

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 10th April 2022 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 2021

Vicar: The Revd Damian Stewart Harrison-Miles, BTh
St Mary's Vicarage, Church Approach,
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St Mary's Thorpe VESTRY MEETING and reports for the ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

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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 10th April 2022, 11:30am (*following the Eucharist*)

1. The opening of proceedings with Prayers
 2. Apologies for absence
 3. Minutes of 9th May 2021 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 10th April 2022, 11:30am (*immediately following the Vestry Meeting*)

Apologies for absence

Minutes of the previous APCM held in Church on 9th May 2021 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 16th May 2022, 7:30pm) as they are Officers of the PCC.*
- Appointment of the Independent Examiner for 2022 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) Church Wardens' Report including Fabric/Terrier
- (v) Accounts – Financial Report 2021
Acceptance of Financial Report 2021
- (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 9th May 2021
(Held via Zoom and in Church)**

Vestry Meeting

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

Present in Church:

B. Huxley, P. Gruncell, Fr. G. Mee, Mtr J. Winn-Smith, A. West. A. Kelly, S. Bruce, J. Bright, M. Herne, C. Cobbold, S. Bolton, T. Leighton, A. Leighton, J. deVille, J. Gruncell, J. Carter, D. Howard, A. Falconer, M. Roberts. P. Alder, S. Thornton, J. Collinson, M. Morris, J. Lowe. M. Harnden, P Hudson, B. Germany

Present via Zoom:

B. Grove, T. Grove, C. Wareham, D. Kidd, R. Nicholson, E. Nicholson. Richardson, K. Wade, N. Wase-Rogers, L. Gilham, M Alderson.

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. He reflected upon the sad loss of people during the past year, some due to Covid and some of them longstanding members of the Church family.

2. Apologies for Absence:

I. Rigazzi-Tarling, D. Gough, S. Mante, M. Mante, J. Mitchiner, J. Carthew, K. Carthew, E. Gill

3. Minutes and Matters Arising

Minutes for the APCM Meeting held 20th September 2020 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

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, Jane Lowe and Margaret Roberts. All eight candidates were unanimously accepted.

7. Any Other Business - None

Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting of St Mary's Church, Thorpe **Sunday 9th May 2021 11:45am**

Minutes from the APCM held 20th September 2020 were accepted with no amendments.

1. Elections and Appointments

8 persons had submitted written nominations for PCC:

Bev Germany, Allison Kelly, Margaret Harnden, Sarah Bolton, Andrew Falconer, Jenny Bright, Andy West, Susi Thornton

All 8 nominations were unanimously confirmed.

Fr D welcomed Susi Thornton back onto the PCC.

- 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.

DHM further welcomed Mary Morris to her Admin role in the church office.

- Approval of Sides-persons

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

S. Thornton, 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, Jane Lowe, Jim Lowe, A. Falconer, B. Germany, H. Cunningham, P. Whitlock, J. Collinson, D. Lees, S. Bolton, M. Morris, J. Bright, M. Alderson,

All persons were unanimously confirmed.

- Appointment of Sides Person to Assist the Treasurer with banking

This role will be carried out by the Treasurer, Vicar and Wardens for the time being.

- Confirmation of appointment of the Electoral Roll Officer

Sarah Bolton was unanimously confirmed. Sarah asked if she can be replaced by the next APCM when she wishes to stand down after several years in this role.

Thanks were given to Sarah for this work.

- Appointment of the Independent Examiner for 2020 Financial Accounts

Alan Alderson was unanimously confirmed.

2. Reports

(i) Electoral Roll

The electoral roll has 119 members subsequent to the 25th April 2021.
There were no questions raised.

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

(iii) Parish Reports
DHM raised the question of the closing of the Barclays branch in Egham during June. Cash has to be banked every 3 to 4 weeks and he asked for any comments as to whether the bank accounts should be moved away from Barclays. There was a lively discussion regarding the issue with most attendees being aware of branch closures and that not everyone was *au fait* with on-line banking or wished to use it. It was agreed this could be an opportunity to look at mission values as Barclays were not an ethical bank. A. West requested that if any cheques were used as a payment method that they were made payable to Thorpe PCC as the Bank tellers would not recognise St. Mary's Church as the payee.

A. West also raised the point that some Banks would not accept Charity accounts; he was unaware if the rules had changed but would investigate. DHM confirmed that the church now had a separate registered Post Office address and post code which may facilitate the move.

DHM proposed moving the Bank account to a more ethical bank. A. West seconded.

Unanimously approved.

(iv) Church Wardens Report
There were no questions raised on the report.

B. Huxley confirmed that terrier reports were moving to a digital format and Mary Morris would be working with the church wardens to put the work on line to enable more accessibility for inspections.

DHM confirmed a submission has been made for proposed AV equipment, with a total cost of around £40,000, together with an application for a grant from Marshalls charity, of around £20k. The matter is further compounded in that the electrical wiring is not at current required specifications.

The electrical work forms approximately £17,000 of the cost. The projectors will project onto the walls or the screen, which will be attached to the beam. The high altar will still be visible when the screen is down. Technology has moved on, leaving St. Mary's still very paper focussed. This can make it hard to follow the service. Current services would not be changed, the equipment would simply offer an alternative way of following services. It would also enable the church to be used for teaching, conferences and public meetings.

The current sound system usage is limited and although the speakers are some 30 years old they will not be replaced as they are of a good standard, as are the

amplifiers. The DAC will need to be consulted and the heritage body's faculty will take time. The DAC will visit the church as part of the consultation process. G. Mee explained that the benefits of the system will free up clergy for their pastoral role rather than onerous technical problems and photocopying.

It was asked if the screens were down would people in the side aisles be able to see. DHM Confirmed yes, there would be projection to all 3 walls, everyone would have an unobstructed view. Several people present voiced reservations on the use of screens as they had previously attended churches where these had intruded on worship or led to a different style of worship.

DHM agreed that it would be advantageous to have some printed sheets in services but that currently some 30,000 sheets were being copied each year and there was a need to find a balance. He confirmed that no change was planned to the content, style or tradition of our worship. This was purely about accessibility and making sure our worship was inclusive of all. There would be no change to theology of our tradition – we are Anglo Catholic. But embracing such technology would help everyone to have access to the treasures in our midst. Andrew Falconer agreed that, in line with the newsheet statement 'Inclusive for All', technology will enable us to live up to this statement if used sensibly.

Jane Carter voiced concern that the church would lose holiness using screens and additional wiring everywhere. Jo Winn-Smith voiced that St. Mary's has the oldest and most Eucharistic worship, that having screens has the potential to engage more people in our tradition and draw more people in, that this would be an exciting opportunity, with family worship one of the services which would most benefit. She thought we should undertake the move to technology with enthusiasm.

J. De Ville agreed that there was a need to move forward and enquired why the organ, which needs money and attention, had not been addressed first as a priority. David Howard, Director of Music and Organist agreed that there were some problems with the organ but that the integrity of the instrument was good and most problems were seasonal issues connected with damp, but the organ should remain. Harrison & Harrison maintain the instrument for us with bi-annual inspections and servicing to a very high standard. Longer-term there could be an option to replace or enhance the existing instrument, as well as replacing the blower unit, but that was not costed. A full clean of the instrument had been costed at over 60k, but that was many years ago and not taken up.

DHM explained that there were several services annually where we do not have enough space. The pipe organ is not in the correct position. Longer term we need to ask ourselves, is this the organ we want to keep, and is this where it should be positioned? We could move it and be creative about space. It is in our best interests to undertake first the electrical work and AV equipment installation and then move to the organ and Tower area and look at what could be possible. Jill Collinson asked when we would be permitted to sing again in church. DHM confirmed this was not yet known and he was considering a small group of singers for the Civic Service but that we were probably only allowed six people given the

limitations on space and they would need to be seated in the Chancel. Sue Bruce enquired if it was possible to start an organ fund as people may like to contribute. Andy West confirmed that there were several thousand pounds held specifically for the organ and this money is ring-fenced in the Works Fund. DHM confirmed that opening a fund implies that those contributing are paying towards the current organ. We may need a new pipe organ or a combination instrument and that a conversation had been started with Harrisons about this.

Peter Gruncell wished to point out that use of the TESIS car park was not being utilised properly and if car numbers dropped we may lose access. Could the person on first duty on Sundays please ensure that the gate is opened to the TESIS car park. DHM explained that as part of our welcome we should leave spaces in Church Approach and the Vicarage Car Park for newcomers. DHM also reminded all that the Vicarage car park is really the front garden and doesn't belong to St Mary's. Cars can only be parked on the red gravel area and never on the driveway.

Barry Huxley confirmed that the flooding to the area outside the Lych Gate was being addressed. Quotations had been received and he was collaborating with TESIS.

Jane Carter wished to pass on her thanks for all the work in the churchyard which has left this in a very attractive condition.

(v) Accounts – Financial Report 2020

Andy West briefly outlined that finances were in good shape. Income directly to the Bank account had increased by 10%. Running costs had been reduced to lower than 2019 and all liabilities had been met. A large amount of the parish share had been paid early.

Andy passed his thanks on to the leadership and PCC. Margaret Harnden passed huge thanks on behalf of the PCC for keeping finances under control.

DHM proposed acceptance of the Financial Report. Andrew Falconer seconded. The accounts were unanimously accepted.

DHM explained that St. Mary's has applied for a number of grants unsuccessfully over the year. The Heritage lottery grant was refused as the church is unfairly classified as being in the top 10% richest parishes in the country. Retaining a full time priest in Thorpe could cost around £75,000 per annum by the mid 2020's. Although we are currently paying a discounted parish share, due to the current state of Diocesan finances, the full cost may be required earlier. It was asked if there was some way of appealing. DHM advised that the houses adjacent to the Thames are expensive homes and are in our parish, which skews the Equifax data. Margaret Harnden advised that the figures do not appear on council records and she will investigate and report.

DHM confirmed that additional figures from RBC would be useful. Jane Carter enquired, as Fr G Mee and Mtr J Winn-Smith are not paid, if they were factored in. DHM confirmed they were not, only some training costs are included. St. Mary's do not have a stipendiary training curate. When the full parish share is paid we could possibly consider a stipendiary curate; we have achieved so much together in the past year, the electoral roll has increased and attendance is returning. There are very many positives.

If anyone is currently giving in yellow envelopes and could consider a standing order could they please do so as it helps with budgeting and challenges with the bank.

(vi) **Deanery Synod Report**

Catherine Wareham had agreed to stand as the third Deanery Synod representative.

Unanimously agreed.

3. Any Other Business

No questions had been submitted before the meeting and no questions raised at meeting.

DHM expressed disappointment at the lack of questionnaire response. Could all please complete and return, including anything you wished to have discussed.

DHM thanked all for their contributions of time and support in so many ways over the past difficult year. He understood how much St. Mary's means to everyone present but we now need to share our faith and more comprehensively grow the church. Your witness, honesty and communication with others is what brings people in and where we need to sow seeds.

The PCC, Church Wardens and DHM will seek occasions in the coming months when you can bring people to come in and meet everyone. Go away and fill in your questionnaires with ideas! What will make people comfortable and enabled as we come out of the pandemic and stand up to reformers and the diocese? Please pray about this, who you can bring and find out what is in your heart and share it.

DHM closed in prayer, followed by the grace.

Meeting concluded at 12.55 p.m.

RECEPTION OF THE ELECTORAL ROLL IN ADVANCE OF THE APCM 2022

At 31 December the roll stood at 118. The revision of the Electoral Roll has taken place. Notices were posted 27 February 2022 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 2021

Preparing this report for the APCM 2022, I have realised something of which others have spoken; that the second year dominated by pandemic has somehow merged into the previous year, and memories are a little jumbled up. As time has passed some experiences have repeated themselves, as for one moment we have felt like we were on an irreversible roadmap out of restrictions only to find ourselves struggling, indeed fearful of new variants.

What stands out for me from 2021 has been the determination of our church community, led so brilliantly by Pete and Barry our churchwardens, to always remain open and that is exactly what we achieved, although it has been hard to re-start and renew some missional activity, especially among families and children, which has been to the detriment of us all. The PCC, of whom I am immensely proud, not only achieved a full payment of parish share, up just over £5k on the previous year, but worked so hard with the brilliant welcome team of volunteers, to staff all kinds of services, events and activities, including a morning visit to church by each class from Thorpe Primary, outdoor refreshments from the tent, the 3 day extravaganza that was our August bank holiday weekend fair and the best ever Winter Wonderland, heaving with families and children who delighted at the switch-on of our Christmas lights, which now include Barry's Reindeer!

We completed the patio project, re-surfacing of the area by the Lychgate and pathway improvements ensuring our church and buildings are now safely accessible for everyone.

It has been exceptionally difficult to maintain the congregation throughout this period with the legacy being irregular in-person attendance during 2021 and a decrease in regular income from planned-giving and in-church collections. We started with promising signs of renewal when we came out of lockdown around Holy Week and Easter, with a good level of attendance and Sunday morning congregations returning to the best levels seen this past two years, only to be reduced by the Delta wave and fears among many that the virus was spreading

again. Indeed, my own family caught Delta in October and so I know first-hand what it is like to experience the lung infection associated with Coronavirus and the weeks it took to overcome it, as well as my own long-covid symptoms which affect my memory, confidence/feelings of being overwhelmed among others. Thankfully these symptoms are beginning to lessen and my prayer is that many others who are so much worse will find their situation improves soon too. As we headed towards Christmas, we had our best attendances of the year for both Remembrance Sunday and, two weeks later, the Annual Memorial Service, when St Mary's was heaving, but still safe. Then the fear surrounding Omicron hit and numbers plummeted, meaning Christmas was disappointing, except for the one Crib Service on Christmas Eve, once again with oversubscribed roles for children in the nativity and a full and safe church, due to our protocols.

During a significant part of 2021 the clergy were not permitted to make home visits, so we resumed written printed communications but found this to be imperfect in many ways. So, ups and downs in terms of attendance, the health of our community and all this mirroring the challenges of the times we have lived through. Financially, things have been a little more stable, although increases in income from funerals and fundraising have off-set a decrease in planned giving and collections. I do wish to mention here the hard work behind the scenes of the standing committee, especially Andy West our Treasurer and Sacristan, Barry and Pete our diligent and committed Wardens, Allison our PCC Secretary and Mary Morris in the office who has been such a brilliant addition (our gain, the Bishop of Guildford's loss!) Along with Father Gerard and Mother Jo, our team have kept the show on the road, funerals looked after and so much more besides, ably supported by our dedicated team of Deputy Wardens who have given so much time and shown so much love. Add to them Claire our superb church cleaner who, except for when she had Covid herself, hasn't missed a week and key members of our Social Committee including Susi, Jenny, Jill, Deborah, and Joan helping us to enjoy some super social events and raise much needed funds in the process; and on the music side David and Lionel with our superb and busy music secretary Jill keeping everyone (literally) singing from the same hymn sheet! It is incredible what has been achieved in our worship and so much more. Mother Jo and Father Gerard have been exceptional colleagues and friends and we owe them a real debt of thanks for their faithful presence, sound teaching, inspiring worship, pastoral care and support. I have felt held by them in prayer through challenging times and am so thankful for their participation and wisdom. There is so much to celebrate as we have offered the very best of who we are back to God in worship.

Leadership of St Mary's during the pandemic required some responsibilities to be drawn back into the centre. A much wider number of delegated roles and responsibilities returned to the Vicar and Wardens than we would have expected, which was perhaps understandable given the disruption to all our lives caused by the pandemic. However, not everyone has been willing or able to take back on roles or accept new responsibilities. Consequently, a number of reports this year

have been prepared by myself to fill gaps, on this occasion only. Roles such as Children's Church leader will need to be re-delegated if we are serious about re-grouping and renewing our mission to Thorpe and re-growing our congregations. Re-establishing our vision groups (not chaired by the Vicar!) and preparing a new Church Development Plan (strategy/mission!) will be essential to focus our activities and prioritise our mission.

Once again, some people have moved away, among them Andrew Falconer who has been a rock, especially with technology and online resources. What a joy for us to send him to theological College. Margaret Alderson has moved to Scotland, although we do still see her from time to time on a Sunday morning either in church or via our online live streaming. A number of our families have moved out of the area too. And we have lost some lovely people, who have passed from this life to the Kingdom promised by Jesus for those who believe and trust in him. Among them we remember lovely Bryan Lowe who was a member of the choir and part of our Liturgy and Worship Team, proofing resources and contributing in many ways to the life of this community. I miss Bryan leading the intercessions, which he always did with dignity, great care and focus.

As we look back on 2021, so we give thanks for the many blessings we have received and I wish to say thank-you to you, the faithful members of our church family, who have contributed your time, prayer, money and so much more in support of St Mary's. Thank You. But this report also comes with a challenge. During the pandemic we have lost people and money is tighter and some of us have formed new habits, no doubt the consequence of lockdowns, which mean we are not as regular at worship as we once were. As Christians, scripture is clear that our priority must first and foremost be to gather regularly (that means at least weekly) for worship to praise the God who made us, loves us and redeems us through his Son our Saviour Jesus Christ. That has not changed. God continues to call us into a relationship with himself and with one another, and that can't be replicated in any other way than gathering as church together. Yes, we can watch worship online and we have learnt new skills and to use technology to aid our communication of the Gospel. We will continue to offer live-streaming until March 2023, but we must also recognise such participation is passive, although important for the housebound. Now we are called, if we possibly can, to gather again as one family of faith in all our diversity – truly inclusive of all and active! That is St Mary's catholic mission; to offer the very best of who we are back to God who loves us first. We have so much to celebrate at our APCM 2022 and I commend this excellent Report and Accounts booklet to you. May your prayer life deepen, your relationship with the Lord be renewed and grow and your commitment to this Church strengthen in the coming months as we together proclaim Jesus as Lord to Thorpe and beyond.

Your friend in faith and Vicar Father Damian Harrison-Miles

Electoral Roll Report – January-December 2021

The Electoral Roll for St Mary's Thorpe at the end of December 2021 was 119 and of this figure there are 22 households where there are 2 members.

The figure at the beginning of January 2020 was 113 so there has been an overall increase of six this year, which has included some additions and some members of our church family passing on or moving away.

Fr Damian has done some work on a new Welcome Pack which will be used over the next few weeks as we encourage those who have joined us for online worship over lockdowns to join our Electoral Roll.

It has been a privilege to serve as your Electoral Roll Officer for the past 3 years and I am very grateful to Claire Cobbold who has agreed to be my successor.

Electoral Roll Officer, Sarah Bolton

A sincere thank you to Sarah who has looked after this vital role at St Mary's for several years. We will miss you but wish you well in your new spiritual home and in your continued work for our Diocese. And thank you to Claire for taking the Electoral Roll Officer role.

Fr Damian Harrison-Miles

PCC Secretary's Report 2021 on the work of the Parochial Church Council

The Parochial Church Council met six times over 2021 excluding the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on Sunday 9th May 2021. 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. Meetings were held in a variety of formats over the year, either on Zoom or in person, dependent on the Covid regulations in force at the time.

All meetings in 2021 focussed on the proposed AV equipment and electrical work, culminating in quotations finally being approved by PCC and the Faculty being submitted in November. If the faculty is approved the work will proceed initially with the electrical work required for the whole project and the central screen. This has been made possible by a generous bequest. Additional screens and proposed sound desk will be added at a later date, when funds allow.

The approved patio and pathway project was completed in 2021 which, together with the new patio furniture, allows more capacity for outdoor gatherings and social events.

Following discussions and approval by PCC, St. Mary's has become a member of Inclusive Church and all letterheads and promotional material now carry the logo showing our membership.

Funding was approved by PCC for a replacement kitchen boiler and work to the exterior of the Lych-gate to stop flooding after heavy rain. All now completed.

At almost every meeting throughout the year Covid was high on the Agenda and involved discussions on risk assessments, cleaning and planning in the event of a further lockdown. In November the PCC agreed that, for a second year, it would pay a lump sum to the Diocese in January to enable better planning capabilities for funds by the Diocese and so that the monthly standing order remained constant throughout the year.

The November meeting also approved the Quinquennial Inspection due in 2022. 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, 2021

It has been another tough year for us all at St Mary's, mainly due to the ongoing Covid pandemic. But once again Fr Damian was brilliant in his excellent leadership, hard work and good guidance. Because of this our team were able to stay ahead of the game, keep the Church open for services and, most importantly, keep everyone safe with our excellent covid-secure protocols.

With great skill, he and our excellent clergy were also able to continue broadcasting services online. Many people have watched these online services and have commented how wonderfully supportive and comforting they found them (and this continues today). Thank you once again Fr Damian, from all of us, for all your hard work, wisdom, skill and great leadership. You have excelled.

Our grateful thanks must also go to Fr Gerard and Mother Jo – we are so fortunate to have such wonderful and delightful clergy, and to Andy West, our Treasurer, for the careful and skilled stewardship of our church's finances.

In addition, the continued success story of our Church could not happen without the considerable hard work, generosity and dedication from our terrific team made up of several people – many of their names appear on our service support rota - and those who quietly assist in their own way.

Thank you all. What a wonderful team. We could not manage without you.

Barry Huxley and Peter Gruncell

Terrier & Fabric Report 2021

This past year we were able to finish all the patio and pathway projects and upgrades, which we hope people are pleased with. We now have more useful outside space for our events on the patio area and, importantly, have much safer access for everybody (no tripping hazards etc.). The drainage in this area has also

been greatly improved. We hope everyone is happy with the way it looks as well. The last pathway to be rebuilt was the walkway down to the ancient pedestrian gate leading to the TASIS car park, which is now a lot safer.

Although somewhat heavy, the addition of the sturdy, all-weather furniture on the patio appears to have been a great success. This has been generously gifted to St Mary's. We are sure the furniture will be a great asset over the coming years and discussion has taken place about adding to it (maybe one or two more benches and chairs).

Preparations were made for the AV project, following several quotations and consultation with the Diocese, Heritage England and others. The PCC approved each stage of the process.

It is so pleasing to note that we continue to enjoy a very warm relationship with our nearest neighbour, TASIS School. The school continues to allow us to park in their South Campus Car Park for certain services (by permit entry for electoral roll members). They continue to help us in other ways too, such as loaning us pop-up gazebos for our fund-raising events, providing a lovely tree at Christmas etc. We greatly appreciate their friendship, kindness and cooperation. Two or three times a year now the school brings across a cheerful team of students - willing helpers to assist us in our churchyard tidy-up. This plays a great part in helping keep our lovely Churchyard looking neat and tidy. We pass our thanks again to Bryan Nixon, Head of School, for making this all happen.

This year, 2022, is our Quinquennial Inspection Year. This is a 5-yearly detailed inspection of our Grade 2 Medieval Church building, which applies to all churches and is a requirement of the Church of England.

We have again appointed our consultant architect to carry out this inspection which will take place on Wednesday 10th August 2022. We await his report and recommendations from which we will form a plan of action. Hopefully there won't be too many expensive maintenance issues to be burdened with.

Barry Huxley and Peter Gruncell

Financial Report 2021

(including the PCC Treasurer's report) PCC accounts can be found at page 32.

Receipts

Regular Giving decreased by just over 6% (£3.5k) compared to last year. A significant drop in GA collections (-£6.2k) was partly off-set by a £5.6k increase in NGA direct donations compared with last year. Income from planned giving (green envelopes and regular direct to bank payment) were down by £3k across the year.

Other voluntary receipts

Income from general donations was significantly higher than 2020 due to a generous *In Memoriam* donation towards the audio-visual project.

Fund-generating activities

Receipts from fund-raising events were considerably higher this year amounting to more than £15k compared to £5k the previous year. Income from both the Summer and Christmas Fayres as well as generous individual donations meant that the patio project could be completed to a high standard. Receipts from hire were expectedly lower than 2020 due to Covid. Overall income was £9.3k (118%) 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 our CBF shares rose by 3.5% year on year. Income from transfers from the Works and Education deposit accounts were to pay suppliers for the patio projects and shared resource costs for Youth work. The GA reclaim from HMRC for 2020 (received in 2021) was 13% up (£1,434) on 2019 (received in 2020).

Total receipts for 2021 were £140,964 compared to £94,152 in 2020 (49.7% or £46,812)

Payments

Church Activities

Our Parish Share for 2020 (£54,375) was paid in full. Parish running costs such as travel, telephone and related expenses were less than 2020. The cost of organist's fees was higher due to the higher number of funerals this year. Costs related to services in Church rose by 92% yoy due to the on-line broadcast licence fees and related IT resourcing to enable this. Overall, costs rose by £2k (3.5%).

Maintenance

Maintenance costs rose by 102% (+£11,898) compared to last year. This was due to the cost of a new kitchen boiler (£2.3k), patio work (£9.8k), resurfacing the road outside the Lych gate (£2.1k) and the side path to TISIS (£2.2k). These costs were off-set by income from fundraising and funds already held in the Works account specifically for these purposes.

Church running expenses

The cost of insurance rose by 2% (£53) compared to last year and Utility costs rose by 15.7% or £553. Overall running costs rose by 10% but we can expect these to be very significantly higher in future due to the rise in energy costs.

Administration

Costs across administration, computer and office supplies were 18% lower (- £798) than 2020.

Other costs

Total expenditure in this sector rose by £8.4k (108%) compared to last year. Most of this increased expenditure was on fixed assets i.e., new microphones, chargers, amplifier and a photocopier. Other cost-centres that saw a significant increase over the previous year were Fees due to the Diocese (for Funerals and Weddings) and the cost of marketing and resourcing the Summer and Christmas Fayres.

Fund transfers

A total of £29,543 was transferred from the Current account to the Works deposit account in 2021. 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). This should be taken into consideration for any comparison of Total Income versus Total Expenditure.

Total payments in 2021 were £140,126 compared to £98,431 in 2020.

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 good 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 2021

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 have 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 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 Office) 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 2021



Deanery Synods

Due to pandemic restrictions, there were no physical Synod meetings in 2021. Zoom meetings took place in March, welcoming Bishop Jo for an informative introduction to the “Living in Love & Faith” course, with a secondary presentation on “Net Zero Carb” by Clem Jones of St John Egham, and in June with David Welch (Head of Mission Enabler Team, Diocese of Guildford) leading us through an exploration of “Beyond Covid” and Danny Wignall (Mission Enabler – Evangelism, Diocese of Guildford) contributing input on “Beyond Covid – National Church”. Both meetings were open to the public and detailed Minutes are available on the [deanery website](#). October Synod was cancelled owing to the short notice withdrawal of our main speaker, Archdeacon Paul, for reasons out of his control. He is now coming to contribute on 24 March 2022.

Deanery Growth & Strategy Group

This group did not meet in 2021. An outstanding point of business – one Deanery Growth Fund grant application – was added to the Standing Committee agenda in November but subsequently withdrawn due to changes in the circumstances on which the application was based. As of 2022, all leading bodies of the deanery will, as per CofE strategy, be incorporated into the new Deanery Leadership Team and therefore G&SG will cease to exist.

Kebbi Link

Bishop Edmund joined June Synod via Zoom for an update and thanks to Runnymede Deanery for continued prayer support. He visited the UK for successful prostate cancer treatment shortly after, staying, together with his wife Priscilla, with Lay Chairman Keith Malcouronne and using this time for contacts

around the deanery and a Prayer Evening at St John's Church. The Deanery also facilitated financial support from the Bishop's Discretionary Fund towards Bishop Edmund's treatment.

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.

Other Business

- Following his presentation in March, Clem Jones was elected Climate Champion by Runnymede Deanery Synod. Ben Niblett of Christ Church Virginia Water was appointed Eco Church Champion and Deanery Greenery leader by the Diocese of Guildford. A Deanery Greenery network has been established via Google Groups with Environmental Stewardship Coordinators and Eco Church links from the churches as representatives.
- A deanery "Living in Love and Faith" course ran during summer as a result of the March Synod presentation by Bishop Jo. It occasioned positive feedback as providing stimulating discussion.
- 2022 Open Synod dates were set as 24 Mar (Egham Hythe), 21 Jun (Virginia Water) & 5 Oct (Chertsey).

Newsletters continued to be produced three times a year around Synod meetings, with an emphasis on sharing experiences. These were supplemented by simpler Event Diaries roughly ten times a year but due to reduced activity around Covid restrictions these were generally short. The mailing list is open to anybody interested; requests via runnymededeanery@gmail.com

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

OTHER REPORTS IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

Preparation for Confirmation and Emmaus Autumn 2021

It was a joy to welcome Bishop Jo Bailey Wells to preside over a service of confirmation for our Patronal festival in September 2021 at which Andrew Falconer and Zac Winn-Smith were confirmed in a very moving ceremony. We also ran the Emmaus course during the Autumn with an average attendance of 5 adults. 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's 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 2022.

Fr Damian Harrison-Miles

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 2022.

Fr Damian Harrison-Miles

Charities Engagement & Craft Group Report 2021

We are looking for two new leaders to head up teams of people: Charities coordinator (who books speakers and organises the Charity Lunch, Lent giving campaign etc) and Craft Group coordinator (to organise card making sessions and other crafts) – could this be you? Please prayerfully consider taking on one of these important roles at St Mary's.

Fr Damian Harrison-Miles.

Children's Church Report 2021

Noahs Ark, the toddler group, resumed in September 2021. As most of the older children previously attending had now moved into school we welcomed an almost new set of carers and children. The group averages 8 adults weekly, some with multiple children, and continues to grow and be enjoyed by those attending. It is a time we at St. Mary's can support those with small children and offer a place of safety to play and a chance to make local connections and feel supported by other carers and the group leaders.

Family services are run twice monthly on Sundays at 11.30 a.m. Attendance has been extremely good with the services advertised at the school and by word of mouth. The crib service on Christmas Eve was extremely well attended.

Regrettably, during 2021 we were unable to run our popular after school club, 'Faith & Fun'.

Margaret Alderson has now stood down as our children's church leader and we owe her a deep debt of thanks for the many hours of work and commitment she has given over a number of years. Covid continues to be the great disrupter and many of those who previously volunteered to lead Faith and Fun groups have decided not to resume that offering post covid restrictions. As we run our children's work with volunteers, it is very sad that we can no longer offer children's groups as we have previously. This is impacting our mission and outreach, and is a step backwards. Although individually each decision is quite understandable, even if corporately St Mary's is diminished by this lack of provision – it has not been for the want of trying. The clergy team have worked hard to develop the weekly 'Family Packs' with resources for children to remain in services and participate, however this was only ever intended to be a temporary measure and will not help re-grow our congregations. Even if the PCC found the money to recruit a Family and Children's worker to lead this essential work, there are very few volunteers to work with them which would be essential if we were to be serious about children's work

moving forward. However, it is a joy that Allison Kelly, supported by Joy Mitchiner, has got Noah's Ark back up and running – a sign of new life to give thanks for.

Looking to 2022 with the launch of our monthly Lego club we are trying something new, but again resourced largely by the clergy and churchwardens. Given that so many clubs and groups for children in our area run on a Sunday morning, re-starting 'Faith & Fun' at Thorpe Primary and developing a monthly service on a Sunday late afternoon will be essential if we are to renew our mission among families and children. But in all honesty, I am not sure where the people resource is coming from to make that happen. A lot of prayer is required!

Fr Damian Harrison-Miles

Church Cleaning Report 2021

The cleaning team of Deborah, Johanna and Jill were constrained by Covid rules at the beginning of the year as only one person was permitted in the church at any time. Deborah and Jill alternated in dusting when possible.

Deborah is standing down and we wish to thank her for her many years of service. If anyone would like to join Johanna and Jill in this rewarding task please contact me. We currently meet at 8am on the third Saturday of the month but can be flexible – we would dearly love additional help! Could you?

We are so grateful to Claire who cleans the church and halls complex every Wednesday morning and is always such a dutiful, kind and encouraging support in our community. Claire continues to wash the floor of the church on a weekly basis. A small group of the congregation, coordinated by Susi, contribute to pay for this service which is much appreciated, so thank you to those who made additional donations during 2021 to enable us to continue keeping our buildings safe, clean and Covid-secure. The PCC have no plans to reduce this cleaning, finances permitting.

Fr Damian Harrison-Miles & Jill Collinson

Contemplative Prayer Group Report 2021

When Mother Teresa of Calcutta was asked how she prayed she replied: "I don't say anything, I listen." When the questioner continued by asking "What does God say to you?" she replied "He says nothing, He listens" and she was unable to explain it further. In Common worship Eucharistic Prayer G, which we sometimes have at St. Mary's, we hear the words: 'All your works echo the silent music of Your praise'. Living in and listening to this silence is what we attempt to do in our weekly time together. After relaxing our bodies, we hear one of Fr Richard Rohr's daily meditations and enter a place of silence. It is a beautiful thing to be able to share this holy time and space together. To end the silence we sometimes sing a Taize chant or ring the bell, which leads us gently back, preparing us for vocal prayers of intercession for the sick and needy both locally and in the larger world. Now that Covid restrictions are relaxed, our Prayer Group takes place in Ivy Cottage's cosy sitting room around a little table of lighted candles or, during the Summer months, in the garden.

Tea and cake and conversation bring us back to the 'here and now' with all its ups and downs, twists and turns. Do come and give this a try, all are most welcome.

Jane Carter, Margaret Harnden, Marie Jedla, Susi Thornton

For further information contact Jane Carter on 01344 843033 or Susi Thornton on susi@thorntonclan.com or 01784 433480.

Flower Guild Report 2021

At last, as Covid restrictions have been easing over the past year, we have been able to get back to some sort of normality regarding church floral decorations. We had some really lovely comments about the Christmas displays, which I hope added beauty to the inspiring services held over the festive season. Our thanks go to Jane Lowe for arranging a socially-distanced Christmas afternoon tea for us – an opportunity to meet socially again and plan for 2022!

For some time we have been a team of six but during the year we said farewell to Sarah Bolton, who had been travelling a long distance to be with us and is now attached to a church nearer her home. Thank you Sarah for all your past help. We miss you but I am sure your talents are being appreciated elsewhere.

Margaret Alderson has been a Flower Guild member for many years but has recently relocated to Scotland. I am delighted to say she still has Thorpe connections so we hope to see her when she is visiting and I hope I will be able to persuade her to continue as an 'associate member' of the guild. Thank you Margaret for all the beautiful pedestal arrangements you have produced over the years – always admired and hugely appreciated.

So now we are a group of 4. If you would like to join us, please do speak to me. We are all amateurs, but share a love of flowers - and St Mary's church and its family of course. We would be happy to welcome you on board.

Margaret Harden

Liturgy Group Report 2021

Once again, our desire was to offer up to God the very best of who we are in worship, while adhering to all the safety protocols, which has only been possible through the loyalty and commitment of many unsung heroes who have worked tirelessly both behind the scenes and 'front of house'. Our celebrations during the seasons of Easter and Christmas, in addition to the weekly Wednesday and Sunday Eucharist, continued to touch the lives of many, both in church and online. Those who were unable to attend St. Mary's Church building in person were still able to stay in touch through the wonders of the internet, and we look forward to building upon these missionary facilities in the coming year as we upgrade our audio/visual systems in church.

The Liturgy Group met both via Zoom and in person throughout the year to ensure all views and traditions are incorporated into our beautiful, inclusive services which are respected and appreciated locally and even internationally.

There were mixed emotions when our occasional Preacher, Andrew Falconer, left us for theological training. Andrew's knowledge of IT had been a godsend so we will miss his skill and the help he gave us throughout the year. We wish him and his family well as they discover where God may be leading them once he has finished his residential training course for ordination. Worship only happens here at St Mary's in the way it does because we work as a family of faith, drawing upon a diverse range of gifts and talents. Thank you all for maintaining that faith through your prayers, your contributions, helpful suggestions and fellowship.

Fr Gerard Mee

Music Secretary's Report 2021

2021 was another difficult year when Covid 19 requirements restricted choir activity. Father Damian kept up to date with all the new regulations and procedures were adjusted accordingly. Services were available live on Zoom with recorded music from St Martin-in-the-Fields. As restrictions were eased, doors were opened initially to a reduced number of people. Face masks were required and no singing was permitted except for the Cantors, Father Damian, Mother Jo or Petra Hudson. Easter services were held with a reduced congregation with David playing the organ and Petra as Cantor.

From October our choir were able to perform at festival services and at a wedding on the 16th October.

On the 31st October St Mary's choir travelled to All Saints, Woodham to join their choir for their Patronal service, which was very enjoyable. Unfortunately, a return service was cancelled due to the pandemic restrictions at the time. The Hythe Singers joined St Mary's at the Lessons and Carols service which was a joy to hear.

Thank you to all who made it possible for us to have music again at St Mary's.

Jill Collinson

Social and Fundraising Team Report 2021

The pandemic has caused us several "stops and starts" over the last two years resulting in the cancellation of some of our annual events. However, in May we held a BBQ for the Church family which everyone enjoyed and we had a brilliant three-day Summer event in August involving lots of games for the children as well as stalls culminating in a children's fancy dress competition. The weather could have been kinder but we had a good turnout nonetheless and raised nearly £2,000, plus the proceeds from the Grand Draw. Many thanks to TASIS who very kindly lent us their gazebos.

Our Winter Fayre took place at the end of November. Most of the activities were again outside and it was a freezing cold day! Despite this, we were very surprised at the good turn out and the mulled wine flew off the shelves! Again, the Grand Draw tickets did well with the winners being drawn on Epiphany Sunday.

We also provided the catering for the Christmas festivities including the Egham Band concert and the Lessons and Carols service, although people were slightly wary of socialising after these events. Our Quiz Night on the 26th February was very successful and provided a great boost to our fundraising. We are also planning a Barn Dance in the Autumn.

At the moment we are in the process of planning for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations in conjunction with TWRA and TESIS which will take place on Friday 3rd June from 12pm – 5pm. TESIS have kindly agreed that we can use their beautiful lawn area and it will all be linked up with stalls, fun activities, and food and drink in the grounds of St Mary's and the Rutherwyke Room.

Jenny Bright

Stewardship Committee Report 2021

A very big thank you to Andrew who has now moved to Ripon College, Cuddesdon, Oxford where he is completing his theological training for ministry – we miss you! We are looking for a new leader to become our stewardship Officer – could this be you? Please prayerfully consider taking on this vital role at St Mary's.

Fr Damian Harrison-Miles.

Environmental Stewardship Report 2021

As of late August 2021, St Mary's Church has had an Environmental Stewardship Co-ordinator (Petra Hudson). Susi Thornton will continue as representative for St Mary's on the Deanery Greenery network. The primary objective of the Environmental Stewardship Co-ordinator is the administration of Eco Church, an ecumenical environmental stewardship programme, run by Christian environmental charity A Rocha UK. You can read more about it [here](#). The Diocese of Guildford has signed up as an Eco Church, has achieved Bronze level and is encouraging all parishes to take part in this scheme as well.

The Eco Church programme guides and encourages churches to progress towards a more creation-centred and environmentally sustainable future within a balanced scheme. It offers awards – bronze, silver and gold – for which a certain level of compliance must be reached across all five sections which are: Worship & Teaching, Buildings, Land, Community & Global Engagement and Lifestyle. Award qualification is based on online surveys which require set amounts of positive completion in order to achieve each level: 25% for bronze, 50% for silver and 75% for gold.

St Mary's Church was registered at the end of August and achieved a Bronze Award straight away which came through in time for a Harvest Festival announcement. You can now find us on the Eco Church map [here](#) with a bronze marker and our award certificate is displayed on the pin board.

In most areas we have already achieved silver level and should be able to qualify for a Silver Award before the end of the academic year and indeed for a Gold Award in due course. Our Silver Award tasks yet to be completed are a Christian Environmental Lifestyle Survey of congregation members (presently ongoing – please join us on [Care for Creation](#), register – linking to St Mary's Church Thorpe! – and complete the survey) and a Churchyard Management Plan (to be mapped and projected for three years in spring 2022).

Care for Creation also feature a 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).

This explains why Eco Church is not simply a box ticking, award hunting exercise – those are only the markers of progression! In reality, it is a learning process towards increasing Environmental Awareness (Creation Appreciation) and Environmental Stewardship (Creation Care), both as Church and as individuals who make up that Church.

We are now working on a proposal for our Eco Church Vision, researching options based on the official survey and resources offered by Eco Church, the Church of England and God's Acre. This proposal will give a blueprint and choices on how to take St Mary's to gold level *and beyond* without undue pressure on resources, financial or in terms of volunteer time.

Petra Hudson

Thorpe Church of England Primary School Report 2021

We are making our way out of restrictions and embracing the freedoms this is giving us. We have also kept some of the changes that have been useful over the last two years, such as some meetings on line. We continue to be incredibly proud of the way our school community has responded to the swift changes that we have had to adapt to.

Our Governors continue to be very supportive and visionary and are an asset to the school. Our Co-Chair of Governors, Mrs Margaret Alderson and Cllr Linda Gillham are both are very experienced governors and work hard for the children at our school. We are lucky to have Mr Bryan Nixon, Head teacher at TESIS on our Governing Body as well as new parent governors and members of our community through our church appointed Foundation Governors.

Fr Damian and I offer **Collective Worship** via Zoom and are planning to start in person worship next week. Our strong **Christian ethos** and values permeate throughout everything we do. Children at our school are very motivated and want to join in with prayers during the school day.

Throughout the last year **the Grace Learning Partnership** has continued to work closely together for school improvement, resources and sharing good practice. We have collaborated on Curriculum improvement as well as lesson observations of teaching and learning.

We are an **inclusive school** where we welcome all children and adults 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. 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.

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**.

Following the Head teacher's visit to The Gateway Primary School, a Christian School in Freetown, **Sierra Leone**, the children are enjoying finding different ways to raise money towards building a toilet block with running water for them.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to let me know.



.Mrs Helen Southgate, Head teacher 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 2021

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 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.

2021 – a year of pandemic many challenges

Combined with covid restrictions and fears around infection (particularly in the run-up to Christmas 2021) and with some of our more mature members having moved away to accommodation further afield (and some gave-up driving) we have seen a drop in attendance. 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 nonetheless, a decrease in income from these people is to be expected. From the start of the pandemic we 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, but we have lost some people along the way.

Church Attendance

It is impossible to make an accurate comparison between 2021, 2020 and 2019 due to the nature of the Covid-19 pandemic and the heavy restrictions which have been placed upon society – the church has in no way been immune to this. For half of 2021 our risk-assessment allowed for 40 people (plus 8 staff) to be present for any individual service; a significant reduction on our 140 capacity. We did all we could to stay open and are thankful for the support of so many in achieving all we did during the last lockdown. It will take some time to recover numbers in Church but we must all be 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

(S) = Sunday Christmas with additional worship/service included in the figures.

STATISTICS FOR MISSION 2015–2021

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Mothering Sunday	194	77	97	157	8	25
Easter Day	183	259	257	249	(closed)	149
Harvest	86	84	106	112	41	79
Advent Carol Services	(new from 2017)	916	1133	1082	181	569
Christmas Eve/Day	697(S)	638	639	627	161	258
<i>Occasional Offices:</i>						
Funerals (Crematorium)	10	9	10	15	20	20
(In Church)	11	11	9	9	9	14
Burial of Ashes	4	5	3	4	1	3
Baptisms	17	22	17	25	3	4
Weddings	9	10	6	6	2	7
Wedding Blessings	2	0	0	1	0	1
Wedding Banns Only	4	2	2	3	2	2
Electoral Roll (Dec year-end)	122	140	142	107	119	118
Average 10am attendance at worship ONLINE (devices) during 2021						59

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 2021 Sunday attendances varied dramatically from over 50 at 10am to just 28. As some joined the electoral roll, we have overall remained relatively level at 118. Considering the national challenge, we must not be complacent. 2021 saw new faces join our regular community, so there is a lot to celebrate amidst the challenges of our time.

In response, we need to do more to encourage committed faith and disciple regular worshippers in view of the continuing and challenging change in wider society. During 2022 our PCC will work on progressing a new Church Development Plan which must prioritise our missional activity; recognising who we are as an inclusive church with a 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 survived the past few years financially sound against all the odds, is a real achievement. Let us all pray for renewed growth in attendances, so we can make up the lost ground, offering 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.

Mission 2022/23

As we renew our Church Development Plan, our PCC set us the challenge of reaching out during 2022 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, and with Vimeo (our broadcaster) we have renewed a relationship allowing us to simultaneously broadcast to Facebook, YouTube and our own website. Truth be told, it remains to be seen what the long-term impact of the pandemic will be upon attendance and involvement and therefore finance.

Thorpe Together Magazine (Including St Mary's Quarterly News)

A smaller version of Thorpe Together has been produced during 2021, in spite of the limitations caused by 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. During the pandemic it was not always physically possible to distribute this to every household in Thorpe Ward. It was however digitally circulated, and printed copies have been sent to those members of our church community who don't have access to the internet. We have continued to produce the quarterly news segment (A5 leaflet) in-house for our church community and this has also been distributed via Thorpe School.

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 2021

General Receipts & Payments

Receipts	2021	2020
	£	£
Regular Giving		
Planned giving	29,545	32,467
Collections and other giving (non gift aid)	14,435	8,809
Collections and other giving (gift aid)	9,134	15,340
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	53,114	56,616
Other Voluntary Receipts		
Donations/In Memoriam	20,164	60
Charities	10	332
Wall boxes & Candles	172	146
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	20,346	538
Receipts from Fund-generating Activities		
Fund-raising Events & Activities	15,272	5,031
Hire of Church and Rutherwyke Room	1,878	2,806
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	17,150	7,837
Receipts from Church Activities		
Fees (Banns, Weddings, Funerals)	15,762	8,629
Refreshments	615	340

Noah's Ark	114	196
Flowers	99	45
Books		15
Sundry (Stall, Cards, Gifts, Refunds etc.)	263	504
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	16,853	9,729

Receipts from Investments

CBF Dividends	489	472
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	489	472

Other Income

Works Account (inter a/c transfers)	14,330	4,677
Education Account (inter a/c transfers)	6,050	1,141
Tax reclaims (2020 Gift Aid)	12,633	11,199
Receipts from insurance		1,943
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	33,013	18,960

Total Receipts

	<u>140,964</u>	<u>94,152</u>
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Payments	2021	2020
	£	£
Church Activities		
Diocesan parish share	54,375	54,395
Parish Costs (Expenses, Travel, Telephone)	1,345	1,635
Organists	1,270	560
Cost of services	3,496	1,825
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	60,486	58,415
Maintenance		
Facilities maint. Cleaning, Fees etc	23,532	11,634
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	23,532	11,634
Church running expenses		
Insurance	2,672	2,619
Gas, Electricity, Water	4,082	3,529
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	6,754	6,148
Administration		
Admin, computer & office supplies	3,564	4,323
Postage	33	72
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	3,597	4,395
Other Costs		
Books	80	172
Music & Subscriptions		302
Charities		305
Parish Fees to Diocese	6,808	5,775

Events & Fund-raising costs	1,666	566
Refreshments	480	141
Marketing	1,161	529
Flowers	167	
Sundry payments (training, misc)	30	
Fixed assets	5,822	
	<hr/>	
	16,214	7,790

Fund Transfers

Transfer to Works Acc	29,543	10,020
Transfer to Education Acc		29
	<hr/>	
	29,543	10,049
	<hr/>	

Total Payments

	<u>140,126</u>	<u>98,431</u>
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Balance (Income less Expenditure)

837

Statement of Assets and Liabilities

2021	2020
£	£

Cash Funds at 31 Dec 2021

Bank: Current Account	1	23,161	22,324
Bank: Business Reserve Account: Education	2	34,308	35,727
Bank: Business Saver: Works	3	25,251	14,663

Investment Assets

CBF: Thorpe St. Mary PCC - value of 822 shares @ £ 23.4181 each on 31/12/21	4	19,249	16,840
		<hr/>	<hr/>
		101,969	89,554

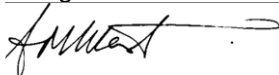
Other Monetary Assets

Estimated refund for 2021 GA donations	5	12,437	11,952
		<hr/>	<hr/>
		12,437	11,952

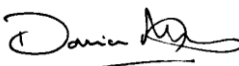
Breakdown of Cash Funds

Unrestricted (1+4+5)		54,847	51,116
Restricted (2+3)		59,559	50,390
		<hr/>	<hr/>
		114,406	101,506

Approved by the PCC on Monday 14th
March 2022
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 2021.

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 14S(S)(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
-

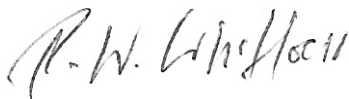
have not been met; or

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

Name: Paul Whitlock

Date: 3/3/2022

Signature:



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 Sunday monthly **11am Healing Ministry**
4th Sunday **12noon Baptism Service**

6pm Compline *monthly – check the newsletter for details.*

Weekdays

Weekday Said Eucharist: 11am Wednesday

Evening Sung Festival Eucharist (Mass) at 7.30pm on select occasions.