so much Margaret for all you did. I appreciate that you are still there for your opinion and advice when we need it! Last year Pete Gruncell became churchwarden, taking Margaret's place. An excellent appointment! Pete is settling in very well to his new role and continues to contribute a great deal to St Mary's. Thank you for all your hard work (and to Joan as well!) We continue to enjoy excellent relations with our close neighbour, TESIS School. We offer our warmest thanks to headmaster Bryan Nixon for their continued help and support. In particular, the use of their car park for certain services and the kind gift of a magnificent Christmas Tree again which was put in front of the church at the start of December as usual and looked beautiful. Thank you Bryan.

Terrier & Fabric Report 2020

The Churchyard: Normally twice a year we organise a churchyard weed and clean-up with members of the congregation, however due to Covid it didn't happen last

year. However we are most fortunate in having a young helper, Dominic Tatham, who spends 2 hours every fortnight working in the churchyard doing weeding and tidying, which is all part of his Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme. He is aiming for gold! Our grateful thanks to Dominic. He carries out his duties cheerfully in all sorts of weather conditions. He started with us last June, and his work is to last 12 months. We also had the help of a team from TASIS in the autumn, including students and teachers (about 12) who kindly volunteered and worked in the churchyard for a morning, doing a great job tidying and sweeping up leaves. Pete has been starting to remove the ivy which has taken over some of the gravestones and the walls. This needs to be kept going to stop it spreading. The half-moon flower bed next to the lych-gate continues to look nice and is a pleasant welcome to all who approach the church. Fr Damian has worked hard making it tidy and attractive. Thank you, Fr Damian, for once again going above and beyond this year. Some of the proposed footpath work was carried out in October 2020 which you may have noticed. Soon we hope to start work on the patio/pathway project outside the Rutherwyke Room. And we are hopeful also of going ahead soon with the new audio-visual project inside the church, although we are waiting for grants to hopefully make this possible. More about this to follow shortly. We have appointed a contractor to clean out all the church gutters and gullies and tidy the roof spaces. This should happen soon.

Barry Huxley and Peter Gruncell

Financial Report 2020

(including the PCC Treasurer's report) PCC accounts can be found at page 33.

Receipts

Regular Giving increased by over 8% (£4.3k) compared to last year. Increased giving by GA and NGA direct donations more than compensated (+23% and +49%) for the expected fall in planned giving (green & yellow envelopes) due to the church closure and the more recent reduced capacity of the church due to occupancy regulations.

Other voluntary receipts

Income from general donations, *In Memoriam*, charity fund-raising and wall boxes was down 50% year on year.

Fund-generating activities

Receipts from hire and fund-raising events were considerably reduced this year for obvious reasons. Income from this sector was down by 57% (£10.2k) compared to 2019.

Income from Church activities

Income from fees (specifically Weddings) was 29% less than 2019 and all receipts in this area showed a drop on last year. Overall income was down by 41% (£6.9k).

Receipts from Investments & Other Income

Income from share dividends rose by 3% yoy whilst other income fell by 18%. This, however, was due to yoy differences in the amounts transferred from the Works and Education accounts into the current account. Also, the GA reclaim for 2019 (received in 2020) was 24% less than that for 2018 (received in 2019). Overall income from this sector was £4k down yoy.

Total receipts for 2020 were £94,152 compared to £111,573 in 2019 (-15.6%)

Payments

Church Activities

Our Parish Share (£54,395) was paid in full by July last year. Other church activity costs either remained static or dropped. Total expenditure was 1% (-£600) down compared to 2019.

Maintenance

Maintenance costs rose by 52% (+£3,965) compared to last year. This was off-set by a recoupment of £1,943 from Ecclesiastical Insurance which is shown in Income and draw-downs from the Works account where applicable. Projects covered were: drainage & path work, architect's fees, tree removal and roof repair.

Church running expenses

Insurance costs remained relatively static at £2,619 (£2,600 in 2019) and Utility costs fell by 12% or £473. Overall running costs fell by 7% (-£454).

Administration

Administrative, computer and office supply costs were 15% lower (£758) this year that last but postage costs increased by £65 due to the increased need to support our parishioners during lock-down.

Other costs

Total expenditure in this sector fell by just under £7,900 (-50%) yoy. Whilst fees due to the Diocese rose by over 95% because of the increased number of funerals that took place, nearly every other area saw much-reduced expenditure, e.g. events & fund-raising costs fell by 89%.

Fund transfers

A total of £10,049 was transferred from the deposit accounts (Works & Education) in 2020 compared to £14,044 in 2019. As usual, all donations specifically identified as, for example, Works project specific were recorded as income when received into the Current account (Receipts from Fund-generating Activities & Donations) and then as expenditure upon transfer to the Works Account (Deposit). This should be taken into consideration for any comparison of Total Income versus Total Expenditure.

Total payments in 2020 were £98,430 compared to £106,903 in 2019.

Considering the unique and difficult circumstances we have faced during the last year I am pleased to report that the church finances are in a good position which is a direct reflection of the outstanding generosity, hard work and commitment of the PCC, our parishioners and the church's leadership.

Andy West, Treasurer

Safeguarding Officer's Report 2020

Initially lockdown slowed up the DBS and Safeguarding training processes in 2020 but transferring some of the training online helped to reduce the backlog around the diocese. Unfortunately, as the year developed the National Churches Institutions' training programme changed yet again, the plus side being that some of the rules and regulations for parish officer training are no longer required.

Virtually all church clubs, entertainment and hospitality were put on hold in 2020, but vigilance on the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults remained a priority. Recruitment of Deanery Safeguarding Representatives enabled a wider point of contact throughout the Deanery. We are optimistic that the Diocesan office will have produced a new guidance report on DBS and Safeguarding Training by the time this report is published.

Safeguarding Officer, Mary Morris



Runnymede Deanery Synod Report 2020

Deanery Events

Due to pandemic restrictions, our only physical Synod meeting in 2020 took place at All Saints New Haw in early March. Revd Craig Holmes, former Curate at St John Egham and now Director of Ordinands at Guildford Diocese, and his colleague, Mrs Glynis Beazley, presented an engaging talk on “Creating a Culture of Vocation”. June Synod was cancelled owing to the extended lockdown and in October we met via Zoom, facilitated by St Mary Thorpe and hosted by St Paul Addlestone, with our new Archdeacon Ven Martin Breadmore giving an introduction to himself and Q&A session as focal point.

Both meetings were open to the public and detailed Minutes are available via the Deanery Administrator runnymededeanery@gmail.com.

Deanery Growth & Strategy Group

The workgroup met once in early 2020, with the main focus being the continuation of the Deanery Growth Fund, hosting of a Kenyan Bishop on the occasion of the Lambeth Conference which was subsequently cancelled due to the pandemic outbreak, and brainstorming deanery-wide opportunities for mission which may yet be realised in the future but were not pursued further in 2020, again due to the circumstances. Encouraging feedback reports on the second round of 2019 grant allocations were presented at March Synod, concerning £150 each given to St Paul Egham Hythe for an upgrade of to their toddler group equipment and to All Saints New Haw for Christian diaries to give away at their local Village Christmas Fair. Although the Fund was open for applications in 2020, none were received, no doubt due to the uncertainties around the pandemic preventing any longer term planning.

Kebbi Link

Runnymede Deanery donated £500 from its reserves to support Kebbi clergy and their families during this particularly trying time (African clergy are generally self-supporting/relying on donations). Sad news was received from Kebbi Diocese, our contact Bishop Edmund having been diagnosed with prostate cancer. Lay Chair Keith Malcouronne, also Non-executive Director of St Peter’s & Ashford Hospitals, has been able to arrange for robotically controlled surgery at the Royal Surrey hospital (a procedure not available in Nigeria), although this, too, is on hold because of the pandemic. Meanwhile a collection is open via Runnymede Deanery to support Bishop Edmund financially for his travels and stay in England –

donations from churches and individuals are welcome; contact runnymededeanery@gmail.com.

Finance

Runnymede Deanery accounts continue to be sound and Parish Contributions were confirmed to remain at the same level as in recent years (individual parish amounts are determined by three-year rolling average of Sunday attendance, combined with Relative Prosperity Index), without donations towards the Deanery Growth Fund.

Other Business

- Revd Ben Becroft, Vicar in Addlestone, was installed as Area Dean in September; thanks given to Revd Sandra Faccini for her sterling work as previous Area Dean. 2020 also saw the Triennial Election of Deanery Representatives who were welcomed during the Zoom meeting in October. Keith Malcouronne as Lay Chair and Sheila Bardell as Treasurer were confirmed for another term.
- 2021 Open Synod dates were set as 4 Mar (Ottershaw), 8 Jun (Virginia Water) & 6 Oct (Chertsey).

Newsletters continued to be produced but on a more irregular basis, owing to lack of activities during lockdowns, and with an emphasis more on sharing experiences. The mailing list is open to anybody interested; requests via runnymededeanery@gmail.com

*Claire Cobbold, Deborah Kidd, Bryan Lowe
St Mary's Representatives on Runnymede Deanery Synod*

Diocesan Synod Report

In the face of the pandemic, it was clear that decisions would need to be taken at a corporate level that could impact all our churches, so Diocesan Synod was convened via Zoom from June 2020 and an emergency budget introduced with support for struggling parishes available. (Thorpe did not take up the offer of financial support, indeed we paid our Parish Share for 2020 in full by mid-July, trusting God would provide for the rest of the year, which indeed was the case). The Bishop of Guildford introduced his Health and Viability review which has begun to look at struggling parishes and ask questions about their resources and staffing levels. The implication is that some churches will need to share a clergy person in future. Sadly, the financial challenges of 2020 left the Diocesan Board of Finance with no choice but to furlough staff and make some redundant to cut costs quickly.

It is a privilege to represent clergy from Runnymede Borough at Diocesan Synod. I enjoyed the support of Bryan Lowe (who passed away in March 2021) at those meetings, who was always an ally and took the minutes for over 8 years. Bryan will be missed and our prayers are with Mary.
Fr Damian.

OTHER REPORTS IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

Emmaus Online Spring/Summer 2020

It was a joy to share the lead with Father Gerard, Mother Jo and Andrew Falconer for our Emmaus course. We had an average of 6 adults taking part. We hope that post pandemic this will lead to the confirmation of several candidates. Like our Faith Confirmed course, Emmaus explores various themes of Christian teaching, doctrine and experience from understanding God and creation to Jesus life, death and resurrection, the creeds, the Eucharist and 7 sacraments of the Church, St Mary's catholic-Anglican tradition, matters of financial stewardship and commitment to worship and fellowship, faith and life after death. We hope to run the course again in Autumn this year.

Fr Damian

Preparation for Communion before Confirmation

Because of the ongoing pandemic we were unable to prepare any children from school during 2020. Previously the children studied the theological meaning of the Sunday Eucharist and our tradition belief that Jesus meets us and is present in the consecrated bread and wine - the Holy Sacrament of the Altar. It is our hope that we can re-start this work in September 2021.

Fr Damian

Charities Engagement & Craft Group Report 2020

Sadly, all our booked charity events in 2020 had to be cancelled due to the pandemic restrictions and our customary crafts sales table in the Rutherwyke Room had to shut down for the same reason. However, there were still some things we were able to carry on and some new ideas tried successfully: During one of our last pre-pandemic social events, the Lent Lunch in February, Sue Bruce kindly drew attention to the Koala Wildfire Crisis and organised a collection which raised £332.

Just before the November lockdown, our Social Team prepared the very popular "Memorials Sponsored Walk", taking participants to memorials and plaques around Thorpe and Virginia Water. 50% of monies raised were dedicated to the British Legion who happily received £305 from this fundraiser. We also managed for most of the year to continue our support of Runnymede Foodbank, implementing various procedures at different times to accommodate changing pandemic rules.

Our Foodbank Link Jill Collinson did a sterling job of delivering huge amounts of food and hygiene items to their Chertsey base during these months (or at times overseeing their pickup at St Mary's), for which the Foodbank was extremely grateful. Many of our members made online financial contributions to Runnymede Foodbank instead during weeks when we were unable to collect goods or they were unable to bring donations to Thorpe.

Harvest collection for Runnymede Foodbank and the White Lodge also went ahead, though sadly without the lovely display around the Altar. Fiona Rouse did a car boot sale for White Lodge in the autumn to which we contributed a large bag of

handcrafted goods, raising £133 in total. Our thanks go to all who organised, participated and donated to any of these activities or online in any way.

Petra Hudson

Children's Church Report

This is a very brief report this year due to the Covid-19 pandemic which curtailed all our activities from mid- March 2020.

Up to that date, from early January, we had resumed our baby and toddler group, Noah's Ark after the Christmas break and welcomed back families to the Thursday morning sessions with good attendances despite an increase of charges from £1 per child to £2. We also resumed the Children's Church Sunday Club sessions at the 10am Sunday morning service, led by myself and Liza Overin on alternate Sundays. Throughout January, February and early March we also offered Faith 'n' Fun on Monday, our after school sessions at Thorpe School, although our take up was reduced by other clubs which started up on the same afternoon and which attracted some of our regular children. We had introduced new strategies to encourage a wider net of children when the school closures were announced by the government. In September, when the school reopened, the regulations and safeguarding arrangements prohibited any resumption of the after school club for the rest of the year. Since mid- March, it has not been possible to run any children's activities. However, we keep in touch with some of the families through phone calls, some garden visits when they were allowed, and contacts at school drop off and pick up time. We hope that 2021 will eventually restore the work of Children's Church and it will flourish once more.

During periods of lockdown from March to June and then recommencing in November 2020, Family Packs, giving children's bible readings and activities have been sent out each week with the mailer and made available via Facebook and our church website. These have proved popular and are worth the hard work to prepare as they are downloaded on average 25 times each week.

Margaret Alderson

Church Cleaning Group Report 2020

The cleaning team of three volunteers has met on the third Saturday of the month over the last year. General dusting, polishing and floor washing has been carried out with the help of the regular church cleaning lady, independent of the voluntary cleaning team. With the imposition of the recent lockdown regulations, cleaning will now take place with only one volunteer on each occasion, in place of all three volunteers.

Deborah Kidd

Contemplative Prayer Group Report 2020

At the beginning of the first lockdown the prayer group members decided to meet weekly instead of monthly and agreed a time each week to light a candle and sit down to pray together, each in our own homes. As the weather improved, and restrictions were relaxed, we were able to meet in Susi's garden where we found an ideal corner surrounded by trees and shrubs, one of which became known as the *Burning Bush* due to its flaming red foliage.

Our structure of prayer is always the same. We start with a short reading often by Fr. Richard Rohr, Fr Anthony de Mello and other Sources, which leads us into a time of silent meditation. This is followed by intercessions for the sick and any others known to us who are in need. We finish by saying the Grace together. With further lockdowns and cooler weather we returned each to our own home but we remain in contact by telephone at the start, and again after the time of silence, for the intercessions.

This is our work to keep a regular weekly time of prayer for our Parish, the Church, the World and ourselves.

Would you like to join us?

Jane Carter, Margaret Harden, Susi Thornton

For further information contact Jane Carter on 01344 843033 or Susi Thornton on susi@thorntonclan.com or 01784 433480.

Flower Guild Report 2020

As you can probably imagine, the past year has been a very quiet one for the Flower Guild. Due to government regulations regarding the Covid-19 pandemic we were unable to decorate the church with the usual Easter lily and white flower arrangements, something we all enjoy doing at that special time. One highlight for us was providing the flowers for the wedding of two of our church family, Bev Syradd and Dave Germany – a really happy occasion in what has been an extremely difficult year.

In Advent and at Christmas, our floral contributions were restricted to producing the Advent Wreath, decorating the windowsills with greenery and one pedestal arrangement at the altar. We hope very much that restrictions will be lifted when safe to do so, allowing us to do what we love, that is adding beauty to our wonderful church building and doing so together, as a team. My thanks as always go to Jane, Margaret, Elaine, Helen and Sarah for their continued, and much appreciated, support.

Margaret Harden

Liturgy Group Report 2020

What does it mean to gather for worship? Our Liturgy Group have been reflecting upon that question over the past year as we have endeavoured to keep offering the very best of who we are back to God. During times of lockdown and social distancing, this has been a significant challenge. But we have worked to uphold and honour our sacramental foundations. We have been so thankful for the prayers of our church family. We have been shaken out of our comfort zone and through God's gracious wisdom and the ever-guiding presence of the Holy Spirit, we have been able to deliver almost all of what we would like, with a combination of online and services with a congregation present. Fr Damian has



worked hard to produce printed service sheets for the seasons and festivals, with no administrative support from the end of September 2020, although Andrew Falconer did step into the breach and help with printing, as well as coordinating the brilliant “Maranatha, Come Lord Jesus” season of reflections during Advent, Christmas and Epiphany. Offering beautiful and reverent worship, fitting for our Lord and Saviour, has at times had to be delivered from our own homes with Fr Damian converting his study into a chapel for services during Holy Week and Eastertide 2020. Use of technology including Zoom and Facebook Live, and latterly Vimeo has been a new experience for most of us and has required patience and humility for all – we know it hasn’t always been easy to hear, or the video stream successful and the team are so thankful for your patience. Significant numbers of people have and continue to tune in to regular worship from as far afield as India, New Zealand, California USA and Canada. Thanks to all who, behind the scenes, have ensured our worship is a living witness and testimony that has cast the St. Mary’s net across a wide inclusive range of people living locally, nationally and overseas. The dedication and skill set of our occasional preacher, Andrew Falconer, has been a real blessing, especially to a techo dinosaur such as me! Likewise, those who have led intercessions and bible readings, both in person and pre-recorded, served the Altar and kept our linen up to scratch have truly been a God send over this past twelve months. As they say, there is no letter ‘I’ in the word team, for that’s what we have here at Thorpe, a team of whom I am proud to be a member.

Fr Gerard Mee

Music Secretary’s Report 2020

A very different year due to the Coronavirus. In January/February St Mary’s choir performed at three Sunday morning services and one wedding accompanied by David Howard or Lionel Pike on the organ. Unfortunately, due to lockdown no more were permitted. With the exception of a cantor singing behind a plastic screen singing was banned in all church services. Most services were available on Facebook live and subsequently on the St Mary’s website which permitted singing at home. Sadly many funerals have been held and, with a few exceptions when David was able to play, the music has been provided from pre-recorded sources (iPod). In September the Knights Templar celebrated their annual service and David played the organ for the first time for many months. David Howard recorded a large amount of music and Andrew Falconer then spent hours preparing it for use on the iPod. Father Damian, Mother Jo and Petra Hudson cantored. David and his daughter Annie recorded the Mass and some hymns for regular use. The Hythe Singers with David recorded carols for the Christmas services which were very much appreciated. This was a heroic exercise in ensuring all covid restrictions were adhered too. Myra Owen stepped in at the last moment to sing at the Midnight mass for which we were extremely grateful. A difficult year for all with many making herculean efforts to ensure music was able to enhance our services. Thank You

Jill Collinson

Social and Fundraising Team Report 2020

Our “A” team continue to meet up on Zoom to try and think of ways to fundraise in these unprecedented times. Just before the first lockdown we held a quiz at the Thorpe Community Hall and raised nearly £1,000. We thought the lockdown was only going to be temporary but then it went on and various planned functions had to be cancelled. We tried a quiz initially with KAHOOT which Andrew and Ritchie kindly organised but this was poorly subscribed. The Summer went on and whilst a few restrictions were lifted it was not possible to organise a social function due to social distancing etc. In November we organised a sponsored walk which again had to be “watered down” but we managed to raise £600. Christmas came and again our hands were tied and our lovely Xmas Fayre around the village for which we had done a lot of planning had to be cancelled as there were too many risk factors. In January we organised another quiz this time only on ZOOM which again Andrew and Ritchie kindly organised: this was better subscribed and we raised £225. We plan to do another one and let’s hope we are able to organise some more fundraising events in the not-too-distant future!

Jenny Bright

Stewardship Committee Report 2020

The Stewardship Committee works to enable the financial sustainability of St. Mary’s and our parish activities. The significant annual increases in Parish Share and higher utility costs must be met by additional financial commitments from the congregation and other income streams. We are committed under the St. Mary’s strategic objectives and “Transforming Church, Transforming Lives” from the Diocese to ensure funds are available for sustainable growth. Regular (“Planned Giving”) donations through Standing Orders have largely sustained despite Covid19. There has been a year-on-year increase in such donations since 2012 and this is vital for the PCC to be able to project and plan expenditure. We actively encourage the whole congregation to donate using this method. The amount given ranges from £8 to £250 per month. It costs us over £10k per month to run St. Mary’s and we are grateful for any increases in amounts donated. Following on from the success of the colourful stewardship infographic, the Diocese has adopted the model as “Best Practice” and is encouraging other parishes to replicate it. Andrew Falconer was invited to take part in a Diocesan webinar to share experiences of stewardship. We had planned to focus on legacies in 2020 but given the circumstances it wasn’t the most appropriate campaign but one we’ll focus on in the future. The church signed up to Amazon Smile so a small amount of money can be raised through everyday purchases online – smile.amazon.co.uk and this is already providing additional revenue.

Andrew Falconer

Thorpe Church of England Primary School Report 2020

We are incredibly proud of the way our school community has responded to the challenges that the pandemic has brought us. Our school staff have all stepped up to support each other as well as the children and families at our school. Several members of staff have been working longer hours or extra days for those colleagues who have suffered from Covid-19. Parents and well-wishers have

funded vouchers for parents in need to buy groceries and presents for their children at Christmas.

Our Governors continue to be very supportive and visionary and are an asset to the school. Our Co-Chair of Governors, Margaret Alderson and Linda Gillham are both very experienced governors and work hard for the children at our school. From the Church Fr Damian has offered Worship weekly over Zoom and during the lockdowns, we together have offered a weekly worship to include parents and carers at home, also streamed in school for all to join in. We currently pray virtually ~ 'together but apart'. We stand by our strong **Christian ethos** which permeates throughout everything we do. Children at our school are very motivated and want to join in with prayers during the school day.

The Grace Learning Partnership continues to work closely together for school improvement, resources and sharing good practice.

We are an **inclusive school** where we welcome all children and provide the best opportunities for them.

We are committed to **safeguarding** children's welfare and all checks on regular helpers are carried out. Our Single Central List is checked by our Safeguarding Governor Mr Bryan Nixon every term. Headteacher trains governors and every member of staff on an annual basis and visitors who volunteer also have training before they work with children.

Our parent body is very active; **FOTSA** have raised a lot of money for the school and is run by a very creative, cohesive group of parents who work tirelessly for the benefit of all the children in the school.

Our strong transition programme continues with **The Magna Carta School – TMCS** where most of our children will go on to, and also to **Chertsey High School**.

We have a successful **Breakfast Club**; Earlybirds and **After School Club**; Owl Club.

In February 2020 the Headteacher visited The Gateway Primary School, a Christian School in Freetown, **Sierra Leone** and will be progressing a project to raise money for them. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to let me know. 01932 562329 or head@thorpe.surrey.sch.uk



.Mrs Helen Southgate, Headteacher Faith, Love and Excellence

God's Kingdom in our School
Faith – Love – Excellence

Part 2

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of St Mary, Thorpe – Charity No: 5116755 Annual Report & Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2020

On Sunday 7th June 2015, the Right Reverend Andrew Watson, Bishop of Guildford, led a service of Institution and Induction at which The Very Reverend Paul Bryer, Archdeacon of Dorking, made Father Damian Stewart Miles BTh the Vicar of Thorpe under 'Common Tenure' – with the agreement of our Parish Patrons Keble College Oxford. This was following a period of five years when the 'Living' was suspended under the pastoral measure. From 31 January 2011, all appointments are made under 'Common Tenure' and the 'Living' has ceased to exist. Father Damian's appointment as Vicar of Thorpe is under Common Tenure and is not time limited. Fr Damian had served Thorpe as Priest in Charge from February 2011 until he was made the Vicar in 2015.

Review of the Year *Please refer to the Vicar's and PCC Secretary's reports.*

The Parochial Church Council and Responsibilities

St Mary's Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of co-operating with and assisting the Vicar in promoting, in the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission to which Christ Jesus calls his Church; worship, pastoral care, evangelistic outreach, fellowship as well as engaging fully within our local Deanery of Runnymede. Our PCC has responsibility for the fabric of St Mary's Historic Medieval Church, the Rutherwyke Room with Wallace Room (Parish Office) and closed churchyard surrounding the church buildings (including the Leigh Bennett Enclosure, and the southern end of Church Approach including the lych-gate, flowerbed and entrance to the Vicarage in Church Approach). By agreement St Mary's PCC maintains the Vicarage front garden for use as a church car park. This land remains the property of the Diocesan Parsonage Board and the agreement allows for car parking on the red gravel area only (approximately 13 spaces). The red surfaced driveway must always be kept clear for emergency vehicles and access to the Vicarage.

Governance

Churchwardens are elected at the Vestry Meeting (meeting of parishioners) and serve for a period of no longer than six years. They are then disqualified from being churchwardens for the next two years, after which they are free to stand for another term of six years. In 2008 the APCM voted to allow an extension of up to two years' service before disqualification under the rules. Members of the PCC are either elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) or ex officio in accordance with the Church Representation Rules. Up to 2018 elected members have served on a three-year term for up to two terms, before being disqualified for a year, as agreed by a previous APCM. This was reviewed at our 2018 APCM and a motion carried for a change to block elections for the PCC annually. From 2019 APCM all those intending to stand for the PCC need to complete an application

form and be proposed and seconded in the customary way. If there are more proposed people than places an election will be held. Additional members may be co-opted at the PCC's discretion for a specific purpose, up to two at any one time. (Church Representation Rules 46A and 46B) A person shall be disqualified from being nominated, chosen, or elected or from serving as a member of a parochial church council, a district church council or any synod under these rules if the person:

- is disqualified from being a charity trustee under section 72(1) of the Charities Act 1993 and the disqualification is not for the time being subject to a waiver by the Charity Commissioners.
- is included in a barred list (within the meaning of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006).
- has been convicted of an offence mentioned in Schedule 1 to the Children and Young Persons Act 1933 (unless the person's disqualification under this sub-section has been waived in writing by the bishop of the diocese in question).
- has been so disqualified from holding office under section 10(6) of the Incumbents (Vacation of Benefices) Measure [1997].

A person is disqualified from being a charity trustee under the Charities Act if they have been convicted of an offence involving deception or dishonesty (unless any such conviction is legally regarded as spent), if they are an undischarged bankrupt, have made compositions or arrangements with any creditors from which they have not been discharged or have been removed from serving as a charity trustee, or been stopped from acting in a management position within a charity.

Charity Registration

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of St. Mary, Thorpe is a registered charity no: 1176929. See www.stmaryschurchthorpe.co.uk/policies for Thorpe Governing Documents and PCC Trustee Guidance, as well as other parish policies and role descriptions for elected, voluntary and employed staff.

Parish Share 2020 – 2023

In 2018 the Diocese of Guildford voted to adopt a new Parish Share calculation from 2019. For Thorpe Parish, if the new calculation were implemented in full, from day one, we would have needed to find nearly 80k each year, an increase of 35k annually. Negotiations followed with the PCC and Standing Committee, and a revised calculation for Thorpe was proposed by the Diocesan Board of Finance, which sees an increase in our contribution of 40% phased over five years. In 2019 we were asked to contribute £50,121. (+5k on 2018) In 2020 we were asked to contribute = £54,439. This should have increased in 2021 to £58,769, 2022 to £63,281 and 2023 to £67,982. However, due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, the Parish Share has been frozen at 2020 level. It is unclear what the position will be in 2022, but we are aware the Diocesan Board of Finance has significant financial challenges, so we should expect the annual rises to be re-introduced. The Parish Share calculation is made up of two component parts: 'Ministry Costs' at £56,300 includes the stipend for a full-time Vicar - Fr Damian is actually paid £27,000k

before deductions – this amount has been frozen for two years with no % increase expected any time soon, so in effect, the clergy have taken a pay cut. Other aspects of the parish share calculation include pension liabilities (including historical pension costs), housing, training (including curates) and the cost of maintaining vicarages, etc. 'Shared Costs' are then calculated on the top, and these include money for mission and the National Church, church schools, diocesan costs and much more besides. As our share contribution rises annually, we will not only pay the full ministry cost but begin to pay the shared costs component, which had previously been subsidised by other churches.

2020 – a year of pandemic many challenges

Last year several of our older members moved away to accommodation further afield, and some gave-up driving. With no public transport into Thorpe on a Sunday this disproportionately impacts our attendances and to some degree income. The ministry team are committed to taking communion monthly to those who cannot attend regular Sunday worship, but none the less, a decrease in income from these people is to be expected. Since March we have produced care packs and distributed newsletters, sermons and much more to over 15 households every other month. It is still unclear exactly what impact the coronavirus will have longer-term. The PCC strongly encourage everyone who can, to set-up a regular monthly standing order in place of cash donations at worship. In addition, we ask everyone to look prayerfully at their giving to see if there is any room for a small increase again this year 2021 to help us through this difficult period.

Church Attendance

It is impossible to make an accurate comparison between 2020 and 2019 due to the nature of the Covid-19 pandemic and the heavy restrictions which have been placed upon St Mary's. After the first lockdown in mid-March 2020, the most well-attended service was Harvest Festival with 38 adults and 4 children. For much of Autumn 2020 our risk-assessment allowed for 40 people (plus 8 staff) to be present for any individual service. We did all we could to stay open and are thankful for the support of so many in achieving all we did.

GDPR & Privacy Policy

Your privacy is especially important to Thorpe PCC and we are committed to keeping your information and data secure and safe. Visit our website to read our Privacy Notice: <https://www.stmaryschurchthorpe.co.uk/copy-of-safeguarding>

ST MARY'S PARISH CHURCH

(S) = Sunday Christmas with additional worship/service included in the figures.

STATISTICS FOR MISSION 2015–2020

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Mothering Sunday	205	194	77	97	157	8
Easter Day	222	183	259	257	249	(closed)
Harvest	104	86	84	106	112	41
Advent Carol Services <i>(new from 2017)</i>			916	1133	1082	181

Christmas Eve/Day	661	697(S)	638	639	627	161
<i>Occasional Offices:</i>						
Funerals (Crematorium)	6	10	9	10	15	20
(In Church)	9	11	11	9	9	9
Burial of Ashes	2	4	5	3	4	1
Baptisms	26	17	22	17	25	3
Weddings	10	9	10	6	6	2
Wedding Blessings	0	2	0	0	1	0
Wedding Banns Only	3	4	2	2	3	2
Electoral Roll (Dec year-end)	108	122	140	142	107	119
Average 10am attendance at worship ONLINE (devices) during 2020						69

National Church – continuing to decline

According to the British Attitudes Survey (September 2018), the number of people in society who describe themselves as part of the Church of England has more than halved since 2002, from 31% to 14%. This is a worrying statistic and should give us cause for concern with the number who attend regular Sunday worship thought to be far lower. Anecdotally, we have seen more people connected to St Mary's (known as the 'fringe' of the church community) but overall, people are less regular in their commitment to worship and lockdowns have exacerbated this trend. Nationally, the decline in attendance among 45 – 54-year olds is most acute and again reflects the challenge we have in meeting this age group and their spiritual needs. The national average decline in Church of England attendance is said to be around 2% and St Mary's Church managed overall to come out level. We were one of a handful of churches in the Diocese of Guildford which showed up as growing consistently over a three-year period to October 2016.

Our numbers then fell (directly attributable to several parishioners dying or moving away) and since then we have remained relatively stable with encouraging signs towards the end of 2018 through 2019 of a new period of growth in Sunday attendances. This is also reflected in an increase in the Electoral Roll, rising above 140 for the first time in decades, although that fell back to 107 following the full revision in 2019. Considering the national challenge, we must not be complacent. We need to do more to encourage committed faith and disciple regular worshippers in view of the continuing and challenging change in wider society. Our post 20:20 Church Development Plan must prioritise our missional activity; recognising who we are and our catholic-Anglican foundation, with the proclamation of the Gospel our top priority in a changing world and context. Whilst we all know that increasing the number of worshippers is not the sole aim of leading a healthy church community, it is still a measure that something is going well, especially given the national backdrop of decline. We have a lot to give thanks for at St Mary's Church but also much more work to still do. To have remained level this year with some modest growth, against all the odds, is a real achievement. Let us all pray for renewed growth during 2021 as we seek to offer a new invitation to people within and beyond Thorpe to worship with us at St Mary's and discover the living God

who longs to touch their lives with deep faith and his real presence.

Looking ahead – Mission!

As we review our post 2020 Church Development Plan, our PCC set us the challenge of reaching out during 2020 and promoting St Mary's to a wider constituency beyond the parish of Thorpe, because we recognise that many people who are drawn to our inclusive catholic-Anglican tradition live outside Thorpe Parish. There is no doubt the use of new technology and internet live-streaming has done just that, but it remains to be seen what the long-term impact will be upon attendance and involvement and therefore finance.

Thorpe Together

The usual Spring edition 2020 was not produced as we were in lockdown due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Margaret Harnden (as editor) with Fr Damian and Petra (up to September) and the support of the Wardens and Social Committee have continued to draw together a list of events, services and activities to be included in Thorpe Together magazine. Due to the pandemic it has not been physically distributed to every household in Thorpe Ward, instead digitally circulated, and printed copies have been sent to those members of our church community who don't have access to the internet.

Gift Aid

As a charity this is especially important in meeting the costs of ministry and the maintenance of our historic medieval church here in Thorpe. We ask every member of the church family who can do so, to complete and sign an annual Gift Aid declaration. Thank you for your help and support.



The Vicarage study was used for live streaming worship from the start of Lockdown in March 2020 until we were allowed back into Church at the end of May. This was the scene at Compline on Easter Day 2020, Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

St Mary's Church, Thorpe
Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2020

General Receipts & Payments				
Receipts			2020	2019
			£	£
Regular Giving				
	Planned Giving		32,467	34,692
	Collections and other giving (non GA)		8,809	7,165
	Collections and other giving (GA)		15,340	10,448
			56,616	52,305
Other Voluntary Receipts				
	Donations/In Memoriam		60	77
	Charities		332	731
	Wall boxes & Candles		146	268
			538	1,076
Receipts from Fund-generating Activities				
	Fund-raising Events & Activities		5,031	13,192
	Hire of Church and Rutherwyke Room		2,806	4,936
			7,837	18,128

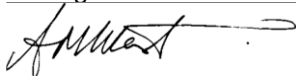
Receipts from Church Activities				
	Fees (Banns, Weddings, Funerals)		8,629	12,091
	Refreshments		341	1,887
	Noah's Ark		196	913
	Flowers		45	361
	Books		15	-
	Sundry (Stall, Cards, Gift etc.)		504	1,353
			9,729	16,604
Receipts from Investments				
	CBF Dividends		472	458
			472	458
Other Income				
	Works Account (inter a/c transfers)		4,677	4,183
	Education Account (inter a/c transfers)		1,140	4,011
	Tax reclaims (2019 Gift Aid)		11,199	14,807
	Receipts from insurance		1,943	-
			18,960	23,001
Total Receipts			94,152	111,573
Payments			2020	2019
			£	£
Church Activities				

	Diocesan parish share		54,395	50,121
	Parish Costs (Expenses, Travel, Telephone)		1,635	1,599
	Organists		560	2,935
	Cost of services		1,826	3,159
			58,415	57,814
Maintenance				
	Facilities maint. Cleaning, Fees etc		11,634	7,669
			11,634	7,669
Church running expenses				
	Insurance		2,619	2,600
	Gas, Electricity, Water		3,529	4,002
			6,148	6,601
Administration				
	Admin, computer & office supplies		4,323	5,081
	Postage		72	7
			4,395	5,088
Other Costs				
	Books		172	136
	Music & Subscriptions		302	132
	Charities		305	454
	Parish Fees to Diocese		5,774	2,953

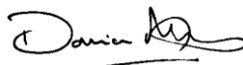
	Events & Fund-raising costs		566	5,191
	Refreshments		141	708
	Marketing		529	922
	Flowers		-	533
	Sundry payments (training, misc)		-	3,665
	Fixed assets		-	992
			7,790	15,686
Fund Transfers				
	Transfer to Works Acc		10,020	13,814
	Transfer to Education Acc		29	230
			10,049	14,044
Total Payments			98,430	106,903
Balance (Income less Expenditure)			(4,278)	4,670
Statement of Assets and Liabilities			2020	2019
			£	£
Cash Funds				
at 31 Dec 2020	Bank: Current Account	1	22,324	26,602
	Bank: Business Reserve Account: Education	2	35,727	36,838
	Bank: Business Saver: Works	3	14,663	9,310
Investment Assets				

at 31 Dec 2020	CBF: Thorpe St. Mary PCC - value of shares	4	16,840	15,721
	821.00 shares @ £20.4873 each on 31/12/20			
			89,554	88,472
Other Monetary Assets				
	Estimated refund for 2020 GA donations	5	11,952	11,285
			11,952	11,285
Breakdown of Cash Funds				
	Unrestricted (1+4+5)		51,116	53,608
	Restricted (2+3)		50,390	46,149
			101,506	99,757

Approved by the PCC on Monday 15th March 2021
and signed on their behalf by:



Mr. Andrew West
Treasurer



Fr Damian Harrison-Miles
Vicar



Independent Examiner's Report to the PCC of St Mary's Church, Thorpe

I report on the accounts of the PCC of St Mary's Church, Thorpe for the year ended 31 December 2020.

Respective Responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner

The PCC is responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The PCC considers that an audit is not required for this 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;
- follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of Independent Examiner's Report

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 section 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.

Name: Alan Alderson Date: 13th February 2021

Address: 5 Mead Close, Egham, Surrey TW20 8JA



Part 3 Appendix Section

Sunday Worship at St Mary's & Covid-19 secure protocols

8am Said Eucharist, 10am Parish Eucharist,
1st, 3rd & 5th Sunday monthly 11:30am Family Service,
2nd or 4th Sundays by arrangement 12noon Baptism Service,
7pm Compline.

ALL SUNDAY WORSHIP is with a congregation present, up to 40 people (plus 8 staff maximum). The 10am, 11:30am and 7pm services are also live streamed to Facebook and St Mary's Church website.

Weekdays

Weekday Said Eucharist: 10am Wednesday

Evening Sung Festival Eucharist (Mass) at 7.30pm on select occasions.

Noah's Ark Group, Faith & Fun, St Mary's Church Choir, Parish Office & Viewing the Church, Charities Group & lunches & Relate Counselling.

These activities are all suspended but under constant review. The PCC is committed to re-starting these as soon as possible. Please note some services will come from the homes of our ministry team, as circumstances dictate.

Covid-19 Entrance Procedures at St Mary's Church

We aim to keep everyone safe and have introduced the following procedure:

1. A one-way system around the Church is in operation, with entrance to worship via the Rutherwyke Room Kitchen door ONLY.
2. On entering ALL must WASH THEIR HANDS. You should wear a face mask (unless prevented from doing so by a medical condition).
3. All must sign-in with their name and a contact phone number. (This information may be passed to TEST AND TRACE if requested by HM Government).
4. Place your financial offering / gift-aid envelope into the glass jar provided.
5. Collect a service sheet, weekly newsletter and post-it note, and make your way up the Link into Church via the Chancel.
6. Maintain social distancing of 2 metres at all times. ALL 2 SEATS ARE SET AT 2M SPACING – MANY IN PAIRS. Don't move or change seats during worship.
7. Place your post-it sticky note onto the top of the chair you have chosen (to identify this for cleaning purposes after the service).
8. The sharing of the Peace has been suspended. Singing is not permitted.
9. Communion is distributed by the priest, stood by the FONT. Please follow the one-way system around the church (marked on the floor) directed by the warden on duty – you will be offered hand gel on your way to the Communion station – please keep your mask on. The consecrated bread dipped in wine will be placed into your hands. Consume on your way back to your seat.
10. Additional hand sanitiser is available in the Link and Church Porch.
11. Exit St Mary's via the BLUE MAIN DOORS / Church porch.
12. Places used service sheets into the BLU re-cycling box as you leave.
13. Please don't stay in church to socialise. Please exit in silence.

Visit our Parish Website for more information: www.stmaryschurchthorpe.co.uk

What does our Church Development Plan look like post 2020/21?

We are nearing the end of our 20:20 vision / Church Development Plan, so it is time to ask questions about the next phase in our pilgrimage of faith and mission in Thorpe. The PCC would like every member of our church community to participate as we review where we have come from and celebrate so many achievements and seek to prioritise projects and ambitions for the coming years, post 2021.

As Christian people, we are called by God to service, just as Jesus' first disciples were called to gather people into God's Kingdom. This is our mission to Thorpe and beyond! To achieve this God has made each one of us unique with different and varied gifts. These gifts, or talents, are the building blocks of our Christian common life and we hope you will be willing to share those gifts with the church family for the building-up of faith. After all everything we have comes from God first:



"But who am I, and what are my people, that we should be able to make this freewill offering? For all things come from you, and of your own have we given you." (1 Chronicles 29:14)



For the past three years our 2020 vision plan (Church Development Plan) has delivered renewal in our life together, fabric improvements, increased discipleship, and improved finances. We should celebrate and give thanks to God for the many achievements of the past five years - what an achievement. Over the next year our Church Teams will be contributing towards a new vision plan, taking us beyond 2020 towards 2024/5. But we need your ideas and help too, so we are asking:

What is God calling us to, as His Church corporate and His people here at St Mary's Thorpe, beyond 2020/21?

Our giving in the service of God is not simply about financial support (although that is one important aspect) but practical gifts of time and spiritual commitment to the Church including regular attendance at worship. Indeed, there are so many ways in which we can all play a part in the life of our Christian fellowship in Thorpe. Thank you for the part you already play in our life together and for being willing to support this wonderful community of faith into the future. Please help us plan for 2020+.

FOUR QUESTIONS TO PONDER AND RESPOND TO:

1. Are there any suggestions or comments you would like to make as our PCC begins to plan our Church Development Plan post 2020?
2. What should our priorities be beyond 2020?
3. What skills, talents, time, or gifts could **YOU** offer/bring to the life of this Parish and the mission of our Church in Thorpe?
4. Considering the Covid-19 pandemic, should we change our priorities and if so how and why? Any reflections upon our Church response so far?

Please return the response slip enclosed with this booklet at the APCM or email your response to stmaryschurchthorpe@outlook.com to have your say.

St Mary's Church, Thorpe			
Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2020			
General Receipts & Payments			
Receipts		2020	2019
		£	£
Regular Giving			
	Planned Giving	32 ,467	3 4,692
	Collections and other giving (non GA)	8 ,809	7,165
	Collections and other giving (GA)	15 ,340	1 0,448
		5 6,616	5 2,305
Other Voluntary Receipts			
	Donations/In Memoriam	60	77
	Charities	332	731
	Wall boxes & Candles	146	268
		538	1,076
Receipts from Fund-generating Activities			
	Fund-raising Events & Activities	5 ,031	1 3,192
	Hire of Church and Rutherwyke Room	2 ,806	4,936
		7,837	1 8,128
Receipts from Church Activities			
	Fees (Banns, Weddings, Funerals)	8 ,629	1 2,091
	Refreshments	341	1,887
	Noah's Ark	196	913
	Flowers	45	361
	Books	15	-
	Sundry (Stall, Cards, Gift etc.)	504	1,353
		9,729	1 6,604
Receipts from Investments			
	CBF Dividends	472	458
		472	458

Other Income				
	Works Account (inter a/c transfers)		4 ,677	4,183
	Education Account (inter a/c transfers)		1 ,140	4,011
	Tax reclaims (2019 Gift Aid)		11 ,199	1 4,807
	Receipts from insurance		1 ,943	-
			1 8,960	2 3,001
Total Receipts			9 4,152	11 1,573
Payments			2020	2019
			£	£
Church Activities				
	Diocesan parish share		54 ,395	5 0,121
	Parish Costs (Expenses, Travel, Telephone)		1 ,635	1,599
	Organists		560	2,935
	Cost of services		1 ,826	3,159
			5 8,415	5 7,814
Maintenance				
	Facilities maint. Cleaning, Fees etc		11 ,634	7,669
			1 1,634	7,669
Church running expenses				
	Insurance		2 ,619	2,600
	Gas, Electricity, Water		3 ,529	4,002
			6,148	6,601
Administration				
	Admin, computer & office supplies		4 ,323	5,081
	Postage		72	7
			4,395	5,088
Other				

Costs				
	Books		172	136
	Music & Subscriptions		302	132
	Charities		305	454
	Parish Fees to Diocese		5 ,774	2,953
	Events & Fund-raising costs		566	5,191
	Refreshments		141	708
	Marketing		529	922
	Flowers		-	533
	Sundry payments (training, misc)		-	3,665
	Fixed assets		-	992
			7,790	5,686
Fund Transfers				
	Transfer to Works Acc		10 ,020	1 3,814
	Transfer to Education Acc		29	230
			1	1
			0,049	4,044
Total Payments			9	10
			8,430	6,903
Balance (Income less Expenditure)			(4,278)	4,670
Statement of Assets and Liabilities			2020	2019
			£	£
Cash Funds				
at 31 Dec 2020	Bank: Current Account	1	22 ,324	2 6,602
	Bank: Business Reserve Account: Education	2	35 ,727	3 6,838
	Bank: Business Saver: Works	3	14 ,663	9,310
Investment Assets				
at 31 Dec 2020	CBF: Thorpe St. Mary PCC - value of shares	4	16 ,840	1 5,721
	821.00 shares @ £20.4873 each on 31/12/20			
			8	8
			9,554	8,472
Other Monetary Assets				

	Estimated refund for 2020 GA donations	5	11,952	1,285
			1,952	1,285
Breakdown of Cash Funds				
	Unrestricted (1+4+5)		51,116	3,608
	Restricted (2+3)		50,390	6,149
			10,506	9,757

Approved by the PCC on ___/___/___ and signed on their behalf by _____

Independent examiner's report to the PCC of St Mary's Church, Thorpe

I report on the accounts of the PCC of St. Mary's Church, Thorpe for the year ended 31 December 2020.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The PCC are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The PCC consider that an audit is not required for this 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 Commission 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 report

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 section 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.

Name: ALAN ALDERSON ACIB
Address: 5 MEAD CLOSE, EGAM, TW20 83A
Date: 13/2/21

Signature: 