



2023

Thatcham Annual Parish Meeting Annual Report APCM 21 April 2024

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

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Thatcham Parochial Church Council 2022/3

<p>Ex Officio Revd. Mark Bennet Revd Nicola Hulks Revd Brenda Harland Revd Angela Brennan</p> <p>Churchwardens Colin Waters (2020) Sue Ball (2023) Mike Watson (2023)</p> <p>Deanery Synod Representatives (to 2026) Chris Watts Catherine Forbes</p>	<p>Elected Lay Members John Hicks (St Barnabas) Bernadette Ellison (St Barnabas) Leanne Fowler (St Barnabas) Alison Dean (St Barnabas) Lourdes Cottam (St Barnabas)</p> <p>Simon Stagg (2021) Chris Druce (2021) Kevin Dunwell (2023) Viv Druce (2023)</p> <p>Co-options Mark Backhouse (Tower Bells) Mike Stevenson (PCC Secretary) Ann Dibble (Safeguarding)</p>

Team Rectors Report

There was a lot going on in 2023 – it started with Nicola on parental leave, and with a sense that we were recovering somewhat from lockdown and getting back on our feet again. Some of the things we do have changed, perhaps for ever – with a special chalice so we can dip wafers and not spread infections – now an option, but surely with us to stay at our communion services.

The summer saw us trying outside services again during August – these were such a blessing during lockdown, but the inconveniences became evident and we will likely only do one of these each year on Bank Holiday weekend and make something special of it.

Marcia Wadham, who had previously been with us on placement, was (finally) ordained to serve in Hungerford, and out two ordinands – Alison and Leanne continued with their training, on track to be ordained on 29 June 2024 – Alison to serve in Walbury Beacon and Leanne in South Newbury (now including Enborne) Somehow our finances held up (just) and we managed to get some of our outstanding work on the building done. Fun was had raising funds for the Organ and that project is going well thanks to Angela and others on the team.

We held Lent groups too and there was a sense of faith being nurtured, and I hope, of the exploration of faith being encouraged – but the main focus of my thinking and action at least was about reconnecting with our wider community. The practices around funerals and weddings have changed because of lockdown, and the number of baptisms has reduced – in all cases numbers have increased from 2022, but are not yet back at pre-pandemic levels. In common with other churches we are seeing less of the families that we used to see (that, if you think about it, has been quite a normal trend as children have grown up) – but the pipeline of replacement families has been rather broken. Work with schools has continued – invisibly to many, but effectively all the same, and that is now strategically important, alongside the family

based initiatives like ABC, Muddy Church, Baby Café and The Nest. And I am now regularly visiting Thornford Park – something Leonard used to do.

With all the modest positives, my main feeling has been of continuing challenge – some core members have moved away, and others have in death moved closer to God – including the longest list of regular members and friends in my time in Thatcham: you will know several of Leonard Onugha, Joan Meechan, Joan Pook, Tony Collie, Joyce Lovelock, Judith Caton, Valerie Muttram, Ron and Rita Christopher and Barbara and John Saunders – it feels as though we will not see their like again – but you, if you are reading this, stand alongside them in service and faith.

We have also seen John Coombs stepping back from visibly active ministry in retirement, and we have started to see some new people stepping up to significant roles – not least our Churchwardens for the year – Sue Ball, Mike Watson and Colin Waters – who have been a great support and encouragement this year – as has Sue Stevenson with her practical assistance and care of the rotas – which with all the various “defections” have become more difficult to fill – though we are seeing a few volunteers stepping forwards. If we each do a little, no-one will have to do a lot.

Special thanks must go to Ann Dibble who has transformed the management of our safeguarding and has started to put our processes on the more formal footing that is now required. We are in a very different place even though there are many (including myself) who have to make sure we are fully on the new way of doing things.

Chris and Ann Watts have kept the accounts and administration alive and active through the year, and though they have been gradually stepping back, they have been gracious enough not to leave us in the lurch over a challenging time: COVID recovery has not been easy, and the many years of service they have given are not easily noted, measured or marked.

And my clergy colleagues have been a pillar of strength – Brenda, Angela, and Nicola all very active and making a difference above and beyond any reasonable call of duty. And of course Marion, whose greatest contribution to my life is as a consistent prayer partner in the mornings at our services of Morning Prayer, and who seems to be working as hard in retirement as the rest of us.

There is much more I could say, and there are many more people to thank – but you will read about them in the other reports, and see just how much is going on. But above all this is praying for God’s blessing on you, as a member of our Church community. Thank you for being part of something special.

Mark Bennet

Parochial Church Council – Background and Proceedings

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

The PCC met at St Mary’s Church six times during 2023/4.

Arrangements were made during 2023 for 47 baptisms (55 in 2022) and 6 (7) weddings. In addition there were 31 (36) funerals (21 with a service at St Mary's, 10 with services at a crematorium or cemetery)

Membership

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

Committees

The PCC operates through a Standing Committee and working groups on Safeguarding and Appeals (Organ and Major Repairs), which met between full meetings of the Council. The Standing Committee is the only Committee required by law; it has power to transact business of the Council between meetings, subject to any decisions made by the PCC.

FINANCE REPORT

Report to the Accounts December 2023

St Mary's General Account (day to day running of church activities) shows an increase of £4,937 in the cumulative deficit from £13,496 to £18,433. This is taking into account £10,654 raised through a fundraising appeal towards running costs including a match funding grant of £5,000 from Greenham Common Good Exchange Scheme.

Regular giving through Standing Orders and The Parish Giving Scheme has been most welcome but the need to attract new regular givers to replace those who have died or moved away is a challenge.

The St Barnabas General Account shows a positive balance of £3,605 at the end of the year.

We again managed to pay the Parish Share (our contribution to the diocese for clergy stipends, housing and pensions) in full (£95,790).

The Parish Share was set at £103,531 for 2024 despite objections from Thatcham that this 7% increase was not achievable.

Income from Services and other activities improved gradually through the year. Further donations were attracted to the Organ Pipedream Repair Project. The total funds available in organ restricted funds is £54,291. A further £4,211 is held in designated accounts. An additional £872 has been raised in 2024 following a concert at St Mary's.

Major repairs were undertaken to the roof and south west wall of St Marys, including replacement of internal areas of lime plaster. Minor repairs were made to tiled areas of aisles and nave floors. The total cost of these works was £47,988 including fees and VAT the bulk of which (£ 35,752) was paid in 2023. The VAT (£7483) has been reclaimed. A grant of £4,000 from the Berkshire Heritage Churches Fund has been awarded and the balance of £1,250 of Architect fees has yet to be paid.

As forecast last May the cost of gas and electricity increase sharply in 2023. The rate of increase over the last three years has been from £2,160; £3,690; and £7,410 in 2023.

The need to increase regular giving is critical, especially if we are to meet the running costs of both churches and pay the Parish Share again in full in 2023. If anyone is thinking of increasing their Stewardship payments during 2023 or joining the Scheme, please speak to the Treasurer or any of the Churchwardens.

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

Investments and Fund Structure

There were no changes to the structure of the St Mary's PCC investment funds during 2022. The value of investments held by the PCC have begun to recover following significant impact on markets of Covid19 and the war in Ukraine.

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

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

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

Thatcham Church of England Charity

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

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

The Church Estate Charity

Charity Commission ref – 00436

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

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

The Rookery Church Fund

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

Bankers: St Mary's PCC - Lloyds Bank plc & St Barnabas - HSBC
Independent Examiners: Tax Avenue, Turnfields Court,
Thatcham Investment Managers:

BlackRock Investment Managers, 12 Throgmorton Avenue London
EC2N 2DL
CCLA, Senator House, One Angel Lane , London EC4R 3AB

A summary of the Accounts is attached at Appendix 2.

Stewardship Secretary's Report – St Mary's.

A total of £76,379 was given through the Stewardship Scheme in 2021 (£69,553 in 2021). This included £24,671 through the Parish Giving Scheme introduced in September 2018. Giving through weekly envelopes was £4,327 and standing order payments were £20,987.

The total of £118,674 received in 2022 was the result of the bequest of £25,000 and a donation of £20,000 referred to on the Finance Report for 2022.

By the end of 2023 there were 21 donors paying by Direct Debits through the Parish Giving Scheme. 31 donors gave to St Mary's through Standing Orders. 10 donors use weekly envelopes. New envelopes have not been ordered for the last two years as the minimum order is now 25 sets. Unused envelopes from previous years will be available for 2024.

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

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

'Donate' facilities have been incorporated into the website for St Mary's and ideas to encourage other ways to enable online payments are in development.

Giving by contactless payments via the GOODBOX at the back of St Mary's increased significantly to £1,830 (£1,462 in 2021).

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

Other bonuses are:

- the donations can be index linked if the donors so choose,
- the donations are paid as a single sum to the parish bank account thus avoiding the checking of multiple pages on Bank Statement entries,
- it reduces the bank charges (currently about £28 per month) for handling cheque or cash donations
- minimising the handling of cash and cheques, and delays in payment to the bank account via the Post Office (necessitated by the closure of the Thatcham branch of Lloyds Bank in August 2022)

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

Chris Watts
Stewardship Secretary

Safeguarding

The Safeguarding Committee have met 3 times since the last Annual meeting and reported regularly to the PCC. The support received has enabled us to make some really good progress. Members of the PCC set the example by completing DBS checks and undertaking the basic and foundation safeguarding training offered by the Church of England. Many volunteers in specific roles are now fully trained in safeguarding and up to date with their DBS checks for the church. Thank you to everyone for recognising the change in the public attitude to safeguarding and the necessity for us to keep up.

Steve Rice and Colin Waters are our id verifiers for the DBS process. Thank you to them both, for their efforts and for ensuring a comparatively straightforward experience for members of either St Mary's or St Barnabas.

Having identified 10 activities involving children or vulnerable adults, we have set out to structure the organisation of these activities so that they are as safe as we can make them for all those involved. This is still a work in progress, but the following key steps have been taken:

- Each of the 10 activities has been allocated a PCC member who is not part of that group. Their task is to get to know the group leader and to help with completing some of the paperwork. We are calling them PCC Link Adviser, because they will be able to inform the PCC when safeguarding documents have been reviewed.
- A database has been developed for the church nationally and made available to us. It will allow us to keep track of volunteers in roles with children or vulnerable adults. This will eventually remove the need to keep such records on paper or in private computers.
- Sue Ball is our Recruiter and, despite having several key posts to fill, she is doing an excellent job in following all 16 steps that 'safer recruitment' demands. We hope that the safeguarding hub i.e. the database mentioned above, will, eventually, reduce the quantity of paper involved. It is a steep learning curve for us all.

My thanks go to all of you for your vigilance. Several matters of concern have been reported through the year. It is the nature of safeguarding that once things are passed on, we do not expect to know the outcome. Rest assured that your input can make a difference.

My particular thanks to the safeguarding committee who have a commitment that has made my job considerably easier and a positive outlook that keeps us all hopeful.

Ann Dibble
Parish Safeguarding Officer

ABC

Wednesday mornings are lively at St Mary's!

Pop into church between 10:30 and 12am and you will see the friendly and informal toddler group run by Brenda and the team of volunteers who welcome pre-school children and their carers, offering refreshments, a variety of play areas, craft, a time to chat.

The morning concludes with a short service, animated talk, often involving props, and ending with prayers. The children are always keen to gather at the altar to sing their familiar songs and dance around.

A highlight of the year is the Crib Service when the children and carers are invited to dress up and be part of the nativity play on Christmas Eve, chaotic, fun and moving, all in one.

Each year we say farewell to children who will be beginning formal education with a special little service and a gift to send them on their way but rest assured, there is a steady stream of new babies arriving to occupy 'baby corner' and become part of their own church. It's wonderful if those babies are brought to St Mary's for baptism.

We witness friendships and support groups blossom among the adults and enjoy our conversations with them in an encouraging and relaxed environment.

The average attendance is upwards of 25 adults and 25 children, with a broad age range as grandparents and even great grandparents attend with their family occasionally. The group is valued by all and the aim is to be open at least 46 weeks each year.

If you think you would like to be involved then do speak to Brenda.

The ABC team.

Children's Ministry.

Val Watts and I are extremely privileged to lead the children's' group during the 10am Sunday service at St. Mary's, meeting on the 1st, 3rd, 4th and 5th (where appropriate) during term time.

So, what do we all get up to?

Well... there's Bible reading, various resources which Val produces from a vast catalogue of books, including the 'Mosaic' series specifically targeted for small groups. Colouring in a weekly worksheet that relates to the Bible story is something the children really seem to enjoy. The youngsters also bring their own ideas and games to share and although there are three at most, they come back each week enthusiastic and ready to join in.

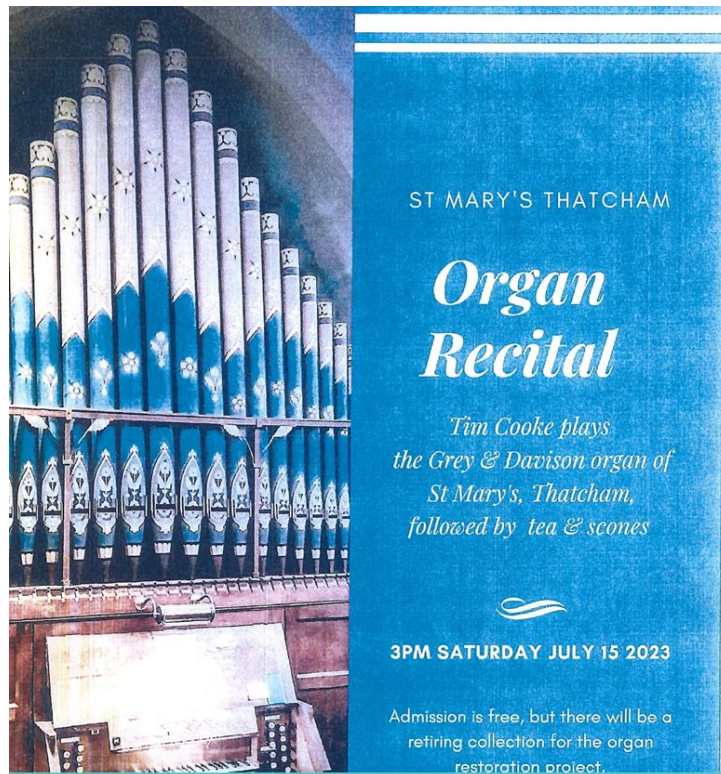
It is of course open to all youngsters, and parents are welcome to sit in if they like.

Christine Rice and The Team

Churchwardens

We would like to give our heartfelt thanks to all the clergy and volunteers, for their hard work in keeping St Mary's & St Barnabas smooth running over the last year.

We have increased the number of Leadership and PCC meetings this year to try and improve the effectiveness of our meetings and running of our churches. Meetings have been well attended.



The Organ

Over the last year we have held successful fund raising events for repair work to be completed on the Church Organ and to repair the roof of the church making us water tight again!

Events include Café & Cabaret, Organ recitals and we have received grants from the Greenham Trust Good Exchange. The majority of the work on the roof has now been completed and church is feeling a little warmer. Hillsdon & Sons Ltd were appointed to carry out much needed work to our church building. There was a significant repair needed to mend the roof and stop the ingress of water, before any more damage was done.

The guttering needed repairing above the south aisle, drying out walls, making good the lime plaster and fixing floor tiles in the main church area.

There have been many musical concerts in the church some of which have been fundraisers as we continue to need money to pay for the day to day running of the church.

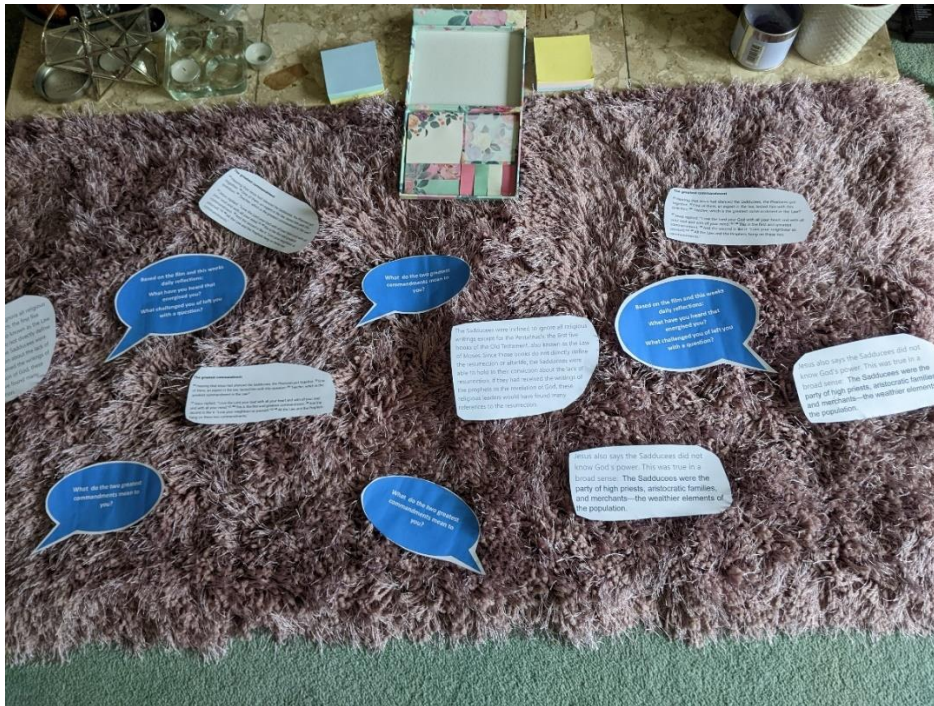
We are appreciative of the role that ABC has in bringing new families to our church.

CAMEO plays an important role in bringing elderly people together in fellowship; we thank very much the volunteers in CAMEO & ABC for their hard work. We have re-introduced prayer helpers in the Chapel after the Sunday 10 am service.

Our services have been slowly getting back to pre-Covid times. However, we need to move on and we are being helped by the Clergy and the Diocese to set a new vision for our Churches.

Lent Groups

We have joined the Oxford Diocese study group for Lent – ‘Come and See the way of love’ Approximately, seventeen have signed up to this as well as a few individuals studying at home.



Things to consider after our Annual Meeting

1. Home study groups – Weekly, Fortnightly, Monthly
2. Working with other churches
3. Developing our mission and vision for St.Mary’s.
4. Invitations issued to families inviting them to our Sunday Morning Activities.

We are aware of the need to review our Parish Share because the way funding is calculated is currently unfair. We struggle each month to pay this bill which means we must look at ways to create more income to sustain and grow our Christian mission in Thatcham. Thank you all for your reports which together highlight the numerous activities in our Churches. Please continue the good work and pray for outreach into the community.

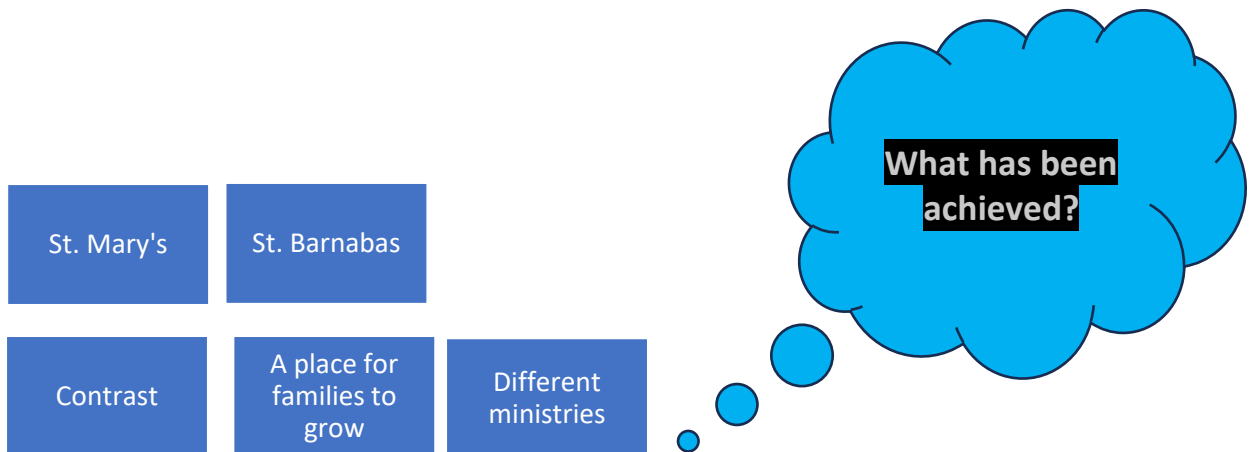
Reflections from the PCC.. ...



How Christ like are we?



We would welcome your thoughts as we look to reinvigorate the church in Thatcham, post pandemic. What would you like to see changed/ tweaked or improved?





So, what will our Churches be like in 5 years time?

Music at St. Mary's

It's been good year for choir. We have sung an anthem at every 10am service apart from August and two Sundays in the year designated as low Sundays and at every Evensong.

We've sung a variety of Anthems from those that are relatively simple to those that more complex, from those that we have been singing for years to those that are new to the choir. Choir numbers remain steady though sadly ill health caused one of our sopranos to retire at least for a while, but we recruited a new voice and Wendy has now been singing with us for some months. We are very lucky to have so many years of experience among us. It makes learning new material really quite easy.

The major festivals over the year were celebrated with, as usual, a range of music. A service for the start of Holy Week took place on Palm Sunday evening led by the choir which was well received.

With the Coronation in May, the choir sang the RSCM suggested anthem with aplomb.

Christmas was slightly different. St Mary's no longer hosts the Hospital Friends service and we were not asked to participate in the switching on of Thatcham lights though some of us did join with the Baptist Church to sing carols on the green. For the first time in many years, St Mary's hosted a traditional carol service which was very well attended by many people from the community and members of the congregation.

As always I am looking for new choir members . We are happy to take young people from age 14. All that is needed is a commitment to the choir, enjoyment of choral singing and

wanting to learn. It's worth pointing out that faith is a journey and that you don't have to have arrived to join the choir. It's an excellent way to explore faith.

We couldn't sing as we do without two people who need particular mention – Alice who is our rehearsal accompanist and Tim who plays for services. They are both invaluable. Thank you.

Many thanks also go to all the members of choir not only for their effort and achievement but for all the other things they do to enhance the music in our worship.

Mary Stagg

Prayer Ministry

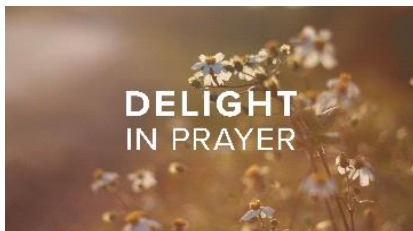
The prayer ministry provides regular meetings for quiet, personal and reflective prayer. The group is a local hub of the Guild of St. John and St. Mary Magdalene and respond to prayers requested from overseas and the local community in Thatcham & surrounding areas. The group is run by Michael Watson, meets every alternate Tuesday and is always encouraging others to join these times of worship.

We have set up a WhatsApp group for prayer requests that anyone can join and introduced an intercessional prayer Initiative for the local community to specifically pray for all those who are suffering and affected by the cost of living crisis. A prayer point has been established at the entrance to the church.

We continue to work with other local church groups which bring together as many as possible from all the churches in Thatcham in order to pray for our town.

Michael Watson

Prayer Ministry Circle



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

Sue Stevenson.

St Barnabas Church

This year has been another great year at St Barnabas, many of us have noticed that there has been a good buzz in the community and we have happily welcomed some new members. We continue to seek new ways to worship together as a community that includes everyone who has found a home with us, of all ages and stages of faith. Our Zoom

community group led by Ben has gone from strength to strength and offers a weekly opportunity for people to explore the Bible in more depth and discuss what this means for their lives.

Our link with Thatcham Park School remains important to us and since Nicola returned from leave weekly assemblies have resumed. As a community we volunteered at the Christmas and Summer fair, providing food and a craft stand. Nicola has also begun a research project in school to explore how storytelling can support children spiritually and several children have already been part of this project which will be ongoing for the next year. Angela has also been visiting school weekly to support the work with children with additional needs in the school. We continue to support the school in celebrating the festivals of the Christian year, whether in school or at St Mary's.

Our Baby Cafe, meeting at the Old Bluecoat School, continues to be a vibrant community where support is offered to parents of young babies. As you will see in the report on ABC, this also continues to thrive under Brenda's leadership. Our work with children is important to us and we are excited to have recently relaunched Muddy Church, now in St Mary's Churchyard. Our opening event attracted around 50 people and we hope that many will come back for our next event in April.

There is much to be thankful for this year at St B's and we look forward to a new year and all that God has in store for us!

Revd Nicola Hulks

Deanery Synod Report

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

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

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

The effects of the pandemic had meant progress on the plan had slowed. Bruce Laurie, Lay Chair of Synod having reviewed the plan in 2021 found it was still wholly relevant to today's needs. It was stressed that this is the Deanery's plan to support and encourage benefices and parishes rather than to direct or impose requirements from the Diocese. Synod had

identified four action groups and work was continuing on putting these into being. These are:

- Finance
- Schools and Education
- Lay Training
- Environment
(Consideration on new housing developments and also communities will be incorporated in due course.)

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

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

The Deanery is run by the Deanery Synod. Like the PCC this is a mixture of clergy and elected lay members, but in the Deanery case the members represent the different parishes. The Deanery Synod elects a standing committee and appoints officers to act as an executive, and to progress the various aspects of its work. It may also receive requests from the Diocese of Oxford or from the National Church to respond to matters of interest. The Deanery Synod can also raise matters of concern and ask for these to be addressed at a Diocesan or national level.

In 2023/4 the Synod considered issues arising from progress on the Living in Love and Faith Report, the Cost of Living Crisis and the value of community hubs and 'Warm Spaces', the reinvigoration of St Mary's Shaw and promotion of the ECO Church strategy

The Deanery Share was paid in full to the Diocese, despite shortfalls from some benefices, by use of the reserve. Two-thirds of the rebate due to the Deanery will be distributed to parishes after further consideration is given to support those parishes in financial difficulty.

Thank you for your support for our clergy members of Synod and our lay members Cath Forbes and myself.

I also note with grateful thanks the support received from our good friend, the late Tony Collie, a long standing member of the Deanery Synod.

Chris Watts

St. Mary's Church Bellringers

We have rung every Sunday over the last year including half muffled on Remembrance Sunday. There was late night ringing for New Year and prior to the Christmas midnight service. We have had a handful of weddings to ring for.

The national highlight of the year was the coronation of King Charles and Queen Camilla and all thirteen members of the band were able to ring on the day including our (at the time) very new recruit Rhiannan who rang totally unassisted for the first time and managed this with her family watching on! A quarter peal attempt for the occasion was unsuccessful but we did manage a pleasing 720.

The board in memory of Ron Christopher was dedicated in July and now hangs in the ringing chamber. We have managed to ring eight bells (or more) on most Sundays and numbers on practice night have varied between six and sixteen. We usually welcome one or more visitors to practice.

The Tuesday peal band have started coming again every two or three months and we have had several visiting bands.

The Guild 8 bell striking competition trophy is currently on display in the ringing chamber as Mark and Rachel were part of the winning band representing the Newbury branch.

A few members of the band have had health problems during the year and Janet was out of action for several months following a broken wrist.

I would like to thank all the band for their support and especially Richard and the team looking after the bells and John for dealing with the monies and accounts.

Finally, we are grateful to the members of the clergy who brave the stairs on a Sunday morning to say belfry prayers with us.

Rachel Backhouse
Tower Captain

Fabric

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

- Spring and autumn clean and clear
- Test lightning conductor
- Test and service Fire Extinguishers
- Service heating boilers
- Tune and minor repairs to organ (noting the Choir manual is not operational)
- Clearing block drains and soakaways
- Major repairs to roof, wall and tiled floors
- Completion of a 5 yearly EICR (Electrical Installation Condition Report)
- Completion of a 2 yearly PAT (portable appliance testing) report
- Repair to the pump to the WC

The Organ Restoration Working Group has continued to work through the implications of repair and restoration of the organ. It has become clear that the scale of the work requires the involvement of a major grant funding source – probably the Heritage Lottery Fund. The HLF undertook in 2023 a full review of its grant making policies and has published revised guidance and application procedure with significant implications for our proposed project.

A temporary protective 'umbrella' has been placed above the organ pipework to protect the instrument from dust and small pieces of debris falling from walls and roof. Minor repairs and application of sealant to roof edge above organ.

The PCC's architect, Christian Randall of Wantage has begun preparation of his second five yearly report on the state of the fabric. In 2018 he listed the regular concerns of clearing gutters and repairs to rainwater downpipes, repairs to stonework and flint facing and ivy on the tower. In addition to the major repairs to roof and walls referred to in the above Finance report he noted:

- significant dampness and deterioration to the plaster on the external walls to north and south aisles,
- rotting of timber thresholds to both north doors.
- a series of minor repairs to stonework

Further improvements are required to the Meeting Room and kitchen. In particular a replacement heating and hot water boiler is required that satisfies the Diocesan guidance which strongly favours a carbon free solution.

There are also warning signs that the church's main heating boiler will need major repair or replacement within the next 2 years.

The PCC has taken the first steps in adopting a Maintenance checklist and reporting process.

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

Chris Watts

Inventory

The Memorial Book has been updated to include the names of all for whom our Ministry team have undertaken a funeral service up to 18 January 2024.

20 copies of Carols for Choirs no. 5 have been donated to the Choir music library.

2 defective electric urns have been disposed of and 1 replacement donated. 1 electric kettle has been replaced. 3 pedal operated recycling bins and a sanitary waste bin have been donated and several plastic bins recycled.

Sewing group and Flowers.

Where to start? Let me give you the history of the Group.

Back in 1998 several ladies were talking about getting together to make something to commemorate the Millenium.

We decided to make a new altar frontal for the chapel, the old one was getting very shabby. We worked together on the design, a grape vine, to represent the church rooted and alive and fruitful in the community. About 8 of us worked on the frontal. The base fabric was bought and the additional materials were collected from our own stocks.

The finished frontal was dedicated in 2000 and I was ordained priest in the September of the same year. If you look on the back of the frontal you will see the list of names of the makers, many of whom have since died. That was just the start of course and the cry was what do we make next. There followed banners, alterations and remaking the white / gold frontal, the purple frontal plus vestments and a new purple frontal for the Chapel.

Alongside this we have made and mended small white surplices for the children in the choir, taken up and down blue cassocks and made white clothes for use at Communion and white corners for the altars.

There have also been the fun things, soft toys, patchwork covers, cushions, blankets etc. etc.

Our latest project was the new red frontal. Now we are making things for sale later this year.

We meet on Mondays at one of our group's houses where we relax, drink tea, eat biscuits – oh, and sew, knit or crochet.

Come and See

Marion and team.

'Little Churches'

I am very much in debt to those who are part of this vital ministry.

Over the last year we have seen attendance fall and rise across the three locations that host a monthly service of Holy Communion.

Faithful members of St. Mary's congregation volunteer to bring God's message of love and hope to those who, for one reason or another, are not able to attend church on a Sunday.

Nevil Court

This has seen numbers decline and it has been decided by the one remaining resident who comes that this service should no longer continue for the time being. I will, of course, keep the situation under review and if there is interest, I will reinstate.

Last year, members of St. Mary's choir hosted a carol service which was, by all accounts very successful and generated a goodly donation towards the church coffers.

Joan Collins assists with this service.

Ferndale Court

Sees three or four folk who attend regularly and I am grateful to Emma Watts who provides valuable assistance to me and conversation to others.

Thatcham Court

This has proved to be the most successful venue in terms of attendees.

Most months we welcome between 15 and 20 residents. This home also hosted a carol service which was also well attended.

Joan takes the lead here and I provide assistance.

Steve Rice

West Berkshire Community Hospital

This service of about 45 minutes sees a number of in-patients each week and is led by the Rev. Dr. Simon Thorn who is also chaplain to the hospital in Wokingham.

Due to other commitments, I am not able to attend the service so regularly but St. Mary's is very well represented by Joan Collins, Barbara Carwardine and Margaret Goodhead, all of whom support Simon by fetching and returning patients after the service, reading and leading the prayers.

Members of other churches in the area also attend which makes for a lively ecumenical time of fellowship. Individual prayer is offered and available to anyone and volunteers also take the opportunity to chat with those who might not otherwise see a visitor that day.

There is always a need for more help so if you are reading this and are interested, please get in touch.

Steve Rice

Prayer ministry

Every Tuesday fortnight at 6pm, Michael Watson leads a short service of about half an hour using litany and prayer.

We are privileged to pray for our brothers and sisters overseas whose prayers are emailed to Michael and also for ourselves and those things on our hearts and minds.

This is a beautiful time held in St. Ann's chapel – quiet, reflective and peaceful.

As Michael frequently iterates, everyone is most welcome to join us.

We are also privileged to pray for anyone after the 10am Sunday service. Again, this is held in St. Ann's chapel and two people are there each week to listen and to pray with those who come.

Steve Rice

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

There have been many changes this year, Margaret left for family reasons and Ann and Roger moved to the Marlborough area leaving a big hole in the organizing team. We were very fortunate that Carol and Max Dowding stepped in to help with the driving and setting up of each meeting. Carol is also an excellent cake maker and joined our now substantial rota of willing helpers. Our sincere thanks to them for stepping in so ably and Theresa and I would also like to thank all our members for their support and cakes during this difficult year.

A first for us was the addition of two students from Kennet School this winter term, on work experience. They helped where they could but they said they gained most from interacting and talking with the elderly members and were surprised at how good we all were at games and quizzes!

We covered a wide range of activities and entertainments, Hand bell ringing, Local comic poet, Saxophonist, local choir visit and very interestingly a member of the WI talking about her space walk experience with Elon Musk!! Locally grown activities include quizzes, craft, games, bingo, singing, beetle drive, etc..



We also had our usual termly celebrations of summer tea party, fish and chip lunch, Halloween, Christmas party and an extra tea with special cake in January for CAMEO's 10th Anniversary and a very special send off to Ann and Roger in September.

The group meets every Monday afternoon with activities from 2.00 pm until tea and cake is served. We currently have a regular membership of 25 to 30 and meet every week and although we are limited in space we are able to take new members. We are a very friendly group so if you know of anybody who is lonely or bereaved please let them know they can be sure of a warm welcome.

Viv Druce – 820718
Theresa Lucas - 635923

The Thatcham Parochial Charities

This ancient charity has continued to play a significant role, both in the life of our churches and in support of local people in need, this year. The rector and our three churchwardens are ex officio members of the Board of Trustees and I (Chris Druce) am currently a representative of Thatcham Town Council and Chairman of Trustees. Other members of the Trustees Board are drawn from representatives of other local councils in Cold Ash, Greenham and Midgham. We cover the area of the 'Ancient Borough of Thatcham', encompassing modern Thatcham, together with Cold Ash, Midgham and Greenham.

The trustees have a wide remit of responsibility, covering various needs of our local community. This year, two of our churchwardens stood down and two new people, therefore, were elected as churchwardens and, as such, are now serving on our Trustee Board, immediately becoming involved with the work of the charities and involvement with the residents and organisations within our local community. Our Cold Ash parish council representative trustee also retired after 55 years of dedicated service to the charities. The occasion was marked at his final meeting in December.

There are 2 principal charities – the 'Thatcham Parochial Almshouse Charity' and 'Thatcham Relief in Need Charity'.

The Almshouses – The first almshouses in Thatcham were established by Thomas Loundyes, in 1446 AD. Some of the present almshouse flats, in Chapel Street, are named after him. To qualify for accommodation, applicants should be 'of a certain age', a resident in the Ancient Borough and can demonstrate a housing need.

We have 14 flats in all. During the year we said a sad farewell to two very long-standing residents. One lady passed away in the latter half of 2023 & not long after, her neighbour moved out of her almshouse accommodation & into more sheltered accommodation. These neighbours had created a very happy environment within their community & are missed by everyone. This means that currently, there are 2 vacant flats are within the oldest almshouse building, necessitating much redecoration, prior to new residents taking up residency. The trustees are currently in the final stages of appointing the new residents.

The Trustees agreed unanimously not to increase the weekly maintenance contributions (rent equivalent) this year & there continues to be no increase since 2017. The variable energy costs still present a challenge & trustees are very keen not to increase the heating and lighting contributions after the last increase in 2022, striving always to avoid unnecessary increases in cost to our residents.

Relief in Need Charity –

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

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

During the year, the charity made grants in excess of £15,000. In addition to individual needs, including a new mobility scooter, the charity made a donation towards playground equipment for young children and contributed to the local newspaper's "over 80's Christmas food-parcel" fund. So, as you can see, it has been another eventful year. If you know of anyone who may need a helping hand, or a piece of equipment otherwise unaffordable, do, please, have a word with me, Mark, or one of the churchwardens.

Thankyou – Chris Druce

MISSIONS



Thatcham Christian Aid Committee

As ever, a very big thank you for the money you have helped raise to give people in the developing world the chance of a better life.

This financial year (October '22 to September '23) we raised over £3,500 for Christian Aid – a very creditable effort given the continuing demands on people's wallets, if still down on pre-pandemic levels.

Following on from that, we have held another Beetle Drive and Fish & Chip supper, and two Lent Lunches (one at St Mary's on Good Friday).

We are now gearing up for Christian Aid Week – which runs from 12th to 18 th May this year, and is where we raise most of the money. This year's appeal is for Burundi, for a province where 70% of people live in poverty, and 52% of children are underweight. Most are reliant on finding casual work each day, in order to buy food for that evening, and many go to bed hungry. The money raised will provide support to set up small businesses, so people can work towards a better future for their families.

You can help by:

- Taking Gift Aid envelopes in Church, filling them yourself, and passing on spares to friends and family (a congregation member raised £60 that way last year).
- Volunteering for an hour from 10am-4pm on Saturday 18 th May at our Collection Point in St Mary's Church porch.
- Giving donations for coffee and cake after the Service on Sunday 19 th May - or even baking a cake yourself.

In addition, we are delighted that Phil Evans (Christian Aid's Home Counties Region Officer for Church Engagement & Fundraising) will preach for us on Sunday 12th May, and show the new Christian Aid Week video after the Service – please do come and be inspired, and invite your friends too, all are welcome.

We still hope to add a supermarket collection and carol singing later this year, but are still looking for venues. This will be greatly helped by the new contactless-giving phone App.

We are a small Committee, and always welcome new members. However, we are particularly reliant on Church members volunteering at our events. We would like to particularly thank everyone at St Mary's who has helped over the past year - cooking soup, baking cakes, washing up, collecting, or even just going to events, donating, and praying. As ever, the needs remain huge, so please give if you can, and if not do please continue to pray.

Sarah Bennet Chair,
Thatcham Christian Aid Committee

Children's Society and USPG

The use of collecting boxes and globes has significantly declined in recent years, probably as a result in the reduction in the use of coins. Support for Missions has increasingly transferred to event such as the ever popular Cream Teas and to direct donations including those made online. *Collecting boxes continue to be available however for anyone wanting to support Missions in this way.*

£303.53 was donated to the Children's Society in 2023. The money goes to help the Society and its network of centres and projects to deliver specialist services for children who face disaster and danger in their daily lives; children who are unable to find the support they need elsewhere.

USPG

£462.27 was donated to USPG in 2023. USPG is working with the Anglican Church in Zambia to develop healthcare and leadership programmes that will have an impact on the life and outreach of the church and community. Support was given for training of specialists at the Hospital of St Francis at Katete and other health projects in Zambia.

If you would like to help with either of these Missions please speak to Ann Watts (864567).

Ann Watts

West Berks Foodbank



The continuing pandemic and then cost of living increases have meant that a significant number of people used West Berks Foodbank (WBFB) during 2023. Single adults, couples and families contacted the Crisis FoodLine for help and support.

The Foodbank no longer collects donations from St Mary's. Donations continue to be made, however and thanks is due to Matt Evans for regular transfer of these to the depot at Greenham particularly at Harvest and Christmas.

WBFB's Foodbank Centres in Thatcham, Hungerford and Burghfield and Mortimer continue to experience increasing need for support. The hybrid operational model is also well used in responding to requests for food deliveries to clients unable to get to a Foodbank Centre.

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

Rainbows (Girlguiding at St. Mary's)



Two separate groups of Rainbows (5-7 year olds) meet at St Mary's on Tuesday and Friday evenings to do all sorts of things from game and crafts to pamper evenings and escape rooms.

If there is anyone who would like to volunteer to help with the Rainbows of Girlguiding please contact Julie, julie@dunwell.org or www.girlguiding.org.uk/

Connect

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

Julie Dunwell

Service Support Teams

We have continued to operate a scaled down version of the rota during the year, not quite getting back to normal but doing what we're comfortable with. Thank you to everyone who supported Sunday services, baptisms, weddings and funerals by reading, leading prayers, handing out books, making people welcome, operating IT equipment to enable those at home to participate in worship. Additional help would be very welcome in any of the teams. Just get in touch.

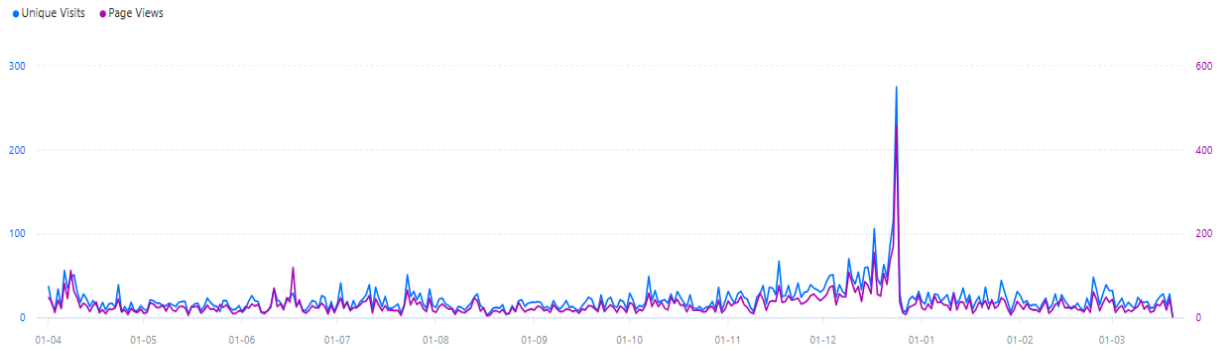
Sue Stevenson

St Mary's Church Website

There has been little change in the structure and management of the web site. The content remains fairly static with most of the updates being the Bulletin, Connect, What's On and the Choir schedule.

The following chart shows the number of unique visits and the number of page views over the period 1-April-2023 to 24-Feb-2024. Activity peaked on 24-Dec-2023 with over twice as many unique visits compared to 2023 with an average of 2.5 pages accessed per visit. The overall activity throughout the year was more evenly spread.

The peak activities occur in the Easter and Christmas periods. The information that is shown seems to suggest that many users know what they need and go straight to the required page.



The traffic breakdown is shown in the chart below



As always, the web site is wholly reliant on its content from all those who are directly and indirectly involved with St. Mary’s and who produce information for general consumption and those who organise events. Compared to the previous year, the number of unique visits has increased and the average number of pages viewed per visit has also increased. The web site is the public face of St. Mary’s and needs to reflect the life of the church community and be up-to-date.

An exercise to review the web site content was conducted. There were 16 contributors covering 36 pages. The response was disappointing with only 25% of the contributors replying. The web site potentially has pages that are out of date and should therefore be removed.

Grateful thanks are given to all active contributors. Please keep the information flowing.



Minutes of the APCM meeting of the Thatcham Parochial Church Council held at St Mary's Church on 21st May 2023.

In attendance: Mary Baker, Sue Ball, Judith Bennet, Revd Mark Bennet (Chair), Sarah Bennet, Revd Angela Brennan, Paul Bullock, Joan Collins, John Collins, Mike Collins, John Coombs, Alison Dean, Ann Dibble, Doreen Dines, Chris Druce, Viv Druce, Julie Dunwell, Kevin Dunwell, Maggie Fidler, Marion Fontaine, Revd Brenda Harland, Debbie Harley, Michael Harley, Christine Rice, Steve Rice, John Robinson, Margaret Robinson, Mary Stagg, Simon Stagg, Lynne Starr, Mike Stevenson, Susan Stevenson, Colin Waters, Debbie Waters, Mike Watson, Ann Watts, Chris Watts, Emma Watts

Apologies: Tony Collie, Jeremy Cottam, Lourdes Cottam, Bernadette Ellison, Cath Forbes, Leanne Fowler, John Hicks, Pam Hicks

---oOo---

Mark Bennet opened the meeting with a prayer.

Minute No. **APCM** /

No.	Minutes / Notes	Action
1	<i>Minutes Previous APCM</i> The minutes of the APCM of the 29 th May 2022 were agreed as a correct record and signed by Mark Bennet.	
2	<i>Matters Arising</i> None	
3	<i>Fabric Log Book</i> The fabric log book for the year was accepted as a correct record and signed by Mark Bennet.	
3a	It was noted that there was no hot water in the kitchen or the toilets. Chris Watts explained that the heating system works but the component that supplies hot water to the taps is not functioning. Due to the age of the boiler, it is very unlikely that it can be repaired and a replacement unit will be required. The standing committee will address this issue.	
4	<i>Safeguarding</i> Ann Dibble provided an update and current status of Safeguarding. Everyone should do the basic on-line training as anyone could be the first person approached. DBS checks and further training will continue to be performed.	

No.	Minutes / Notes	Action				
5	<p>Parish Organisations</p> <p>Paul Bullock will be stepping down from his role. A replacement is being sought.</p>					
6	<p>Electoral Roll</p> <p>Chris Watts said that there are 178 people on the Electoral Roll. The previous count was 179. The Electoral Roll is due for review in 2025.</p>					
7	<p>Inventory</p> <p>The inventory was presented. Chris Watts explained that a photo record of key items is now required by the insurers. Mark Bennet said that the inventory will have to be formally transferred to the Church Wardens.</p>					
8	<p>Financial Accounts</p> <p>Chris Watts presented the financial accounts which are awaiting formal verification. The financial situation seems to be resilient but is still not in the "black".</p> <p>The meeting wished to thank Pam Broads' family for the bequest of £25K. A further £20K has also been donated. This money has been ring-fenced in the Fabric Fund.</p> <p>It was noted that there has been no income from advertising in Connect, as very few copies are now printed because most people receive an electronic copy.</p>					
8a	<p>It was proposed that the Standing Committee will review the report.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="579 1261 994 1350"> <tr> <td>Proposed</td> <td>Chris Watts</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Seconded</td> <td>Paul Bullock</td> </tr> </table> <p>The meeting approved the proposal.</p>	Proposed	Chris Watts	Seconded	Paul Bullock	
Proposed	Chris Watts					
Seconded	Paul Bullock					
8b	<p>It was also proposed that the <i>Tax Avenue</i> be reappointed as the Independent Examiner for the accounts.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="579 1541 994 1630"> <tr> <td>Proposed</td> <td>Chris Watts</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Seconded</td> <td>Paul Bullock</td> </tr> </table> <p>The meeting approved the proposal.</p>	Proposed	Chris Watts	Seconded	Paul Bullock	
Proposed	Chris Watts					
Seconded	Paul Bullock					
9	<p>Deanery Synod</p> <p>Mary Stagg and Tony Collie stated that they wish to stand down from their rolls.</p> <p>Kath Forbes and Chris Watts will continue with their roll.</p>					

No.	Minutes / Notes	Action																														
10	<p>PCC Members</p> <p>The following people were accepted for the PCC for St. Mary's</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="486 481 1102 573"> <tr> <td data-bbox="486 481 683 524">Judith Bennet</td> <td data-bbox="683 481 874 524">Proposed</td> <td data-bbox="874 481 1102 524">Mark Bennet</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="486 524 683 573"></td> <td data-bbox="683 524 874 573">Seconded</td> <td data-bbox="874 524 1102 573">Steve Rice</td> </tr> </table> <table border="1" data-bbox="486 698 1102 790"> <tr> <td data-bbox="486 698 683 741">Kevin Dunwell</td> <td data-bbox="683 698 874 741">Proposed</td> <td data-bbox="874 698 1102 741">Mike Watson</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="486 741 683 790"></td> <td data-bbox="683 741 874 790">Seconded</td> <td data-bbox="874 741 1102 790">???</td> </tr> </table> <table border="1" data-bbox="486 916 1102 1008"> <tr> <td data-bbox="486 916 683 958">Mary Stagg</td> <td data-bbox="683 916 874 958">Proposed</td> <td data-bbox="874 916 1102 958">Simon Stagg</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="486 958 683 1008"></td> <td data-bbox="683 958 874 1008">Seconded</td> <td data-bbox="874 958 1102 1008">Mike Warson</td> </tr> </table> <table border="1" data-bbox="486 1133 1102 1225"> <tr> <td data-bbox="486 1133 683 1176">Steve Rice</td> <td data-bbox="683 1133 874 1176">Proposed</td> <td data-bbox="874 1133 1102 1176">Ann Watts</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="486 1176 683 1225"></td> <td data-bbox="683 1176 874 1225">Seconded</td> <td data-bbox="874 1176 1102 1225">Emma Watts</td> </tr> </table> <table border="1" data-bbox="486 1350 1102 1442"> <tr> <td data-bbox="486 1350 683 1393">Viv Druce</td> <td data-bbox="683 1350 874 1393">Proposed</td> <td data-bbox="874 1350 1102 1393">Chris Druce</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="486 1393 683 1442"></td> <td data-bbox="683 1393 874 1442">Seconded</td> <td data-bbox="874 1393 1102 1442">Sarah Bennet</td> </tr> </table>	Judith Bennet	Proposed	Mark Bennet		Seconded	Steve Rice	Kevin Dunwell	Proposed	Mike Watson		Seconded	???	Mary Stagg	Proposed	Simon Stagg		Seconded	Mike Warson	Steve Rice	Proposed	Ann Watts		Seconded	Emma Watts	Viv Druce	Proposed	Chris Druce		Seconded	Sarah Bennet	
Judith Bennet	Proposed	Mark Bennet																														
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Viv Druce	Proposed	Chris Druce																														
	Seconded	Sarah Bennet																														
10a	<p>The following people have been accepted for the PCC for St. Barnabas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alison Dean • John Hicks • Kath Forbes • Lourdes Cottam 																															
11	CTiT																															

AOB

No.	Minutes / Notes	Action
1	<p><i>Ascension Day</i></p> <p>Debbie Harley mentioned that the Ascension Day service was appreciated and very much enjoyed and asked if it could be held later in the day and not at 7:00 am.</p> <p>Mark Bennet replied that the time was to enable people who worked could attend yet still get to work. However, he would review the timing of the service.</p>	MB
2	<p><i>Lent Groups</i></p> <p>Joan Collins asked if a future Lent Group could be held in the afternoon and be better publicised. Mark Bennet replied that request this would be looked at.</p>	MB
3	<p><i>Communion Cup</i></p> <p>Sarah Bennet raised the idea of returning to the common Communion Cup instead of intinction.</p> <p>After a general discussion, Mark Bennet replied that there was a need to carefully consider the options and the needs and preferences of the congregation.</p>	
4	<p><i>Parish Away / Quite Day</i></p> <p>Debbie Harley asked if a Parish Away / Quite Day was planned.</p> <p>Mark Bennet said that this was being considered.</p>	
5	<p><i>Evening Services</i></p> <p>The meeting wished to thank Mark Bennet for special evening services. These were enjoyed and appreciated.</p>	
6	<p><i>Outside / Open-Air Services</i></p> <p>Simon Stagg asked if Outside / Open Air Services were planned similar to the services that were held during "lock-down".</p> <p>Mark Bennet replied that this was being considered for the month of August.</p>	

The meeting was closed with a prayer.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST. MARY'S, THATCHAM, BERKSHIRE

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER 2023

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
INCOMING RESOURCES					
Incoming resources from donors	104,470	0	0	104,470	147,884
Other voluntary incoming resources	18,548	1,154	0	19,702	14,837
Income from investments	3,770	0	0	3,770	2,221
Income from charitable and ancillary trading	21,121	0	0	21,121	21,057
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES	147,909	1,154	0	149,063	185,999
RESOURCES EXPENDED					
Grants and Special Collections	1,197	0	0	1,197	901
Activities relating to the work of the Church	173,313	0	0	173,313	129,379
Church Management and administration	8,559	(1,908)	0	6,650	6,852
Transfers	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED	183,068	(1,908)	0	181,160	137,131
NET INCOMING RESOURCES	(35,159)	3,062	0	(32,097)	48,867
Gains on investment assets:					
on disposal	0	0	0		0
on revaluation	0	11,509	0	11,509	(2,977)
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS	(35,159)	14,571	0	(20,588)	45,890
BALANCES B/FWD 1 JANUARY	64,982	116,147	169,535	364,848	318,958
BALANCES C/FWD 31 DECEMBER	29,823	130,719	169,535	344,261	364,848

Thattham Team Ministry

Profit & Loss

January through December 2023

11:11 AM

28/02/24

Accrual Basis

	<u>Jan - Dec 23</u>	<u>Jan - Dec 22</u>
Ordinary Income/Expense		
Income		
3000 · General Income		
3100 · Donor income		
3110 · Service Collections		
3112 · Goodbox	1,829.93	1,462.49
3113 · Petty Cash	-3.93	-103.62
3110 · Service Collections - Other	5,540.74	5,618.85
Total 3110 · Service Collections	7,366.74	6,977.72
3120 · Stewardship		
3121 · Envelopes	4,326.90	5,880.70
3122 · PGS	24,670.69	23,086.98
3123 · Standing Orders	20,987.00	21,417.00
3124 · Tax reclaimed	21,876.83	15,579.88
3125 · Donations	2,622.62	26,131.92
3126 · Bequests	100.00	25,937.05
3127 · Share Rebate	1,795.34	635.85
3128 · Stripe Parish Buying	0.00	4.94
Total 3120 · Stewardship	76,379.38	118,674.32
3100 · Donor income - Other	0.00	65.00
Total 3100 · Donor income	83,746.12	125,717.04
3210 · Other voluntary Income		
3220 · Mission		
3221 · Childrens' Society	303.53	360.90
3222 · Christian Aid	0.00	5.00
3223 · USPG	462.27	333.18
Total 3220 · Mission	765.80	699.08
3230 · St Barnabas - Share	5,500.00	6,800.00
3240 · Gifts / Presentations	-2.00	122.00
3250 · Grants Youth Work	0.00	1,587.71
3251 · Grants general	12,284.13	1,745.59
3260 · Curate Hsg - Rent	1,153.89	5,470.05
Total 3210 · Other voluntary Income	19,701.82	16,424.43
3310 · Investment Income		
3315 · Investment Income	3,023.78	2,220.87
3310 · Investment Income - Other	746.07	0.00
Total 3310 · Investment Income	3,769.85	2,220.87
3410 · Charity and Trading		
3415 · BRF income	164.45	209.30
3420 · Fees		
3422 · Funerals	9,929.00	9,274.00
3426 · Wedding	5,382.00	5,140.00
Total 3420 · Fees	15,311.00	14,414.00
3428 · Printing / Photocopying	150.30	86.26
3430 · Functions / Activities	395.58	1,313.75
3440 · Mast Rental	5,100.00	5,100.00
3450 · Altar Books	0.00	-66.19
Total 3410 · Charity and Trading	21,121.33	21,057.12
3510 · Building / Equipment Income		
3520 · Hall Hire	1,896.00	1,325.00
3530 · Other B/E income	864.16	1,260.17
3536 · Organ Appeal	6,361.61	7,890.26
Total 3510 · Building / Equipment Income	9,121.77	10,475.43
3610 · Choir Income		
3620 · Choir Fees	240.00	240.00
Total 3610 · Choir Income	240.00	240.00
3710 · St Barnabas Income	11,362.33	9,811.28
Total 3000 · General Income	149,063.22	185,946.17
Total Income	149,063.22	185,946.17
Expense		
4001 · General Expense		
4010 · Grants & Special Collection		

	<u>Jan - Dec 23</u>	<u>Jan - Dec 22</u>
4011 · Missions		
4012 · Berkshire Churches Trust	0.00	10.00
4013 · Childrens' Society	303.53	360.90
4014 · USPG	462.27	333.18
4016 · Christian Aid	131.25	0.00
4019 · Other grants	200.00	100.00
Total 4011 · Missions	1,097.05	804.08
4021 · Presentations	100.00	97.00
Total 4010 · Grants & Special Collection	1,197.05	901.08
4030 · Work of the Church		
4031 · Ministry		
4032 · Parish Share	95,790.42	88,869.33
4033 · Clergy Expenses	104.99	347.56
4034 · Youth work	377.88	1,482.86
4035 · Function & Activities	354.56	570.11
4036 · Fees (ODBF)	6,041.00	7,598.00
4036/1 · Fees (Clergy)	557.00	142.00
4037 · Bank Account Charges	316.83	404.98
4038 · BRF expenses	219.60	257.70
4041 · Curate Training		
4042 · Curate expenses	0.00	75.00
4043 · Curate Housing	279.82	374.78
4041 · Curate Training - Other	-2,188.02	0.00
Total 4041 · Curate Training	-1,908.20	449.78
4031 · Ministry - Other	0.00	50.00
Total 4031 · Ministry	101,854.08	100,172.32
4051 · Church running costs		
4052 · Utilities		
4053 · Electricity	4,708.48	2,079.04
4054 · Gas	2,701.72	1,611.38
4055 · Water	265.20	314.94
4056 · Telephone / Broadband	720.00	720.00
Total 4052 · Utilities	8,395.40	4,725.36
4057 · Insurance	5,149.71	4,918.41
4058 · Professional Fees	4,960.00	4,510.00
Total 4051 · Church running costs	18,505.11	14,153.77
4061 · Upkeep of Services		
4062 · Altar	538.09	753.72
Total 4061 · Upkeep of Services	538.09	753.72
6510 · Choir expenses		
6524 · RSCM	127.00	110.00
6526 · CCLI Copyright	248.00	231.00
Total 6510 · Choir expenses	375.00	341.00
Total 4030 · Work of the Church	121,272.28	115,420.81
4070 · Administration		
4072 · Copier	733.33	722.04
4073 · Stationery	555.03	899.51
4074 · Subscriptions	10.00	0.00
4076 · Audit	954.00	882.00
4077 · Administrator	0.00	2,287.45
4078 · General Admin	75.00	144.00
4079 · Memorial Book	0.00	654.12
Total 4070 · Administration	2,327.36	5,589.12
Total 4001 · General Expense	124,796.69	121,911.01
5001 · Building Expense		
5010 · Repairs	944.34	119.40
5020 · Fixed Equipment		
4025 · Organ tuning & minor repair	315.08	291.74
4026 · Organ Appeal & Major Repair	5,541.16	180.00
Total 5020 · Fixed Equipment	5,856.24	471.74
5040 · Equipment repair & replacement	1,318.32	3,264.26
5070 · Projects		
5074 · South west wall	35,752.00	1,250.00
Total 5070 · Projects	35,752.00	1,250.00
Total 5001 · Building Expense	43,870.90	5,105.40
7010 · Bells		
7020 · Projects		
7021 · Air Conditioning	144.00	0.00
7020 · Projects - Other	0.00	2,000.00
Total 7020 · Projects	144.00	2,000.00
Total 7010 · Bells	144.00	2,000.00
8001 · St Barnabas payments	12,348.60	8,114.83
Total Expense	181,160.19	137,131.24

	Jan - Dec 23	Jan - Dec 22
Net Ordinary Income	-32,096.97	48,814.93
Other Income/Expense		
Other Income		
9000 · Unrealised revaluation		
9001 · revaluation CBF Bells 3	3,336.43	-2,640.44
9002 · revaluation CBF Bells 2	7.49	-33.13
9003 · revaluation BLK Bell COIF	2,626.12	0.00
9004 · revaluation BLK Organ (desig'd)	321.17	-4.05
9005 · revaluation BLK Organ (res'd)	3,853.30	-48.60
9006a · revaluation Rookery	1.50	-23.48
9007 · revaluation TCE Charishare	140.25	-227.68
9008 · revaluation Thatch02 CharBond	277.42	-3,406.53
9009 · revaluation Thatch02 Charishare	945.60	0.00
Total 9000 · Unrealised revaluation	11,509.28	-6,383.91
Total Other Income	11,509.28	-6,383.91
Other Expense		
8002 · St Barnabas account correction	0.00	0.20
Total Other Expense	0.00	0.20
Net Other Income	11,509.28	-6,384.11
Profit for the Year	-20,587.69	42,430.82

Thattham Team Ministry
Balance Sheet
 As of 31 December 2023

11:25 AM

28/02/24

Accrual Basis

	<u>31 Dec 23</u>	<u>31 Dec 22</u>
ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Cash at bank and in hand		
1001 · PCC Thattham		
1002 · General Fund		
1002/1 · Running Costs Greenham G Exchan	10,654	0
1002 · General Fund - Other	(29,087)	(13,496)
Total 1002 · General Fund	(18,433)	(13,496)
1003 · Fabric	45,557	77,061
1004 · Organ (Designated)	401	362
1005 · Organ (Restricted)		
1005/1 · Organ Appeal Greenham Good Exch	8,578	8,015
Total 1005 · Organ (Restricted)	8,578	8,015
1006 · Choir	144	191
1007 · Childrens Work		
1007/1 · Baby Cafe Greenham G Exchange	1,563	0
1007 · Childrens Work - Other	5	5
Total 1007 · Childrens Work	1,568	5
1008 · Curate (Hsg/Expenses)	9,778	6,716
1009 · Bell Maintenance	115	259
Total 1001 · PCC Thattham	47,708	79,113
1050 · St Barnabas	3,605	4,591
1052 · St Barnabas - Set Up	90	90
2101 · Vicar & Churchwardens Treasurer	2,524	2,345
2102 · Vicar & Churchwardens Instant	1,230	1,114
Total Cash at bank and in hand	55,157	87,253
Other Current Assets		
2001 · Investment		
2005 · 47a Station Road	76,339	76,339
2010 · CBF Bell Maintenance 3	29,889	26,552
2020 · CBF Bell Maintenance 2	241	234
2030 · BLK C of E Charity COIF Perp	31,155	28,528
2050 · BLK Organ Fund (Designated)	3,810	3,489
2060 · BLK Organ Fund (Restricted)	45,713	41,860
2070 · Rookery Church Fund	92	91
2071 · Rookery Fund (Lloyds)	149	149
2090 · Thattham Church Estate	3,068	2,928
2093 · Thatc02 BR Char UK Bond	14,956	14,678
2094 · Thatc02 BR Char UK Equity	70,114	69,168
Total 2001 · Investment	275,526	264,016
Total Other Current Assets	275,526	264,016
Total Current Assets	330,683	351,269
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>330,683</u>	<u>351,269</u>
LIABILITIES & EQUITY		
Capital and Reserves		
1010 · Share Capital Account	304,730	304,730
3200 · Unrestricted Net Assets	46,538	4,108
Profit for the Year	(20,588)	42,431
Shareholder funds	330,680	351,269
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	<u>330,680</u>	<u>351,269</u>

THATCHAM PCC
Year ended 31 December 2023

Unrestricted funds	Total	General	Organ	Fabric	Youth	Choir	St B
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
INCOMING RESOURCES							
Incoming resources from donors	104,470	83,746	6,362	2,760	0	240	11,362
Other voluntary incoming resources	18,548	18,548					
Income from investments	3,770	3,770					
Income from charitable and ancillary trading	21,121	21,121					
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES	147,909	127,185	6,362	2,760	0	240	11,362
RESOURCES EXPENDED							
Grants and Special Collections	1,197	1197					0
Activities relating to the work of the Church	173,313	122572		38015	378		12349
Church Management and administration	8,559	2327	5856			375	
Transfers	0						
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED	183,068	126,096	5,856	38,015	378	375	12,349
NET INCOMING RESOURCES	(35,159)	1,089	505	(35,255)	(378)	(135)	(986)

Restricted funds	Total	Bells	Curates
INCOMING RESOURCES			
Incoming resources from donors	0		
Other voluntary incoming resources	1,154		1,154
Income from investments	0		
Income from charitable and ancillary trading	0		
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES	1,154	0	1,154
RESOURCES EXPENDED			
Grants and Special Collections	0		
Activities relating to the work of the Church	0		0
Church Management and administration	(1,908)		(1,908)
Transfers	0		
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED	(1,908)	0	(1,908)
NET INCOMING RESOURCES	(754)	0	(754)
Gains on investment assets:			
on disposal			
on revaluation	11,509		11,509
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS	10,755	0	(754)

THATCHAM PCC

Year ended 31 December 2023

Assets	2023	2022	2023		unrestricted	restricted
			St Mary's Lloyds Acc	St Barnabas HSBC Acc		
Analysis of current account (Lloyds Bank)			31-Dec-23			
General fund	-18,433	-8,289	-18433.00		-18,433.00	
Organ (Designated)	401	513	401.00		401.00	
Organ (Restricted)	8,578	140	8578.00			8,578
Fabric	45,557	34,240	45557.00		45,557.00	
Youth	1,568	-495	1568.00		1,568.00	
Choir	144	-49	144.00		144.00	
Bell Maintenance	115	2,259	115.00			115
Curates Hsg/Expenses (formerly Hatherley)	9,778	3,809	9778.00			9,778
other	0	-281	0.00			
total	47,708.00	31,847				
St Barnabas (HSBC Acc)	3,605	1,909		3,605		3,605
St Barnabas (Set up - HSBC Acc)	90	90		90		90
	51,403	33,846	47708.00	3,695	29,237.00	22,166
Assets of general funds			51403		51,403	
Current accounts (Lloyds + HSBC)	51,403	33,846				
Charishare (CBF Organ Funds)	49,523	45,402				
Charishare (Blk Bell Maintenance)	31,155	28,562				
CBF (Bell Maintenance 2+ 3)	30,130	29,424				
Total	162,211	137,233				
Endowments						
Station Road (Curate Hsg)	76,339	76,339				
Charifund (Diocesan Trustees (Oxford) Ltd)	85,070	87,253				
Rookery	241	263				
Church Estate (Blk Bond + Equity / V&C Lloyds)	6,822	6,764				
	168,472	170,619				
Total assets	330,683	307,852				

Reconciliation PCC Thatcham Acc at Lloyds	
QB 31/12/2023	47,707.21
less o/s credits	
Funeralcare	329.00
HMRC (Tax Reclaim)	418.28
Funeralcare	565.00
Funeralcare	658.00
Funeralcare	751.00
	2,721.28
plus o/s debits	
F Dumont Candles	139.20
Pozitive Energy (gas)	629.40
ODBF Fees	1,894.00
USPG Mission	462.27
Children's Society Mission	303.53
Lyreco paper	62.48
G Blythman Professional Services	50.00
	3,540.88
	48,526.81
Lloyds Statement 31/12/2022	48,526.81
check	0.00